

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, 10 June, 1982

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . . Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we reach Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have 18 students of Grade 9 standing from the Birch River School, under the direction of Mr. Warkentin. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Swan River.

There are 26 students from the Ethelbert Collegiate School, under the direction of Mr. Kozer, Mrs. Hykawy and Mrs. Sud. The students are in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Dauphin.

On behalf of all of the members I welcome you here this afternoon.

Also, before we reach Oral Questions, I have a short procedural statement to make to the members.

PROCEDURAL STATEMENT

MR. SPEAKER: On Thursday, June 3rd, during Oral Question period, a disagreement occurred between the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources and the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain concerning the length of an answer given by the Honourable Minister, and whether the question had been asked at Oral Question period or at Committee of Supply.

I took the matter under advisement in order to check the actual words in Hansard and to consider the remarks of the honourable members on the issue. I find that there was indeed a difference of opinion between the members as to when the matter was raised. While it is probably irrelevant to research Hansard to find out exactly when the question was first raised, the very fact that it was brought to the attention of the House does provide the opportunity to clarify the situation with regard to questions raised during Committee of Supply and at Oral Question period.

Firstly, with regard to questions asked of the Minister at Committee of Supply, there is clearly the opportunity for considerable abuse of question period if Ministers should use this time for lengthy answers to questions asked during Committee. It has been the practice of the House that questions posed to a Minister at Committee should be answered in written form at a subsequent date and the answer communicated to the Member asking the question. Since this long-standing practice has succeeded so admirably, it should be continued.

Secondly, where questions have been taken as notice by a Minister during question period, it has been our practice for the Minister to give an oral reply

at a subsequent question period. This constitutes no difficulty where the answer is brief, but the same opportunity arises for abuse if the answer should be lengthy or detailed. In such cases, the matter should be handled in the same manner as an Order For Return with the Minister announcing to the House that he is providing a written reply to the honourable member's question. Since it is impossible to define what is a reasonable length for an oral answer, Ministers must use their best judgment in this regard. Any Minister wishing to avoid the opprobrium of the House will surely tend toward a written rather than an oral answer to a question.

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Attorney-General, the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission. Mr. Speaker, can the Attorney-General confirm that Manitoba's liquor prices, particularly with respect to spirits, are now second or third highest in the country as a result of the Budget that the NDP Government has brought in?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: The Member for St. Norbert asked that question in Estimates in Committee, was in fact given a written reply by me in writing - I took the courtesy of doing that - and with respect, is now abusing the privilege of the House in raising as a question something with respect to which he's had a written reply. If I understood your ruling, he's asking me to do that which I should not be doing and, in fact, rather than take up the time in question period, I gave him the information within two days.

Now, who's abusing the privileges of the House? If he wants the answer, he has it.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the Attorney-General doesn't wish to confirm what I believe is the case, that they are the second or third highest prices in Canada as a result of the NDP Budget.

My supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Labour. In view of the fact that 35 workers in Gimli at Seagram Distillers Plant have been laid off as a result of slumping sales due to government taxes —(Interjection)— the information, Mr. Speaker, is sales have been slumping as a result of an increase in government taxes. My question is to the Minister of Finance and Labour. Is he prepared to take any action or withdraw any portion of his Budget, Mr. Speaker, which required the Liquor Control Commission to raise an additional \$20 million over and above their increases at the beginning of May and which now are resulting in the layoff of some 35 workers in Gimli, which no doubt are also affected by the imposition of his payroll tax.

HON. R. PENNER: One aspect of that question, the announcement was very clear that the shutdown has to do with changing drinking habits, namely, a switch in the consumption of rye. Now for the honourable member to come into this House and add a bit of information which is not, in fact, official information at all, in order to make a point is, with respect, in the real sense of the word, in my view, an abuse of the privilege of the House. —(Interjection)— I just did.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour. In view of the fact that a Seagram Distillers Plant in Gimli, Manitoba, has laid off 35 production workers as a result of slumping sales due to an increase in taxes, which the Minister increased in his Budget this year by asking the Liquor Control Commission to raise an additional \$20 million over and above their increase at the beginning of May, what action is the Minister of Labour going to take to ensure that these people will retain their jobs?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the member is being facetious. I'm sure not even the Member for St. Norbert believes the kind of nonsense that he's stating.

He knows full well I am sure, that the particular layoff he is referring to does have something to do with the drinking habits, not only of Manitobans, but of other Canadians who are also making use of that particular product and not in as great quantities as they did in previous years. If, in fact, the member had a point then I would presume that the breweries and other operations in this province would also be shutting down for the summer and we certainly have no indication of that.

What has happened again, is that there is a change in people's drinking habits. There may well be somewhat of a reduction in quantities being consumed by Manitobans and, quite frankly, I'm not sure that we would be extremely upset on this side of the House if, in fact, that was occurring.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the fact that the Budget brought down by the Minister of Finance with the increase of liquor taxes and a payroll tax imposed on the people who are in the business of using agricultural commodities, could the Minister of Agriculture assure those people, who would have been delivering corn during that period of time, that they are not in any way being affected or put in jeopardy, or their incomes affected because of the imposition of excess taxes on the commodity that is produced from the agricultural commodity?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Arthur should be, and I hope that he's well aware that the market for corn in Manitoba has been depressed as the result of an oversupply of corn on the market, in

fact, there has been great difficulties suffered by a co-operative in the Carman area where they have now been forced to set up another company to refinance because of the very problem of the price of corn in Western Canada and if we were to, with respect to the specifics of the question into Gimli - the corn supply to Gimli - I'm sure that the corn supplies in terms of the Gimli Distillery are on a regular basis and are handled normally. The shutdown, as I understand, is an overall slump in the consumption of alcohol which, Mr. Speaker, I would say for the health of our citizens of this country, is probably a very good thing. While it does affect the industry in terms of the production of alcohol but for the health of our citizens, it's probably one of the best things that we can see, is a decrease in the consumption of alcohol products.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture, I think it's a decision of each and every Manitoban whether or not they use that particular commodity which comes from the agricultural community. For those members of the government backbench that suggest that they will be using that corn at home to use or make into alcohol, I wonder if they've cleared that with the Attorney-General, if he is now going to allow that type of process to take place legally in Manitoba.

To the Minister of Agriculture then, how can he as the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker, justify the reimposition of a tax on the product that is being produced from grain produced commodities in the gasohol production? Mr. Speaker, he's now adding a tax to that particular industry which is, in fact, using it to extend the nonrenewable resources and he's now taxing that as well as the increased tax on human consumed alcohol or product that is coming from the corn industry. Mr. Speaker, how can he justify supporting the reimposition of taxation on alcohol that would be used for motor power fuel in gasohol?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, the Budget was very clear in dealing with the matter of alcohol. If the member recalls, while the announcements were made when the gasohol plant was opened in Manitoba and there was assistance, in fact, clear subsidies to that plant by the decrease of the tax on alcohol products while —(Interjection)— well, it was a clear subsidy, Mr. Speaker. Obviously it was a clear subsidy to the industry when the alcohol was coming from the United States when we were told that we were producing the alcohol in the Province of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition indicates from his seat that a subsidy is when you pay something. Mr. Speaker, there is a payment if everyone else is paying something and you don't charge someone for something, you are in fact giving them a payment. You may not be giving it directly but you're giving it indirectly, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, clearly with respect to the plant there should be no greater incentive in terms of the production of alcohol than there is for other industry. There should be no greater incentive. The use of the plant certainly should be encouraged and if it can be on a feasible basis it should be done, but the use of the feed and the grains, if they can be put to use and a price received on the world market that will equal or better

that price, that's where that grain should go and not strictly for the fuel. The best use of that commodity should be made, Mr. Speaker.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary to the Minister of Agriculture. With his own admission that the corn sales are lagging and that there is difficulty within the marketing of corn at this particular time, Mr. Speaker, would he then confirm that under his government's policies and taxation policies that are overburdening on the farm community that there are some 400,000 bushels of lost sales of corn for those corn producers probably in excess of \$1.5 million worth of corn sales, Mr. Speaker, can he confirm those figures? Is he going to sit and allow his Minister of Finance to lay people off, to remove markets which have been traditional and built in this province under good sound policies previous to his administration, Mr. Speaker?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, I can't confirm those figures and I'm sure the honourable member himself can't confirm them either. We will attempt to check them out but I can't confirm those figures.

But, Mr. Speaker, clearly, part of the problems that farmers do have are as a result of the laissez-faire policies and the do-nothing policies of Tory administrations. Instead of trying to bring about market opportunities, income security to farmers, they want to throw them out to the wolves instead of allowing them some income security and that's why many of the farmers in this country are in trouble, because of the laissez-faire policies of former Tory administrations and his is one of them, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the First Minister after the lecture we've had from the Minister of Agriculture on how alcohol should be produced presumably under the control system that he favours in other countries.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the First Minister is this: News reports have it that the First Minister has now joined his voice to that of the Premier of Alberta calling for a renewed Federal-Provincial Conference on the Economy, could the First Minister indicate to the House, (a) if that is the case because we have had no announcement of it in the House and, (b) if that is the case, would it be his intention to suspend the imposition of the payroll tax in Manitoba, which is and will be acting as a contributor to unemployment in Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have called for an early meeting of the First Ministers of this country. Obviously, the Versailles Conference has not achieved anything of a positive nature. Obviously, despite the predictions at the Federal-Provincial Conference of February 2nd to 4th, there has been no improvement to the economy. Indeed there has been a further deterioration insofar as the economy is concerned throughout Canada.

At the same time we are hearing remarks from Ottawa that there is some change in stance on their position from what they were indeed telling us on February 2nd to February 4th. There has also been some speculation that the Federal Government is on the verge of bringing in some new initiatives. It is my view, that prior to their undertaking new initiatives, that there should be consultation discussion with the First Ministers of this country so that we can work together in the framework of co-operative federalism in order to resolve those very crucial, very difficult conditions that are facing all Canadians.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the First Minister would find little objection on this side of the House to the proposition that if Ottawa is going to fundamentally change the economic direction of the country with respect to new proposals and new programs, that it would be advisable for the Prime Minister to meet with the Premiers before that takes place.

That being the case, would it not be equally logical and advisable for this government, which has imposed a payroll tax upon all of the employers in Manitoba, to suspend the imposition of that tax until such time as the government is able to ascertain the new directions that the Federal Government is intending to take the economy, because there can be no question that the imposition of this tax will act as something that will increase unemployment in Manitoba, and we're all trying to decrease unemployment, except apparently the members of this frontbench, who are trying to raise \$130 million without trying to save any money for the taxpayers?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, our record of taxation changes in the past two or three months compares most favourably with that which has been compelled upon the residents in other provinces. Mr. Speaker, I need only refer you to the Province of Ontario, the Province of Quebec, the Province of Nova Scotia, the Province of Newfoundland, ad infinitum insofar as the Provinces of Canada are concerned.

Mr. Speaker, one of the very reasons indeed, that a Federal-Provincial Conference is required is so that we can again examine the question of the financing of health and post-secondary education; so that again we can examine measures in order to ensure a greater payment of monies throughout Canada to ensure greater equalization by way of the equalization formula, and I'm sure that if we can hopefully persuade the Federal Government to undo some of the measures that they have undertaken by way of financial payment to the provinces over the past year, that each and every province in Canada would be re-examining the tax measures that they have been compelled to implement because of cutbacks from Ottawa by way of grants.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Government of Manitoba could forego the imposition of the payroll tax in Manitoba merely by cutting its Estimates of Expenditure, which are going to be up somewhere between 14 and 20 percent this year, given that fact and given the fact, Mr. Speaker, as I've said before, that Manitoba is the only province in Canada imposing a new tax, a payroll tax, does the First

Minister not think that it would be better for the economy and for the people of Manitoba to suspend the imposition of that invidious tax until such time as he and his colleagues are able to ascertain from the Prime Minister what new directions, if any, the Federal Government intends to take our economy, in a monetary sense and in a fiscal sense?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, it is somewhat peculiar, some comments coming from the Leader of the Opposition referring to expenditure, when it is practically during the Estimate review of every department that we hear calls across the way for this government to participate in additional spending, that we're not spending adequately. We heard a comment indeed from the former Minister of Economic Development that we should open up our Interest Rate Relief Program to permit more companies to qualify insofar as interest rate relief was concerned even yesterday, so that does strike a somewhat peculiar note.

Mr. Speaker, the fundamental question that we are posed with in Canada is runaway interest rates that I understand have been increased this morning again by one-third of one percent, again causing an additional crushing burden upon Canadians; that is the essential issue that is confronting Canadians. I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that we would gain some support from members across the way so that we could reflect to the Federal Government that Manitoba stands united, regardless of party stripe, in opposition to the kind of high interest rate policies that are being pursued at the present time in Ottawa, copied from those that are being pursued in Washington.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, as is becoming almost a knee-jerk custom of the Premier, we're now hearing about the problems in Washington and the problems in Ottawa. If I may, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the First Minister to the problems in Manitoba, and in this Legislature, most of which reside on that side of the House.

The First Minister said that this side of the House is advocating expenditures all the time. Mr. Speaker, we are advocating that this government conduct . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Government House Leader on a Point of Order.

POINT OF ORDER

HON. R. PENNER: The Leader of the Opposition is clearly doing nothing but making a speech that does not even purport to be a preamble to a question. I ask that you call him to order and what the purpose of Question Period is, is to elicit information by short questions.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I would hope that all introductions to questions should be of a brief nature and Beauchesne suggests that they can be adequately provided for within one question, within one statement.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

ORAL QUESTIONS (Cont'd)

HON. S. LYON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In view of

the fact that the problems reside on this side of the House, and with respect to ill-conceived programs that this government is bringing in, would the First Minister not admit that if he were to re-examine the Estimates of Expenditure of this government that he could put to one side - and one would hope forever - such ridiculous expenditures as \$20 million for a new government oil company, ManOil, and thereby accomplish the desire, Mr. Speaker — (Interjection) —

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Government House Leader.

POINT OF ORDER

HON. R. PENNER: Beauchesne clearly states that a question asking a member of the Treasury Bench to make some admission of opinion of that kind, merely to adopt a fully stated opinion of a member opposite, is out of order. I ask that you draw that to the attention of the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPEAKER: I would hope the Honourable Attorney-General has done just that thing in drawing it to the attention of members opposite.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, thank you, Sir, for your understanding of the rule.

On the point of order which was raised by the Attorney-General, may I make this one comment that you, Sir, have an equal responsibility of which I know you are fully aware that points of order should not be used as methods of harassment in a parliamentary democracy. They may be rules that can be used in other Legislatures in other countries but, Mr. Speaker, the use of a point of order as harassment in this Legislature is not part of the tradition of this House even though the Attorney-General might like to make it so.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader to the same point of order.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, it is clearly improper to impute motives to anyone in the House. I'm not saying that it's because I'm the Government House Leader. I have raised, bona fide, a point of order. I've referred to Beauchesne and for the Leader of the Opposition to say that I'm rising to harass him - much as anyone in their right mind would love to do it - is improperly to impute motives and that is clearly out of order and clearly, when we are addressing a question of order, it shows a lamentable lack of any understanding of the parliamentary system on the part of that man.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. If there is no other member wishing to speak to the same point of order, may we proceed with Oral Question period?

ORAL QUESTIONS Cont'd

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. S. LYON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, would the First Minister then not admit that expendi-

tures of such a dubious nature as \$20 million for ManOil could be put to one side in order that this government can forestall the imposition of the invidious payroll tax in Manitoba and thereby contribute in some small way to an improvement in the economic outlook for Manitoba rather than prejudicing it as this tax will?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, we have indeed noticed how desperate the Leader of the Opposition is, how frantic the Leader of the Opposition is to try to find some expenditure that he can point to that ought not to be expended, though I wish indeed that we were spending \$20 million this year in respect to ManOil. The fact is that we have omitted to put the \$20 million into expenditures for this forthcoming year. There are no \$20 million in the expenditures.

Mr. Speaker, I say to you this, that if the Opposition Members, after bombarding us for weeks and months to add additional expenditures, now make up expenditures that aren't in the book of expenditures, indeed, I don't know where they are. I think it's time the Opposition got their act together.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I am heartened by what the First Minister says. Mr. Speaker, if the expenditures are not in the current Estimates and are not in the Supplementary Supply, which we haven't yet seen, and they're not in the Capital Supply, which we have yet to see; well then, Mr. Speaker, we're pleased on this side of the House.

Can we then have the further assurance from the First Minister that the minute this House prorogues, he won't duck into the Cabinet Chamber and pass a Special Warrant for \$10 million or whatever to fund his socialist plaything, ManOil, which this province doesn't need?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, let me assure this House, it may be difficult considering the hard economic times that we're confronted with, but we'll do all that is possible to avoid the precedent that was established by the Conservative Government last year in that they did duck into the Cabinet room after they concluded the Session, in an election year, to call for Special Warrants to the extent of some \$80-some million. We'll try to avoid that precedent, surely, Mr. Speaker.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, then can we have an answer to the original question which the First Minister has conveniently avoided? Putting aside his own ideological requirements, will he not in the interests of all Manitobans suspend the imposition of the payroll tax to help the economy in Manitoba before he goes to any conference that he is asking for with the Prime Minister of Canada? Will he come to the negotiating table for the economy of Canada with clean hands?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would assume that Quebec would reduce its sales tax; that Nova Scotia would reduce its sales tax; that Newfoundland would make decreases respecting their income and incorporation tax increases they just imposed; that Ontario

would be able again to enjoy some sanity insofar as the extension of exemptions that they had to extend in their recent Budget pertaining to sales tax. I'm sure that the Province of Manitoba would look at some tax reductions if we, collectively, as provincial governments in this country, could persuade Ottawa to return to the original level of financing re health, post-secondary education and equalization levies that, indeed were enjoyed by the four years of Conservative administration in the Province of Manitoba, but they didn't use them very well.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I took as notice the question about the boxes at the Downs and who paid for the boxes that the Commission members were entitled to occupy. I wish to table a letter which gives the response. It's a letter written by Marshall Gobuty, Executive Vice-President and General Manager, to the Editor of the Winnipig Free Press. This letter is in regard to an article which appeared in the Winnipeg Free Press on Wednesday . . .

POINT OF ORDER

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition to a point of order.

HON. S. LYON: I'm sure the House would love to have the information, Sir, but in the light of your recent ruling, I would think that if a letter is available, and the letter not addressed to this House, it could be distributed and, thereby, not abuse question period.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I'll give the gist of the letter. Mr. Gobuty . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition to a point of order.

HON. S. LYON: Yes, Mr. Speaker, just to reiterate the point that was made earlier in your ruling, Sir, if the Honourable First Minister has obtained written information in answer to a question, that is very satisfactory. We'd be quite happy to have her table it rather than read in extenso and thereby take up time of the question period on some information that she can table and hand around.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader to the same point of order.

HON. R. PENNER: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Minister for Economic Development took a question as notice and now within one day is replying. Whether or not it is in extenso - God, how much of the debate has to take place in Latin - cannot be determined until you, as the Speaker who has charge of this Assembly, has heard whether or not the Minister is abusing the time of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden to the same point of order.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, speaking to the same point of order and offering you probably some assistance. I think if you would choose to peruse Beuchesne you would find that the reading of letters to a newspaper or letters to an editor in this Chamber is material that is clearly out of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other members wishing to speak to the same point of order?

The Honourable Minister of Finance on the same point of order.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, to the same point of order. It seems to me that after the Opposition has wasted practically a whole question period on this matter yesterday they can surely wait several minutes to hear the response this afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER: May I suggest to the Honourable Minister of Economic Development that she make the announcement that she is supplying the answer to the question and perhaps send a written copy across to members on the other side to satisfy their curiosity on the matter.

The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: I'd like to ask a question of the Minister of Economic Development . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, can we just dispose of the previous point before that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. M. SMITH: For clarification, Mr. Speaker, I'm unclear at this point whether you wish me to send the letter without giving the contents or whether I may read the very short few paragraphs that give a succinct answer to yesterday's question or whether I can summarize it and give it on my behalf. I wish some guidance, please.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, if the letter itself is self-explanatory, may I request that the Honourable Minister send it across to members on the other side.

ORAL QUESTIONS Cont'd

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a question of the Minister of Economic Development. Yesterday there were some charges made that were critical of the Commissioner of Horse Racing in Manitoba and his conduct. Can the Minister shed any light on the matter?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to answer that question. I did speak both to Mr. Keenberg and to people at the track. I found that the question of the box was that the prior practice was for the Downs to make available two courtesy boxes to the Commission. The Commission itself voluntarily agreed to one box which has a value of \$1,500 but for which no money

was paid, plus the access to a table in the dining room, not the corner on it but the right to use it if they chose.

I also found out from the operators at the Downs that the question of the jeans was not, in their eyes, an important question. In fact, it was a new rule put in for the Turf Club and many hundreds of patrons had made the same error, that they didn't consider the interchange as reported in the paper at all accurate and I am happy to table a letter to the Free Press. A copy was sent to us by Marshall Gobuty, by which I assume he wanted me to share this information with the House, and I am happy to table it for the members of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'll try to ask this question without the silly interruptions from the Premier. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Economic Development why the hearings that are being held yesterday and today, which the Minister herself said were being held - yesterday she referred to them in the House and she referred to them outside the House and has said it on television interviews - why those hearings are not open to the public, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to respond on that. The Commission does have authority to hold such hearings and under The Manitoba Evidence Act they're not required to be open but they are required, if requested, to give reason for holding them in camera. Mr. Speaker, the reason for them being held in camera was at the request of the witnesses who felt they would be divulging private business information and they preferred it to be dealt with in a private manner.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the Minister yesterday made some statements regarding the articles in the paper that I had referred to, and I'm referring to the one of April 22nd in the Winnipeg Free Press and it's in quotes, Mr. Speaker, "Mr. Keenberg said the Commission was given pertinent information as to what to expect in the year end audit." And in quotes again, "We do not have any concern that racing will be other than normal at Assiniboia Downs."

Mr. Speaker, after the question period yesterday, the Minister was in the hall making an announcement and I would like to ask the Minister regarding her comments that the track would operate possibly from day-to-day but may not be viable in the long term; could I ask the Minister why she has to make that statement at the present time after her Commissioner stated to the people of Manitoba and to the creditors of the Assiniboia Downs, who sell products to them, had gone ahead and done business for two months and now we find that it might not be viable for the long term?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, to set the record right I wasn't making statements or announcements in the

hall I was responding to questions in the Press in as open and candid a manner as I felt I could. I was incorrectly quoted in the Press as indicating that one choice we were looking at was the closing of the track this year. Mr. Speaker, I eliminated that as one of the options. I said that the government are committed to protecting and developing the racing industry as a valuable industry; that we are satisfying ourselves on the day-to-day operation; we're committed to minimal disruption in the track operation if there has to be some change.

I at no time, Mr. Speaker, said that the racing season for this season would not continue. Mr. Speaker, I did say that we were acquiring the information we needed in order to make the best choice if we found it necessary to take action to ensure the long-term security of the track.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism if she has been in contact with the Red River Exhibition who were one of the two people that made proposals to purchase the track last year. The owner of the track made his choice as to who to sell it to. I'm wondering, with the Minister giving us the possibility that the government might operate the track, if they have gone to the nonprofit organization Red River Exhibition, who were interested in the ownership and operation of the track, if she has consulted with them at this time.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for recommending to us one line of action. It's premature at this point for us to initiate that kind of discussion, but I can assure the member opposite that we're willing to look at any possible option and weigh it in good time. But before we can make an assessment, Mr. Speaker, we have to have access to the basic information and that was the reason why the hearings were called.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Does the Minister not believe that the hearings held about the race track causes concern with the public and in the long haul and in the short term, as a matter of fact, creates a great hole in the betting and attendance in the race track? Does the Minister not believe that the hearings, if they were public, people would have more confidence that everything is going to be all right at the track?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, it would be naive of us if we thought that having hearings was not going to have some impact on confidence in the track. Mr. Speaker, that is an unfortunate aspect of the situation.

But, the underlying problem, Mr. Speaker, was the problem we inherited from the previous government where there was no thorough record of the kind of information that, in our opinion, is required to run the track, to carry out the work of the Commission in a responsible and thorough way.

Mr. Speaker, we're moving as quickly and as responsibly as we can to make up for that defect but we cannot force the speed unduly. We have given every assurance within our power to the people involved in the track that we are committed to the industry; that we do value it and that we do intend to take responsible action to ensure that industry con-

tinue here in Manitoba.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would express to the House whether she read the extensive report that was done on the racing commissioned by the previous government. I would like the Minister to explain to the House, or tell the House, if she was really dissatisfied with the long, hard work that Mr. Sid Halter, as Commissioner, did for racing in this province?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, we had been operating on the basis of recommendations that came from the previous Commission and from the report but, Mr. Speaker, as we've moved closer into the industry and particularly as we've had to see the effect of the general difficulty that the track is encountering - I presume because of the general economic conditions - we've had new situations to deal with.

Mr. Speaker, I have no desire to evaluate at this time the work done by the previous Commissioner or Commission. What I do know is that there are serious gaps in the information that we have available on which to make sound judgments. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite I think, knows as well as I do what some of the underlying difficulties have been. At a later time it might be more appropriate to discuss those, but I think at this point in time our efforts should be devoted to trying to maintain the track and make the kind of wise choices to keep it on a safe and secure footing.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to debate that at any time, anywhere with the Minister as to whether she had all the information she required or not.

I would only ask the Minister then and by final question, if she felt there were sincere problems at the track, why didn't the First Minister who had correspondence pleading with him to put experienced people on the Racing Commission, why wasn't that done and why didn't the Minister take into consideration the advice that she received, which strongly recommended that they would be in problems if they put inexperienced people on the Racing Commission and yet the government went ahead and did so?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, the problems we are encountering are due to following the recommendations of the previous group and not to the personnel on the new Commission.

I've been extremely pleased with the extensive time put in and the careful analysis being given by the new Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for Oral Question Period has expired.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, I'd like to make some changes on the Statutory Regulations and Orders Committee. I'd like

to substitute the Member for Tuxedo for the Member for Virden; The Member for Kirkfield Park for the Member for Roblin-Russell; and the Member for Sturgeon Creek for the Member for Gladstone.

MR. SPEAKER: Agreed? (Agreed). The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to as well announce some Committee changes in Statutory Regulations and Orders. The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs will substitute for the Honourable Member for Gimli; the Member for Ellice substituting for the Member for Rupertsland; but just for Monday morning, the Member for River East substituting for the Member for Brandon West.

In addition, —(Interjection)— I'm giving advance notice but I'll do it again Monday afternoon.

A further change for Tuesday for Industrial Relations, the Member for River East for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. SPEAKER: Is that agreed? (Agreed).
The Honourable Government House Leader.

ORDERS OF THE DAY ADJOURNED DEBATES ON SECOND READING

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the adjourned debate on Bill No. 21?

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Community Services and Corrections, the adjourned debate of Bill No. 21 standing in the name of the Honourable Member for LaVerendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: Stand, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Stand. The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, would you please call the adjourned debate on Bill No. 30?

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable the Attorney-General, Bill No. 30, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Stand, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Stand. The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: Would you please call the adjourned debate on Bill No. 40?

BILL 40 - AN ACT TO AMEND THE LABOUR RELATIONS ACT

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Labour, Bill No. 40, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Tuxedo. Stand.

MR. R. BANMAN: Stand.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Honourable Member for Thompson wish to speak to the motion?

MR. S. ASHTON: On Bill No. 40, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I find it somewhat strange today that Members of the Opposition are not taking up this opportunity to again debate this bill. Perhaps the comments from the Attorney-General smartened them up somewhat.

I would hope they would read his comments, Mr. Speaker, because I think he pointed out the fallacies in a number of the arguments that members opposite made; fallacies in regard to the source of this kind of legislation, because as the Attorney-General pointed out it has also been introduced in such provinces as Quebec and British Columbia and a good source of this particular legislation was Ontario, that great Tory province. But of course, I suppose members opposite there seem to have blinker vision when it comes to various pieces of legislation. If we introduce it, it's bad; if their colleagues introduce it, the Tory colleagues in other provinces, well then that's okay. I wish they would try and attach some standard of consistency.

I think I would like to add a few comments of my own, too, at this particular time, Mr. Speaker, in regard to some of the arguments put forward by Members of the Opposition, particularly in regard to their suggestion that we somehow not pass this particular piece of legislation.

This is something of a first, Mr. Speaker. They have been arguing in this Legislature for the last couple of months that we haven't been keeping our promises and when we have kept them, they've said we haven't been keeping them fast enough. But in this particular case, they want us to break those promises. They want us to break a promise that was made not just during the election, Mr. Speaker, but several months prior to it, that we would introduce what is presently in the form of Bill No. 40. There's something of an inconsistency there and I think I find it rather interesting that if one looks at the major promises we made, the major promises that we've kept, that they haven't really objected to too many of them; the Interest Rate Relief Plan or the Rent Control Plan - I don't think I'll name all 12 of them, Mr. Speaker - but I find it rather interesting that the one they have objected to, the one promise that we've kept rather quickly, is this particular promise, the one relating to labour legislation.

I think that's a sad comment on the state of the members opposite that when it comes to promises, they only want promises kept which don't affect the working people of this province; when one does affect it, they don't want us to keep it. We made no bones, Mr. Speaker, about the fact that we would introduce this. As I said, we announced it well in advance of the election. We made no bones about the impact we saw coming from this legislation. We felt that it would help not just working people, but generally the whole labour relations climate here, but it would specifically help working people in this province because it would help stabilize the collective bargaining process in

what is one of the most difficult stages, that being in the stage of the first contract.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, there wasn't much objection to that in this province and I find it strange that they are objecting to it, because if they would speak to the average person on the street, I think they would find that they really don't have too much concern about this particular legislation. That's not what we heard from the members opposite yesterday. To them, it was as if the sky was falling, Mr. Speaker; this was the end of the earth; this was going to inhibit new business coming to the province; it was going to create industrial instability. That is not true whatsoever. This particular bill will do nothing of the sort and the members opposite know it.

This particular bill would help stabilize labour relations in this province. It would help prevent strikes; it would not help start strikes. And if that is going to stop new businesses from coming to this province, Mr. Speaker, I really don't know what logic they're attributing to potential new businesses because that argument is totally illogical.

They also suggested yesterday, Mr. Speaker, that this was somehow a payoff for labour support in the election. The New Democratic Party has a close association with the labour movement; we've had a close association with them for many years; we make no bones about it. In my particular constituency, many members of the NDP are also active in the labour movement and vice versa, though I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, if you speak to them, if you speak to members of Local 6166 of the United Steelworkers in Thompson, the largest union there, if you talk to them and ask them about their relationship to the party, they will say that they view it as a two-stage process. If you talk to executive officers they will say their commitment, first and foremost, is to represent their members, to be part of the labour movement and that their connection with the NDP is because there is a certain affinity between the labour movement and the NDP. It's not because there's any direct connection, because this union is not affiliated with the NDP, Mr. Speaker. In fact, of the voting delegates at NDP conventions, only 13 percent are direct affiliates.

Most members of the labour movement, who are also members of the NDP, are members as any other members of a political party are; they are individuals first and foremost. They join a particular political party because they see a certain affinity with the goals that they propose. So to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that somehow the NDP and the labour movement are in cahoots or anything of the sort I think is an insult not just to the NDP, which I would take perhaps in a partisan spirit of exchange, but it's an insult to the entire labour movement and it shows a complete and utter misunderstanding of what the labour movement seeks to obtain here in Canada.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, if one looked at the brief of the MFL, for example, we have disagreements at times in terms of the speed in which we enact things and in terms of particular things that we enact - disagreements between the NDP, disagreements between the labour movement - as indeed we have with other such groups in our society; as indeed I would hope that members opposite would have with their more traditional supporters in the corporate business commu-

ity. We are not taking our directions from any one particular group, Mr. Speaker, and to suggest this in debate on this particular resolution that somehow Bill No. 40 is here only because labour backed the NDP in the election and we somehow owe it to them as a payoff is absolutely ridiculous.

The principles behind this particular bill were discussed by the NDP at an open convention. The particular principles in this were supported and are supported by the vast majority of New Democrats and as I said, there was very little objection to these principles in the election; so it's as democratic as you can get, Mr. Speaker. There are no hidden strings, there are no hidden agendas. It's something we've discussed openly in public and something the public has no great objection to. As I said, Mr. Speaker, to suggest otherwise is, I think, to show a complete and utter misunderstanding of the NDP as a party which I can expect from the members opposite, but also of the labour movement which I would expect they would have at least some knowledge about.

I had not intended to speak at great length on this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, but only to reply to some of the comments yesterday and to suggest that some of the members talk to people in the labour movement sometime about politics, about their involvement in politics. I think if those honourable members opposite did speak to them they would find that this sinister hidden agenda, these strings, this payoff talk is complete and utter nonsense.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, if they did have a better understanding, they might do well or much better at least in certain constituencies in which there are a large number of working people who are active in the labour movement. I must say personally, Mr. Speaker, that being in one of those constituencies where this is the case, I'm perhaps thankful that the honourable members opposite are so ignorant of the facts of the labour movement, the way they operate and the way the NDP operates.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, this particular legislation is a campaign promise, another one that is going to be fulfilled. Pretty soon I think we are going to be running out of them. It's a campaign promise that was made public during the campaign on a number of occasions, made public well before that; it's been discussed by the NDP; it's been discussed by the labour movement; it's been discussed by the people of Manitoba. So to suggest now that there's all this hidden agenda going on, there's all these terrible things behind this, is an insult, Mr. Speaker, to the intelligence of the people of this province.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Honourable Minister of Labour wish to speak to the motion?

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Yes, I do, Mr. Speaker, and that would close debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

It is my understanding that the adjournment will stand in the name of the the Honourable Member for Tuxedo and that the Member for Thompson spoke during that time. It is our practice to permit a bill to remain under the name of the member who takes the adjournment on the prior day.

The Honourable Government House Leader on a point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

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

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, on a point of order. That, however, is not the situation. The situation is that the Member for Tuxedo had begun his speech. It wasn't a question that he had adjourned. It was not standing in his name. He had begun his speech and he was in the House today and if he chose not to be here to finish his speech, he has lost his right to speak under the Rules. —(Interjection)— No, no, that is right.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Member for St. Norbert on the same point of order.

MR. G. MERCIER: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker. As the Attorney-General is well aware, the Member for Tuxedo rose at about 5:28 p.m. yesterday, because I recollect that you indicated at the end of yesterday's Session that the Member for Tuxedo had 38 minutes left to speak. He merely offered a few comments in order to spin out the few minutes remaining in yesterday's time. The bill is standing in his name.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I remind the Attorney-General, that we cleared eight or nine bills off the Order Paper. We waived Private Members' Hour in order to allow the government to proceed with its business.

Mr. Speaker, if the Attorney-General is suggesting now that he doesn't have the courtesy to allow this bill to stand today in the name of the Member for Tuxedo, then I am shocked, Mr. Speaker, at his behaviour.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry to the same point of order.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Could I add one word on the same point of order?

I don't know what Hansard will say or what it will show, and unfortunately because of the point at which we've arrived in the Session and the heavy workload it's understandably running two or three days late, but it was my very clear understanding that the Progressive Conservative Party Whip, the Honourable Member for La Verendrye said, "Stand," at the time Bill 40 was called and I heard him distinctly, Mr. Speaker. I will not guarantee that was picked up by the microphones and heard by Hansard. At that point the Member for Thompson stood up and it was certainly our clear understanding that he was being accommodated with an opportunity to speak while the bill was standing in the Member for Tuxedo's name.

MR. SPEAKER: On the same point of order.

The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, the Member for Fort Garry misunderstands. The Member for La Verendrye said, "Stand," when I called Bill No. 21 and it was already

standing in his name and there was no objection taken to that.

Secondly, with the point which I've just made with respect to the Rules, in my understanding it is not a discretionary question. It's not as if it's up to me as to what should happen. The Rules are quite clear as I understand them; namely, that the Member for Tuxedo, having already begun his speech, it was not standing in his name, standing in a member's name and he did not adjourn and therefore, he has had his speech. That is the Rules. It's not as if I am attempting or have a discretion to operate, I do not have a discretion to operate. The Rules, I think, are mandatory in this respect.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry to the same point of order.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Yes, the same point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Attorney-General is absolutely correct that when he called Bill 21, the Member for La Verendrye, the official Opposition Whip said, "Stand"; and when he called Bill 23, the Honourable Member for St. Norbert, Deputy House Leader of the Opposition, said, "Stand"; and when he called Bill 30, the Honourable Member for Minnedosa, the Chairman of the Opposition, said, "Stand"; and when he called Bill 40, the Whip again said, "Stand," and it certainly was our impression that the bill was standing and that accommodation was being accorded the Member for Thompson.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture to the same point of order.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, yesterday when the Honourable Member for Tuxedo rose to speak - I was here in the House - to speak just before the adjournment hour, it was suggested to him in fact by, I believe, the Honourable Member for Springfield for him to call it 5:30 and adjourn debate in his name.

He chose not to do so, to adjourn the bill, but he started to speak. Mr. Speaker, as I understand the Rules that once you start speaking when the bill next appears on the Order Paper, it is your turn to speak. If another member rises in his place to speak to the bill, then you have in fact spoken and I believe members on this side counselled the Member for Tuxedo to call it 5:30 and adjourn debate in his name.

He decided and began to speak on the motion yesterday.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell to the same point of order.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, to sort of solve the problem, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kirkfield Park, that debate be adjourned.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, there is a matter of order before the House which has not yet been resolved.

The Honourable Member for St. Norbert to the same point of order.

MR. G. MERCIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to indicate that when we on this side indicated the bill should stand - stand in the name of the Member for Tuxedo - the Member for Thompson rose and I believe you clearly indicated to him that debate was open and he could speak. There was no suggestion that the Member for Tuxedo was losing his right to continue to debate the subject.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate my earlier comments. We allowed the government to proceed through Private Members' Hour yesterday, once again in order to conduct government business. We allowed eight or nine bills to go to Committee yesterday and, Mr. Speaker, there's some other business that the government could attend to if they have the courage to. I suggest that they use the same courtesy that we extended to them yesterday in allowing government business to proceed through Question Period and that they allow the bill to stand in the name of the Member for Tuxedo. I think that would be clearly, Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the practices and procedures of this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson to the same point of order.

The Honourable Minister of Finance to the same point of order.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Well, Mr. Speaker, last night as members have indicated to you, the Member for Tuxedo rose, spoke for several minutes and then it was 5:30 p.m.

This afternoon, I indicated to the Member for St. Norbert, I asked him where the Member for Tuxedo was. He knew full well and I'm sure that everyone on that side knew full well the bill was going to be called. The members of the Opposition know full well that we wish to have this matter proceeded with this coming Tuesday morning or Monday morning. We have already announced the debate of the Industrial Relations Committee.

When this bill was announced, I do not recall you, Mr. Speaker, recognizing anyone from that side. The first thing that you said as I recall, Mr. Speaker, was that you recognized the Member for Thompson and then the speaking went on. If that isn't what happened then I would suggest that possibly there's some way of determining from the Hansard tapes exactly what was said.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Springfield to the same point of order.

MR. A. ANSTETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the rules provide that when a member is speaking at the appointed hour of adjournment that a bill will stand in that member's name, and that member will then continue to speak the next time the bill is called. If the member does not speak - there's no discretion on this matter - and other members wish to speak - I think that's the key - and another member rose to speak in this instance, then that member is considered to have concluded his remarks. That's what the rules have provided. That is the precedent under which we have operated.

Now I realize that in this situation the Member for Tuxedo, who may have stepped out briefly because he

had been here for question period, may have unfortunately lost his right to continue his address. Mr. Speaker, that could have been accommodated by members on the other side recognizing that problem. I can recall many instances in this House where a similar situation has prevailed and the members on the side of the member who was about to lose his right to speak have asked the indulgence of the House for a few brief moments while they found the member who was to speak, recognizing - and that's why they did it - that if they did not find the member and have that member come in, he would lose his right to speak.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't think there's any question here that since the Member for Thompson has addressed the motion that there can be neither an adjournment nor a continuation of a speech which has been interrupted by another member. Certainly, the motion of the Member for Roblin-Russell would be in order and the adjournment would stand in his name if he wishes to move that motion again but certainly, Mr. Speaker, to leave the Order Paper notation on Bill 40 in the name of the Member for Tuxedo would be out of order.

I have a suggestion though, Mr. Speaker, that if the Opposition feels and I certainly would be opposed to us doing it any other way because of the precedent it would set, but if the Opposition feels there is some real concern about the member - I think it was 38 minutes which certainly represents a substantial portion of his speech - being allowed to speak, it takes only a substantive motion on their part with regard to the bill to obtain for him speaking rights a second time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert to the same point of order.

MR. G. MERCIER: To the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, I beg to differ with the Member for Springfield. My clear understanding of what was happening when the Member for Thompson rose is that the bill was standing in the name of the Member for Tuxedo, it was open for debate and the Member for Thompson was leaving it standing in the name of the Member for Tuxedo.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Springfield to the same point of order.

MR. A. ANSTETT: Mr. Speaker, very briefly. A bill which has been adjourned may stand in the name of the member who has adjourned it. A bill which is in the name of a member who was continuing a speech may not be stood. Such bills, if called, must be spoken to.

MR. SPEAKER: One moment please. Order please. It was my understanding when this bill was called this afternoon that it was adjourned and standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Tuxedo and it is our usual practice for the House to exercise sufficient reasonableness as to enable a member to complete his remarks; especially since in this case the particular member had spoken for only two minutes. It was my impression he was just speaking until the time of adjournment.

However, the points raised by honourable members

as to the strict legality of this issue are quite correct. The bill was called and it was up to the member who was interrupted to either continue to make his remarks or to lose his right to speak on it. It would then seem that it is up to the House if they so wish to grant leave to have this matter stand in the name of the Honourable Member for Tuxedo, which would seem a reasonable way of continuing; otherwise, I will recognize the motion of the Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell and put the vote on the adjournment.

Order please. Is it the will of the members to have the matter stand in the name of the Honourable Member for Tuxedo?

The Honourable Member for Springfield.

MR. A. ANSTETT: Mr. Speaker, we are certainly prepared to grant leave on the understanding — this is why I rise to speak on it - this does not set a precedent for this to occur in the future and that members when speaking are expected to speak the next time the bill is called. We're more than happy to grant leave to allow the Member for Tuxedo to finish his remarks.

MR. SPEAKER: By leave, Bill No. 40 will stand adjourned in the name of the Honourable Member for Tuxedo and he will be expected to speak on it next time the motion is called to the House.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: I move, seconded by the Minister for Health, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

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

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak to this motion and I had intended to do so prior to the last little debate that went on, but that has certainly further encouraged me.

The Honourable Attorney-General, the Government House Leader at one stage during the proceedings today when he indicated to one of our members who stood debate did not prepare to debate, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to him as I just did in speaking to the point of order that we, on this side, yesterday cleared some eight or nine bills off the Order Paper. I think we were quite co-operative in the manner in which those bills were handled. Once again — (Interjection) —

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Since the matter of order has been dealt with, it would not really be proper for the honourable member to discuss the matter again.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm simply pointing out and I'm not speaking again to the point of order; I'm speaking to the manner in which the House Leader has handled the House.

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

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, the honourable member has not stated that he rises to speak on a grievance. If he is

doing that, then let him say so and then, of course, he has the right to do so for 40 minutes if he wishes; but if he's addressing the point of order once the situation was cleared and we established the point and said that we didn't want it to set a precedent and made the point. We agreed that Bill No. 40 may stand in the name of the Member for Tuxedo.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The manner of order has been dealt with; there is nothing proper for any member to bring before the House at this stage other than a grievance.

The Honourable Member for St. Norbert on a Matter of Grievance.

MATTER OF GRIEVANCE

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I want to speak at this particular time, perhaps not for 40 minutes, but for some time with respect to - on my single occasion that a member is allowed to speak - on a matter of grievance. Mr. Speaker, I was encouraged to do so when I heard the Attorney-General, during question period from his seat, in response to a question from the Member for Arthur who was asking about and expressing his concern about the fact that some 400,000 bushels of grain would now not be sold to the Seagram Distillers Plant in Gimli as a result of the layoffs which have taken place at that particular plant. The Attorney-General's response was, "Let them use the corn at home." Well, Mr. Speaker, that's indicative I'm afraid of the reaction and the concern that this government is showing for many people in our society in Manitoba today.

Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago I read a report about the Premier who said he was amazed that his government had done so well in their first six months in office. I find it simply inconceivable that the Premier could make a statement like that, Mr. Speaker. We have a situation and I've spoken on a number of occasions before, but it doesn't seem to penetrate the minds and actions of this government. But people throughout this city, particularly at this time of year as the July 1st deadline for payment of their real property taxes approaches, are sick over the increases that they've been required to pay in this municipal fiscal year, Mr. Speaker. I pointed out before the fact that an average home assessed at \$7,000 in the City of Winnipeg over the four years under our Progressive Conservative Government, Mr. Speaker, the net taxes on that particular home were increased by only \$78, and this year the taxes on that same home have been increased by \$180-and-some-cents. Well over double, Mr. Speaker, the increase that took place over four years and at a time in our economic life when people are finding it extremely difficult to make ends meet.

Meanwhile, the Premier says, "I find it amazing how well our government has done." Mr. Speaker, an inconceivable, unbelievable statement for him to make, he must be living in another world, because he's not talking to the homeowners in the City of Winnipeg and throughout the province who are being required to pay these fantastic increases in municipal taxes that are taking place under this New Democratic Party Government in the first year of their operation when he promised to ease the property tax burden in the

province. Mr. Speaker, he has been tested on that particular promise and he's been found wanting. In fact, if he wants to compare to what took place over the last four years, Mr. Speaker, if he wants to live up to that promise, there should be no more increases in real property taxation for the next three years during the term of their government if he wants to do as well as our government did while in office.

Mr. Speaker, he makes these statements when we see layoffs occurring in this province in mining, in the railways and elsewhere, in all industries of this province to an extent that has been unseen since the years of the Depression and he finds that his government is doing amazingly well in their first six months in office. We see layoffs every day in the newspaper, and I raised one today and members opposite laugh. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance raises the price of spirits, wine and beer to a level second or third highest in the country. Nobody these days expects those prices not to increase, but why should prices in Manitoba in this particular area be the second or third highest in the country?

Mr. Speaker, they laugh at these 35 people who were laid off. The report clearly says that sales are lagging as a result of the recession and government taxes. They ask, Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission to raise an additional \$20 million after the price increase in the beginning of May and this, no doubt, is contributing to this lack of sales, to this layoff of 35 workers.

Mr. Speaker, they've imposed a payroll tax not only on the Liquor Control Commission, they've imposed it on this plant in Manitoba; a plant which was, I believe, attracted to the Province of Manitoba in Gimli in the late 1960s by former Progressive Conservative Government; a plant which is a definite asset for this particular area of the province. It has created in that area some very good jobs for the people of that particular area but what has this government done, Mr. Speaker? It has increased taxes to an uncompetitive level and we're seeing some effect. I don't suggest it's responsible for the layoff of all 35 workers because this plant produces for other than Manitoba. We are fortunate to have the plant in Manitoba but, no doubt, the layoff of the 35 workers has been affected by the taxation policies of this particular government. The Attorney-General's response to the farmers who, last year, I believe, supplied 100 percent of the corn for this plant for the first or second year, Mr. Speaker, for the first time farmers in Manitoba supplied all of the corn for this particular plant. We know now that farmers will not be able to sell some 400,000 bushels, they will be affected by that reduction in demand and, Mr. Speaker, the Attorney-General's response is words to the effect of "let them use their corn at home." Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not satisfactory. We see in Manitoba an economy that is in a disastrous situation and meanwhile the Premier of the province says, "I'm amazed at how well our government is doing."

Mr. Speaker, he talks a lot about going out and speaking to people. Well, I have to wonder who he is speaking to, because he's not speaking to the people who are expressing concerns every day and they're everywhere throughout this province expressing concerns about the state of the economy. What is the government's response? It's been to introduce the 1.5

payroll tax, Mr. Speaker, at a time when bankruptcies are occurring in record numbers; when layoffs are occurring in record numbers; when unemployment is up to the Depression year levels. They impose an additional 1.5 payroll tax which can only affect the employees in the reduction of jobs or in the reduction of salaries or wages or in the increase of prices to the consumers making Manitoba less competitive with other provinces and other parts of this world. That's what he cites, Mr. Speaker, to demonstrate how well this government is doing.

They introduce first contract legislation at a time when all of these things are occurring, when what Manitoba really requires, Mr. Speaker, is an increase in employment opportunities. Mr. Speaker, they talk about their Career Related Employment Program which is not, in any way, going to create the same number of jobs as our program created. They are creating 1,500 jobs; for the same amount, we created 5,000 jobs. They are spending double the amount of money. They won't create any more than 3,000 jobs at double the expenditures that we were involved in. Mr. Speaker, meanwhile, there are more and more people being laid off or unemployed than will ever be employed through their Student Employment Program. They cling to their criteria under this particular program at a time when not only young people, but people of all ages would be happy to find employment opportunities of any kind.

Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, the Premier of this province says he's amazed at how well his government is doing. Mr. Speaker, again it is simply inconceivable that he would make such a statement, but perhaps it's not inconceivable when we consider statements that he's made in the past. The promises that he has made, Mr. Speaker, that have been referred to in this House, I know have been cited by a number of members of this House, but they simply must be emphasized time and time and time again in order to remind the people of Manitoba as to how this First Minister has betrayed the people of Manitoba. He talks about keeping faith with the people of Manitoba when he said, Mr. Speaker, "We can turn around the harsh economic circumstances of the past four years." Since then, since his election, we have heard nothing from him other than complaining, making excuses, blaming the Federal Government, blaming President Reagan and blaming the world-wide economy. He never said anything about that, Mr. Speaker, when he made this statement that "we can turn around the harsh economic circumstances of the past year."

"No Manitobans will lose their homes or farms due to high interest rates," Mr. Speaker. Would he put that to the people of Manitoba who have indeed lost their homes and farms due to high interest rates? "Together we can build a great future; that's a promise we can guarantee." We know now what the clear choice is for Manitobans, Mr. Speaker. It's to have your real property taxes, Mr. Speaker, doubled in one year over what they were for four years; it's to have the second or third highest liquor price increases in Canada, resulting in a loss of employment in Manitoba at one of the major distillers that a former Progressive Conservative Government was able to attract to Manitoba.

"A Clear Choice for Manitobans," Mr. Speaker, means a 1.5 payroll tax which is going to result in

decreased employment opportunities, more bankruptcies, increased costs to consumers and will affect virtually everything that is exempt under a retail sales Act and is affecting the churches, the nonprofit agencies throughout this country.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, although they exempt the public schools - perhaps rightfully during this year - at least make it not effective until the 1st of this year, they tax the independent schools in this province. I'd like, Mr. Speaker, the Premier of this province to indicate to me and to members of the House what the difference is in consideration of those two educational systems, when the independent schools follow the criteria and the guidelines imposed by the public educational system.

They continually talk and will not admit to exempt municipalities and school divisions. They're going to make it effective upon them, beginning January 1st of 1983 and then they're going to give them a grant. They're going to cause them to go through the administrative machinations and work that will be necessary to collect it, to pay it over, to receive it back, which is entirely unnecessary and just an added burden to municipalities in schools divisions throughout this province. But that's what "A Clear Choice for Manitobans" means, Mr. Speaker, although the First Minister didn't indicate that in his promises which he made in his election.

He was going to take action to get Manitoba's troubled economy moving again and he was going to restore vitality to the provincial economy. Mr. Speaker, the electorate in Manitoba now knows what faith they can have in the statements of this First Minister, particularly when they look at what is really happening and he says that he's amazed at how well his government is doing.

Mr. Speaker, he talked about housing and we see the lowest number of housing starts that have ever probably been recorded in Manitoba's history. We saw yesterday a long-time builder, Raymond Massey Builders, an experienced, long-time builder in the City of Winnipeg particularly, who is in great difficulty. He may have thought that the Premier was going to do something about this, because they were going to take steps to relieve the interest burden facing families buying a home, because that's what he said, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, he may have counted on that promise from the First Minister. We've seen nothing on that, Mr. Speaker. He probably also saw that the Premier said that the burden of education taxes which often fall unfairly on low income homeowners would be shifted away from property taxes. We did that over four years, but in one year that low income homeowner, living in a home assessed at \$7,000 in the Winnipeg School Division, has had his taxes more than doubled than what it was over four years under a Progressive Conservative Government. The number of promises, Mr. Speaker, go on and on.

The Manitoba NDP believe working people deserve job security in a workplace. Mr. Speaker, we went through the Estimates with the Minister of Labour. He said that wasn't a priority and that he hadn't even looked at it yet. Manitoba New Democrats would provide security from layoffs. We've seen the largest number of layoffs, Mr. Speaker, that have ever been experienced in this province and what have they done

about it?

Mr. Speaker, we see the great concern however of the Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board who, on March 25 of this year in Estimates, said within two weeks he would file on this table in this Legislature his summary of the private investigation into the Workers Compensation Board, March 25, Mr. Speaker, some 9 or 10 or 11 weeks ago, whatever the exact number is. We have heard the Ombudsman's comments upon the kind of report that the Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board undertook. The Ombudsman clearly wanted a public inquiry at which the allegations made against the Board could be publicly heard.

Those allegations were made publicly, Mr. Speaker, against the Workers Compensation. All of the employees of the Board had to receive public criticism, Mr. Speaker, yet the Minister ordered a private inquiry and now he's going to give us some day, probably not before this Legislature ends, Mr. Speaker, he's going to probably keep that document, his amended version, his censored version, in his drawer desk until some time after the Legislative Session ends and then he's going to bring it out one day when he's not subject to questions during question period from members on this side; that's when we'll probably receive his amended version, Mr. Speaker. But that's the kind of concern that they have demonstrated while in government as opposed to what they said when they were on this side and we could all imagine the great concern the Minister would have had while he was on this side of the House over allegations against the Workers Compensation Board and what he would have said had a Minister in our government cancelled a public inquiry and then undertook to file a summary of that report within two weeks in the Legislature and then some 9 or 10 weeks later that summary hadn't even been filed yet in the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen the statements that the city was raising the prices of essential services, such as ambulances. Well, what did they do about that? The ambulance fees were increased 25 percent this year. Did they do anything about that? No they didn't, Mr. Speaker.

In fact, on another matter, I asked the Minister of Natural Resources the other day, he raised park fees 25 or 30 percent. I didn't ask him to reduce it for everybody. I just said to him, Mr. Speaker, would he provide some support or some relief for senior citizens using camp park grounds and fees. He said, no, this increase is going to be applied to everyone equally. Not even the low-income senior citizens of this province will get any relief from the 25 to 35 percent increase in park fees and campground fees from the Minister of Natural Resources. Mr. Speaker, the list goes on and on and on, the promises made and the promises broken, that's the clear choice for Manitobans under an NDP government, Mr. Speaker.

We have seen the actions of the Minister of Community Services and I want to say now, a couple of weeks ago there were news reports quoting the Executive Director of the Children's Aid Society saying some 57 children in this province where adoptions were being held up because of the moratorium placed by the Minister of Community Services and this government on their adoptions. I asked him at that time in

this House if he would lift that moratorium and he refused. Mr. Speaker. The Executive Director has said, you can't take these 57 children and put them up on a bookshelf like a piece of jewellery and expect them to just exist until the moratorium is resolved. Mr. Speaker, I would once again, through this Legislature, ask the Minister of Community Services to give that matter some serious, thoughtful, compassionate consideration.

There are some 57 children, at least as of the time the Executive Director of the Children's Aid Society was speaking whose opportunities to live, as one of the delegations had put it, in a loving family home rather than being moved from one institution to another, whose opportunity for development as a child and a member of a family is being jeopardized wholly, Mr. Speaker, and I can't condone or excuse the actions of the Minister with the position he has taken. It may very well be that in the long term the Indian population of this province, the Native population, will be able to develop procedures and homes for children of Native descent and if they can, well and good. But that's something that they have said in their briefs to Judge Kimelman's Committee, it can't be done in the short-term, they need time to do that. In the meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, I don't think the children who are being affected by this moratorium should have their lives jeopardized in that manner.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do now have a clear choice for Manitobans. At least Manitobans know what that clear choice for Manitobans is. The Premier, Mr. Speaker, when he says he can't understand how well his government has done in their first six months of office has made one of the most unbelievable statements, I think, in the history of politics in this province when one considers the disastrous economy that has resulted and the effects on the economy that have resulted from this government's action in raising taxes and in their anti-development, anti-private sector philosophy. The workers of this province, Mr. Speaker, will rue the day they ever voted this government in.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, J. Storie: If there are no further comments.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for Flin Flon in the Chair.

SUPPLY - EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

MR. CHAIRMAN, J. Storie: Committee will come to order. We are continuing with the Estimates of the Executive Council, continuing with the Minister's Salary - the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Chairman, as I said at the conclusion of the last Committee meeting when we were discussing the Executive Council Estimates, in particular the salary of the First Minister, I wasn't attempting to make a big thing of it, but there were a number of weeks went by after the government came into office when very little if anything occurred and one of the first announcements we heard from this government was the changing of the colour of the license

plates from red, white and blue to red, white and black. I renew the question. Could the First Minister give me the rationale for making that weighty decision which cost the taxpayers a bit of money?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that the Leader of the Opposition pose the different questions that he has in mind and I'll bank them as has been the normal case in past years and respond to them at one time.

HON. S. LYON: I would be quite happy to wait for the answer for that. Then we'll go onto another topic.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1. (a)—pass;

HON. S. LYON: No, we're waiting for answers, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, unfortunately, the Leader of the Opposition obviously didn't hear clearly. I am going to carry the practice that indeed the Leader of the Opposition did last year when he was Premier. I remember the Minister responsible for Mines in banking some of these questions rather than getting up and down each time. So, if the Leader of the Opposition would like to proceed through his questions and I'll deal with them in the way that has been done in the past.

HON. S. LYON: The question is very simply, Mr. Chairman, what was the rationale for changing the colour on the licence plates in Manitoba and the cost?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Deputy Chairman, as I indicated, I will answer that along with other questions the Leader of the Opposition will have for me as we proceed, at one time.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Chairman, I am quite happy to give my honourable friend a few more questions that he can't answer because that's the posture that he adopted the other night with respect to the whole resource question when it was demonstrated in this House, in a way in which I have never seen a First Minister of this House have to backtrack, that the statements that he made about resource giveaways were a bunch of electoral claptrap which he can't sustain by any scintilla of evidence that he can call whatsoever. So, if the First Minister feels more comfortable in banking questions, we'll let him bank the questions.

Our concern, Mr. Chairman, is hearing the First Minister answer a question because he's done very little of that during the course of the Estimates. It doesn't matter if he wants to change the procedure; that's immaterial to me. What we want, what the people of Manitoba want, are some answers to questions. If the First Minister, if he has to wait for his advisers to trundle in or for the Minister of Mines to bend his ear and give him misinformation, that's his problem, not our problem. But, we're quite happy to give him a few

questions and see how he can attempt to answer them.

Let me call his mind, Mr. Chairman, to the brief of the Annual Legislative Presentation to the First Minister and the government on the 1st of June, 1982 and let me ask him some questions, based upon Page 24 of that agreement.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Which brief?

HON. S. LYON: MFL, Manitoba Federation of Labour. Somebody across the way said, a good brief. There will be varying opinions on that. I've got in front of me some of the previous briefs that they gave which were laced with misinformation, laced with a lot of rhetorical, ideological nonsense. I must say that, by comparison, this one is slightly more sensible than some that I have read in the past, but still they do have their wild moments.

On Page 24, talking about Northern Development, this statement is made and I read from the brief, "A reduction in Hydro rates for Northern residents which are under Provincial Government control would be a good starting point. A study of Northern prices and how they relate to transportation costs should be undertaken."

I wonder if the First Minister could tell the House, in view of the statements that his Minister of Mines and Energy has been making about taking off the Hydro rate freeze which he then decided to keep on for one more year, whether the reduction in Hydro rates for Northern residents which is being touted by the Manitoba Federation of Labour in its brief and the study of Northern prices and how they relate to transportation costs, whether these two matters are seriously under consideration by the government, mildly under consideration by the government, or being rejected by the government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: Mr. Chairman, it sounds here this is the Leader of the Opposition's final question.

HON. S. LYON: No, it isn't, Mr. Chairman, we're waiting for the First Minister to answer.

MR. S. ASHTON: I have some comments I want to make, but if the Leader of the Opposition has more questions, I'll be glad to save my comments.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, maybe I should again explain that, rather than jumping up and down, I am taking careful notes of the questions. We'll answer at some appropriate point before 4:30 as to the questions posed.

HON. S. LYON: Fine, Mr. Chairman, as long as the First Minister is now guaranteeing that he's going to give answers and not shilly-shally all over the place as he has done heretofore.

Referring to the same page of that brief, Page 24, the title of the paragraph is, "Resumption of Hydro development" and I quote from the Manitoba Federation of Labour Brief, "Manitoba is rich in Hydro power which

we could be using to create our own energy resource boom. A previous government ceased construction of all planned Manitoba Hydro projects, thereby cutting off our prospects of building up a large scale generating capacity in a world running short of energy." To carry on, "We urge the Provincial Government to commence construction of power generating facilities on the Burntwood, Churchill and Nelson River systems without delay, beginning with the much awaited Limestone Generating Plant. At the same time, we should embark on an aggressive marketing program to export our surplus electrical energy and to induce Hydro using industries to locate in our province. Construction of roads and other infrastructure into the areas could be undertaken immediately."

Mr. Chairman, a series of questions arising out of that: Has the government made a commitment to the Manitoba Federation of Labour, as it did to the people of Manitoba, that it was going to resume Hydro construction immediately as a priority item of its policy and if so, when can we expect the announcement of that to take place?

No. 2, if that is not the plan of the government, can the First Minister tell us what response he made to the Manitoba Federation of Labour when they said, first of all, that (a) a previous government ceased construction of all planned Manitoba projects? Did he say, Mr. Chairman, to the members of the Federation of Labour that it wasn't a previous government, it was the previous government of which he was a member, even though he and his colleagues have been misleading the people of Manitoba for a good number of years by trying to imply that it was the Conservative Government elected in 1977 that had stopped construction. It was the Schreyer Government when the First Minister was a member of it that stopped construction.

Did the Minister interrupt the reading of the brief of the Manitoba Federation of Labour and say - well now chaps, you know, the game's over; we've been called on it because in the prospectus we finally had to admit that it was the previous Schreyer Government that stopped construction on Limestone, so we can't use that one anymore - did the Premier stop the Manitoba Federation of Labour in the midst of their brief and tell them that?

Then secondly, if he is in agreement, Mr. Chairman, with respect to the immediate construction of Hydro plants at Limestone and so on, is he then discarding the advice that was given to the committee and to the House by the Manitoba Hydro officials when they appeared just a matter of a few weeks ago in which they said it would require an agreement on the Western Inter-Tie to be undertaken before any new capital construction could take place at Limestone.

Now, is the First Minister saying now that he's going to abandon his election promise which was to start immediately; is he saying he's going to agree with the Manitoba Federation which is to start immediately? Which of the two choices is he going to follow or is he going to follow the sensible choice which is to get on with the negotiations for the Inter-Tie with Saskatchewan and Alberta, thereby providing the market in place for the resumption of construction of Limestone? Is the First Minister, Mr. Chairman, aware of the existence of the capital construction graph that was provided by Manitoba Hydro to all members of the

Committee on Public Utilities showing that unless the Western Inter-Tie was completed, the agreement was completed and Limestone given a go-ahead, that the probable date of any new construction in Manitoba would be 1988? Is the Premier aware of that fact and if so, Mr. Chairman, what was his answer and what will his answer be to the Manitoba Federation of Labour with respect to those matters?

Now again, Mr. Chairman, continuing on the same brief on page 19 of that brief, the Manitoba Federation of Labour made this statement - they were talking about industrial strategy: "The third step is to determine which planning instruments could be used most effectively to implement the actions necessary to improve our performance. Usually if an industrial strategy gets this far at all it flounders at this point. The reason is that most governments are blindly committed to a private enterprise economy and their conception is limited to bribing private firms to do the job. Unfortunately, private enterprise can be counted on to pursue its own interests first and foremost and to structure the economy accordingly. Consequently, industrial strategy becomes limited to making marginal adjustments in the patterns of industry which suit the private sector."

I would like to know what the Premier's recent reaction was to that piece of nonsense that appeared in the Manitoba Federation brief. Did he, as Premier Roblin once did, stop the person who was reading the brief and say, "Do you really believe that nonsense?" Did he have the gumption to do that, or was it because of the people that he and his government are enthralled to, that he just let all of that nonsense move through the air like a piece of ectoplasm and nod knowingly and nicely as though that really made sense? Does he feel that his government, when they are trying to stimulate industry in Manitoba, are bribing firms to do the job; does he really feel that? If so, does he not have an obligation, Mr. Chairman, to the people of Manitoba to say I reject that kind of statement from the Manitoba Federation of Labour; my government, predecessor governments and I hope successor governments are not in the business of bribing private firms to do the job and that kind of left-wing rhetoric has no place in civilized discussion in terms of improving the economic future of the Province of Manitoba. We would be interested to know, Mr. Chairman, what the First Minister's reaction was when that piece of errant nonsense was read to him.

Mr. Chairman, on page 20 of the same brief another piece of interesting information and suggestion was made by the Manitoba Federation of Labour to the NDP Government of Manitoba under the heading of "Planning," and I'm reading in part from the paragraph and I quote:

"In other cases, funds can be provided to help people launch independent co-operative enterprises. A development tax could make funds available to enterprises which conform to industrial development plans. In some cases, public enterprise is the most appropriate vehicle for getting things done. It often provides the only effective means for coping with our distorted patterns of investment and making available the capital needed to build our economy. Other options might include a government financial institution to make money available for projects which conform to gov-

ernment development goals. Of course, infrastructure, research and marketing support can be a very effective way to influence patterns of development in the provinces."

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to know from the First Minister what reaction he and his colleagues gave to the Federation of Labour when they were recommending a new tax, a development tax, against presumably business in Manitoba and all of the citizens in Manitoba. Did he tell them that he thought that was foolhardy, that the people of Manitoba were already taxed almost to the margin now because of the Budget that his colleague brought in just a few weeks ago, or did he tell them that he concurred in these rather pie-in-the-sky utopian suggestions that were obviously written by some of the apparatchiks or left-wing hirelings that they have at the Manitoba Federation of Labour, who do want to change the makeup and order of society in our country, want to change the free enterprise society to God knows what, but to something different from the system that they advocate.

What was his reaction - I hear the Minister of Agriculture wants to say something — (Interjection) — The Minister of Agriculture wants to know, Mr. Chairman, if our private economy system, mixed economy that we have in Manitoba and in Canada has worked so well, why are we in this problem? Well, I would say that if a man who is a member of an Executive Council, as a allegedly responsible Minister of Government, has to ask that question, then he should resign, not only his portfolio, I think he should resign his seat because he has obviously come into this House bereft of fundamental information that — (Interjection) — Mr. Chairman, he's saying that the private mixed economy system doesn't work.

Well, I have invited him on previous occasions when he was talking about the land system he would like to see in this land, which is on the Russian system; he doesn't think the private ownership system works. He now says he doesn't think the private mixed economy doesn't work. There are other places in the world, Mr. Chairman, where his kind of system is in place and I think we could take up a collection around the House here, buy him a one-way ticket to one of those places and see how long he would last there under the kind of controlled economy where government makes all the decisions and government collects all the development taxes; government says there will be this industry built; government says there will be a gum store here at which Mr. Uruski can shop as and when we've got some goods in it and so on.

If he wants that kind of a society I think that's fine for him, but don't try to will that onto the people of Manitoba using the alleged social democratic alternative that he belongs to, Mr. Chairman, as the vehicle for imposing that kind of tyranny upon us. If my honourable friend wants to interject some more we'll be happy to hear him talk about Russia and some of his other favourite economic systems, some of the other economic and land holding systems that he seems to favour so much.

Mr. Chairman, I'm not here defending Argentina, Chile or anything else, and unlike the Member for Thompson, I've got no pre-occupation with El Salvador and so on. I think we've got quite enough to do in this House looking after the responsibilities of the

people of Manitoba and if my honourable friends opposite, and the First Minister has been one of them, he wants to trundle down to Chile and weep over the bones of Allende, that's his problem. If the Member for Thompson is all concerned about El Salvador and what's happening to the left-wingers there, that's his problem. If the Minister of Agriculture wants to get upset because we haven't got the same land holding system as they have in Russia, that's his problem but, Mr. Chairman, we're here to look after the people of Manitoba, not to try to inflict some kind of left-wing nonsense upon otherwise free citizens who would lose their freedom if people such as the Minister of Agriculture ever really had the power to implement some of the funny ideas that they hold.

I want to know from the First Minister, Mr. Chairman, what his response was when this kind of nonsense was spoken to him about a development tax, which would then be in the hands of government so that government could take the tax and the Minister of Economic Development, with her superior wisdom of business in this province, could then say, "We're not going to have a plant in Steinbach or Morden; we're going to have a plant in the Interlake, even though that's uneconomic for the province." That's the kind of use that I would imagine from statements of hers I've read in Hansard that she would probably like to have. She would like to have that kind of power.

What I would like the First Minister to reflect upon at the same time, Mr. Chairman, when he's giving us a response to this rather interesting brief that he received from his mentors of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, the people who, along with the Canadian Labour Congress, supplied 500 full-time workers and then turned out a brag piece about it and sent it all over Canada and everybody has seen copies of that; so we know that the First Minister has a number of debts to pay to the Canadian Labour Congress and the Manitoba Federation of Labour. That is why when they make even stupid statements and nonsensical statements - and I'm going to deal with a few more - about Hydro and about their revisionist version of when Hydro construction was cut off and so on, that we have to pay more attention to this nonsense because the First Minister does; he is enthralled to them. That's why when they make a suggestion about something that they want to see happen in Manitoba - across the way you can almost hear the heels click - and say, "Yes master, that's what we think is a good idea." If that isn't the case, then will the First Minister be telling us that he related to the members of the Federation of Labour, or will in a written response to them, that it's impossible to start Hydro construction at Limestone now because of the reasons that all of us are aware of, because we have to have the Western Inter-Tie and that it's impossible to do some of the things that they asked for because they are nonsensical and they would not be in the public interest of the people of Manitoba.

All I want him to do is to tell us that he made those statements or statements to that effect, so that we will be freed from the suspicion that when we read in the Manitoba Federation of Labour brief certain suggestions, that those suggestions can almost be guaranteed within a year to become matters of government policy as we are seeing now with first contract legisla-

tion and some of the other matters that my honourable friends have great contortions and ideological problems with that really don't affect the public interest of Manitoba, but they are matters that are of concern to them with the hang-ups that they have in this life.

Mr. Chairman, I would like the First Minister to dilate upon that particular quote from the brief, as well, and whether or not - the bribing quote in particular - I'd like to hear his comment about that. —(Interjection)— Pardon? The bribing comment at the bottom of page 19: "The reason is that most governments are blindly committed to a private enterprise economy and their conception is limited to bribing private firms to do the job."

Mr. Chairman, those are all the questions I have in mind at the present moment. I won't guarantee that they're all the questions I have, but they are all I have in mind at the present moment.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the questions that have been raised and it gives me an opportunity to deal at some length with the points that have been raised by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Chairman, I don't really care much whether the licence plates are red, white and blue or black, white and red or any other particular colour. The information we have is that indeed the change did not involve additional expenditure. In fact, the Minister of Transportation informed me last night that a little money was saved because apparently there was some paint that had been available that would not otherwise have been so, if anything, there was some degree of saving.

Personally I like the new colours, black, white and red. I must say that maybe we made a mistake in not requiring orange to be part and parcel of the new licence plate, Mr. Chairman. If the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting that there was some sort of political motivation then maybe we ought to have had orange. I'm not aware of black, white and red being the New Democratic Party colours. I'm quite satisfied with the colours of the plates and I believe I can say honestly to the Leader of the Opposition if I've received more than one or two letters of complaint in connection with the licence plates in my office, I would be surprised, so I don't sense that it is an issue of tremendous anxiety on the part of Manitobans. —(Interjection)—

I could ask the same question why the previous government was going to proceed with red, white and blue. They like red, white and blue and obviously we liked the nature of the colours that we're proceeding with. If a poll was taken of Manitobans I doubt that there would be much difference as to their choice of colours.

I'm just a little disappointed, Mr. Chairman, at the tone of the remarks by the Leader of the Opposition. The Manitoba Federation of Labour represents 74,000 workers and that reflects many many households in the Province of Manitoba from every length and breadth of the province. I think that a brief from the Manitoba Federation of Labour should be treated with the same respect as indeed a brief from other organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce or the Manitoba Farmers Bureau. Labour, farm, business, all are important partners within the development of the Province of Manitoba. So I was somewhat taken aback

by some of the language that the Leader of the Opposition used; "a brief, in their wild moments, written by left wing hirelings." Mr. Chairman, that does reflect very much on the President of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, the executive members of the Manitoba Federation of Labour and indeed the entire membership of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, if it's being suggested that left wing hirelings are putting together the policy of the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

It may be that the Leader of the Opposition, not following matters pertaining to Labour, is not aware that Labour discuss policy thrusts by way of democratic convention. Indeed, there can often be some very heated debates pertaining to policy development, in fact, I am pleased that Labour is one of the democratic organizations, as is the Chamber of Commerce at their conventions, democratically working out policy, policy indeed that they present to governments regardless of the party stripe. I do not believe, Mr. Chairman, and I would warn all my Ministers to avoid that kind of language in referring to briefs that are submitted by democratic organizations within the Province of Manitoba. Groups, whether or not we agree with those groups, are trying to make their contribution toward assisting government in the development of policies and programs that will ensure this is a better province. That doesn't say that you have to agree with every line in any given brief, but I do believe that briefs of this nature demand respect and serious consideration.

I may have had some disagreements with the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce brief, or the Canadian Manufacturers' brief, or the Canadian Independent Businessmen's Association brief that was submitted not so long ago, or indeed with the Manitoba Federation of Labour brief, but I'm not going to treat those briefs with disrespect; I am not going to accuse those organizations of having had their briefs written by some sort of hirelings, whether they be right wing hirelings or left wing hirelings. No, I want to treat those briefs as earnest and sincere attempts; whether it be the farm community, whether it be the business community, whether it be the labour community or any other community in Manitoba as an earnest effort to assist government in what is, admittedly, a very difficult time.

I want to make it very clear to the Leader of the Opposition I do not pretend to have all the answers in working out the solutions to the very tough times that we're confronted with now in Manitoba. I know it and I'm sure the Leader of the Opposition recognizes that; I would hope the Leader of the Opposition would also recognize that he doesn't have all the answers. So that I do look to organizations, and to people from whence they come, to make contributions to a government, whether it be indeed a government of the stripe of the former Leader of the Opposition while he was Premier or this government.

I am going to encourage those briefs to be presented and I'm going to also encourage, Mr. Chairman, for those briefs to be listened to with some respect because it is my understanding, and I was not present so I say this only on the basis of reports, that there was such a hassle and such a tangle between the Manitoba Federation of Labour and the former First Minister of

this province and his Cabinet colleagues that the Manitoba Federation of Labour did not feel comfortable in coming forth and having an exchange last year. Instead of an exchange, they were forced to mail their brief to members of the other Cabinet, rather than coming forward and saying, look, would you listen; rather than coming to the former government and saying, look, we have a brief; we have some ideas. You may or may not agree with us, but would you listen at least for an hour, hour-and-a-half while we read to you our views. If indeed the Leader of the Opposition would have had me interrupting to hassle and to argue on the scores of points that he has raised during my Estimates with the Manitoba Federation of Labour, it would have just been a state of anarchy.

I'm assuming, therefore, when the Leader of the Opposition is criticizing me for not having jumped up a score or a score-and-a-half - how many times it is already, I don't know - and to have argued with the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce between 10:30 and 12:00 o'clock, in fact we wouldn't have gotten past page 3 of their brief. I can understand, therefore, why last year the Manitoba Federation of Labour would have chosen not to have come forward because what is the point? If you've got a brief and you've got some ideas and you're not going to be able to proceed for hassle, then why would you come forward?

So, Mr. Chairman, there is a very distinctive difference, I suppose, in approach as we've witnessed by way of the suggested tactics that the Leader of the Opposition has proposed for us this afternoon. I think, from time to time, we do want to take exception when we have the time when people are presenting their briefs. We do want to pose questions for clarification, but to get involved in a dogfight, whether it be the Chamber of Commerce, the National Farmers' Union, the Farm Bureau of Manitoba, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association or the Manitoba Federation of Labour every time they present a brief, I don't know why I would want to engage in that kind of unnecessary confrontation.

We will advise the Manitoba Federation of Labour, advise other groups, where we share views and where we differ view-wise and there will be areas of differences. Obviously, one we're dealing with right now on Labour legislation where the Manitoba Federation of Labour is unhappy that we are not proceeding vis-a-vis anti-scab legislation. That is understandable; they're representing the point of view of the Manitoba Federation of Labour. We've explained to the Manitoba Federation of Labour it was our view that we ought not to proceed. So there will be differences from time to time as there is with other groups.

The Leader of the Opposition asked me whether or not we were considering a reduction for northern rates for Northerners. This matter has come up from time to time. We are not presently reviewing the rates pertaining to Northern Manitoba on Hydro. It is my understanding that we are reviewing, through the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs though, the very high rates pertaining to gas in Northern communities, but as at the present time, there is no review under way pertaining to northern Hydro rates.

I would like to read to the Leader of the Opposition comments that were made by myself during the campaign regarding Hydro policy. I think, Mr. Chairman,

we are proceeding in line and consistent with the policy that we announced during the campaign and we announced to Manitobans, just in case there's any suggestion across the way that we're proceeding in a way that is inconsistent. "The New Democratic Party Government will proceed with immediate orderly development of the Limestone Power Station. The first phase of development will be Northern development and training programs to ensure maximum benefits for the North and Northerners from Hydro development"; that is the first stage.

"We will pursue all market possibilities, not merely those offered by the east-west Grid arrangement." Further on, I had said, "The New Democratic Party will not undermine Manitoba's long-term Hydro prospects through hasty, election-oriented negotiations. We will explore all markets and not just two. As a resource owned by the people of Manitoba, Hydro power should not be sold for a period of decades at its cost of production or cost of production plus a modest sum; it should be marketed at its value in an energy short world. The pricing formula to be pursued by New Democratic Party Government, with regard to sale of Hydro, would include the assurance of a profit to the people of Manitoba from out-of-province sales"; consistent with what is taking place at the present time.

My Minister responsible for Northern Affairs is in the process of completing arrangements in respect to the extension of the Northlands Agreement. A component of that Northlands Agreement would involve training and skill development in regard to Northern peoples so that they could participate in future Hydro construction in regard to Limestone.

It is very, very important that we not proceed with the Hydro construction in a way that is at variance with my statement of October 27, 1981 until such time as we ensure maximum Northern participation in the employment. In fact, there is way above average, as the Member for Thompson knows, unemployment factor in Northern Manitoba. There is a lack of skills because of unfortunate neglect in training. I am not blaming this on the previous Conservative administration; it goes back many, many years. I would hope that we could make some dent in training, in skill development, so that Northerners could maximize their involvement in regard to the resumption of Limestone when it takes place.

Number two, I indicated that we will pursue all market possibilities, not merely those offered by east-west Grid development. That's exactly, Mr. Chairman, what we are doing at the present time. I would like to re-assure the Leader of the Opposition, we are proceeding with the negotiations to insure an agreement of satisfactory terms to Manitobans in regard to the east-west Inter-Tie. Those discussions are continuing; they've been interrupted briefly because of the Saskatchewan election and, properly, the new Premier of Saskatchewan has asked for time to review the file so he can be acquainted with the issues.

At the same time, Mr. Chairman, we are looking at other markets, not just west but east and south. There is an interest south of Manitoba insofar as developing market potential and obtaining supply from Manitoba and that has been expressed, from immediately south of here all the way to California, that's expressing substantial interest because of their very difficult

supply situation that they are confronted with in the State of California. So that, Mr. Chairman, just so there isn't any doubt, what we are doing is quite consistent with our statement during the campaign dated October 27, 1981.

The Leader of the Opposition felt I should have interjected to have pointed out to the Manitoba Federation of Labour that, when they referred to the previous government cancelling, that indeed this was an unfair treatment of the previous Conservative administration in Manitoba, that I should have pointed out that's not so. It was, I suppose, the Leader of the Opposition suggesting the former Schreyer Government cancelled the Hydro development in respect to Manitoba. I would refer the Leader of the Opposition to - as he's referring some statements to me the other day in respect to statements by officials in committee - the statement of April 2, 1981 by Mr. Blachford, pertaining to - (Interjection) - well, I'll be interested in seeing any correction. I don't know how there could be correction to fact.

In 1977, there was a review as to the need. The project was not cancelled and I would be interested in any reference that the Leader of the Opposition has to any correction. I believe it was in 1978 when it was definitely shut down, they definitely began to wind it up. That was the time that the decision was made to cancel. Let's not confuse that decision with an earlier decision that was made in September, I believe it was, of 1977 to review the needs of Manitoba Hydro and to ascertain the source for additional supply, but this Hydro development in itself was not cancelled - let's be very clear here - until 1978. There are Hydro Minutes that can be referred to in that respect. So I don't know on what basis I would have interrupted the Manitoba Federation of Labour presenters to have corrected them on that statement.

There is some reference to abandoned election promise; I've dealt with that. The statement of October 27, 1981 is quite consistent with what we are doing at the present time, orderly development. There are job-training programs that are being developed, a maximized Northern employment, and thirdly, to increase the numbers of the market potential, precisely as what was said during the campaign.

You know, I am not going to get into every debate in respect to every line in the brief. The Leader of the Opposition - I don't have the brief in front of me - refers to some comment about bribing private firms. I suspect - (Interjection) - oh, are we not going straight on?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 4:30, I'm interrupting the proceedings.

Call in the Speaker.

HON. S. LYON: We're prepared to waive and go on to 5:30, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall we adjourn the House or should we just proceed in committee?

HON. H. PAWLEY: If it's agreeable, I would just suggest that we proceed right on as we are.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBER' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time being 4:30, Private Members' Hour.

The Honourable Government House Leader

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, there is an agreement, and we regret that we were unable to communicate this to you earlier, that we continue on in committee. I would assume that if matters before the committee are not concluded at 5:30, continue this evening and subject to an agreement from the other side of the House that Committee will continue, I would be prepared to move that the House stand adjourned, seconded by the First Minister that the House adjourn, on the understanding that Committee will continue.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, we're agreeable to the committee continuing to the conclusion of the Estimates before us, the Supplementary Supply of course, will come at another time. We're agreeable to continuing in the Estimate discussion that we're in at the present time.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 10:00 a.m. tomorrow morning (Friday). It is the understanding that the members will continue in Committee of Supply.

SUPPLY - EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (Cont'd)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, if I could now proceed, there was reference made to a comment in the MFL brief in regard to governments bribing private firms. I, unfortunately, don't have the brief at present, but certainly there have been numerous instances of that and the Churchill Forest Industry example would be a prime example of where governments, by way of the overly generous concessions made to private firms ended up in the history of this province in tremendous and horrendous nightmares, where millions and millions dollars were lost to the taxpayers of the Province of Manitoba because of bribing - maybe it's felt that is too strong a term - but certainly the overenticing of a private company into the Province of Manitoba at terms which were giveaway and were reckless and were contrary to the public interest of Manitoba and there's comment about paying it out.

Mr. Chairman, I'm glad to have an opportunity to put this on the record. I remember very well, because I was a member of the Treasury Board when discussions were made and I said, why do we have to pay this money out. Mr. Chairman, there was legal opinion from some very, very distinguished people from the legal profession, in fact, one that is now a Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench in the Province of Manitoba and I believe two members are presently judges

of the Court of Queen's Bench, advising the government of the day that if we failed to pay out, we'd be in breach of the contract that had been signed by the previous Conservative Government. We would have been responsible for damages that would have amounted to millions upon millions of dollars.

So, Mr. Chairman, the monies were not paid out blindly. They were paid out because of legal coercion that the previous Schreyer Government felt in the Province of Manitoba on the basis of, I think, some of the finest legal advice that the then Schreyer Government could have received in the Province of Manitoba. Is the Leader of the Opposition suggesting that we ought to have ignored that legal advice, that we should have ripped the legal advice up and discarded it in the garbage tins of our offices as not being worth the appropriate consideration? I know the Leader of the Opposition, being a person of jurisprudence himself, would not for a moment recommend that we ignore that legal advice. When I'm a member of a Treasury Board, what I try to do is exclude myself from the legal; I think that's very, very important, that we not try to make legal decisions when, even though we be lawyers around the Treasury Board, that we rely upon some of the finest legal minds that we can obtain. I am satisfied that we did have two of the finest legal minds in the Province of Manitoba giving us advice in those days.

MR. L. SHERMAN: If you thought you'd caught a burglar, why did you pay the burglar?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, we knew it was a bad deal. We had hoped that some way or other something could be salvaged. Under the legal obligations that we were confronted with - and I don't have the figures in front of me - but it was going to involve us in the payment of millions upon millions of dollars in damages if we had breached the contract immediately upon our being sworn into office on July 15, 1969.

Let us not permit members across the way, members that, indeed, sat on the front bench during the former Weir and Roblin administration, now to wiggle themselves out of responsibility for what was one of the darkest and most horrendous experiences that the people of Manitoba were subjected to, let us not for a moment. I know that the Leader of the Opposition signed the original agreement. There was some confusion on his part for awhile as to whether he had actually signed the agreement. I remember the debate in 1977 when I believe it was Mr. Huband that was then the leader of the Liberal Party, was able to pull from the then Leader of the Opposition in the all-party debate of leaders an admission that he had forgotten signing the particular agreement. I can recall that.

Let us not at this stage, permit members across the way that must bear responsibility to wiggle out of that responsibility by saying, well, why did you pay out the money? We had a shotgun to our heads and they're saying, well, we should have ignored the shotgun that was aimed to our heads, a shotgun that was put to our heads because of the direct action of the former Weir-Roblin Government in the Province of Manitoba, yes.

The development tax, there is no consideration at the present time in respect to a development tax. I think what we do require though, is methods within

the Department of Economic Development to encourage the creation of industries and plants in many of the areas of the Province of Manitoba that suffer the greatest inequity. We have some areas of the province where there are plenty of jobs; other areas where there's heavy levels of unemployment. I would like to feel that within the next short time, I say to the Leader of the Opposition, we would develop a strategy that would encourage some reduction in some of those disparities, just as I would like to see across Canada, so that where we do have heavy unemployment, we could reduce the payment of welfare to the people within those areas of heavy unemployment by the creation of projects that would indeed provide for job creation. I do expect the Minister of Economic Development to be working in that area and I know that the Minister of Economic Development is very conscientiously examining those areas in regard to future economic strategy in the Province of Manitoba. It is those areas that we have to target in to provide the folk in those areas with some opportunity, unfortunately, after decades and decades of neglect. I'm not blaming anyone, but I would hate to spend the four years of our government in continuing that neglect; at least, we ought to be conscious of the problems in that respect. I don't know what the Leader of the Opposition - he referred to my being enthralled by the MFL —(Interjection)— in thrall to. He said that every time the MFL looked at us, we clicked our heels. I don't think those statements really require any response because unfortunately I think they reflect upon 74,000 members of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, more than any —(Interjection)— and he suggested we have debts to the Manitoba Federation of Labour. I'm not even going to spend too much time with respect to that.

This is a government that owe no debts to anyone in the Province of Manitoba. We are based upon a party that includes labour, includes farms, includes small business and pensioners, some professional people. I'm sure we have a larger proportion of working men and women in the New Democratic Party than there be in the Conservative Party. We might very well at our conventions have 35, 40 percent of our delegations that might be working men and women; I make no apology for that. I'm sure the Conservative Party would like to up the percentage of union members, people that are union members participating in their party conventions, if they have conventions.

Somebody's reminded me they don't frequently have conventions. What is it, once every six years? Once every seven years? —(Interjection)— Well, I acknowledge that and that's why we're working so hard to improve the 47. I'm working hard and I'm sure all my colleagues are working hard to make sure we go over the 50-percent mark four years from now.

There's one other point I would like to make a comment on. There was only one comment really by the Leader of the Opposition that did cause me some pain, it caused me deppain. I say this sincerely to the Leader of the Opposition, I think that if he reflects he would understand. I know I don't have to deal with this during my remarks, but I feel I must deal with this. I don't know whether the Leader of the Opposition was saying this in a light sort of way or whether he really meant it; if he didn't mean it, then I would like to hear

from him before I get into it. I don't intend to spend much time in respect to this, but he made references to a trip that I'd made to Chile that I had been there to weep over the bones of Allende and I'm not sure whether the Leader of the Opposition really meant to say that. Because I wish the Leader of the Opposition could have been with me when I met with Chilean people in the City of Winnipeg who lost so many of their loved ones, sons, brothers and others through disappearances during the coup which overthrew the democratically elected government of Allende. You know, the Leader of the Opposition has yelled "Communist" to me. —(Interjection)— I do now want to spend some time . . . —(Interjection)—

I'm going to share now a story with members of this House. I went to Chile with a 74-year-old gentleman who was unable to speak very very little English. —(Interjection)— I would appreciate now if I could have the attention of the members. A 74-year old individual that couldn't speak any English; I could speak very little Spanish. The purpose of our trip was to seek out the whereabouts of this 74-year-old Winnipeg Chilean's son who had disappeared in 1974, shortly after the Chilean coup. The father and the mother had gone through a nightmare. In fact, it was commented to me it would have been much better if what had been done in Franco Spain had been done in Chile, that socialists and so-called subversive people in the eyes of the fascist regime had been lined up against a wall and shot; at least, the loved ones would have known that they were dead. But in Chile that did not happen; people were taken out of their homes in the dark of night never to be seen again. In the course of that week, we found out what had happened to that son of that 74-year-old Chilean of Winnipeg. He had been tortured to death by a fascist custodian guard, whipping that son repeatedly. The son was naked at the time, whipping that son as that son attempted to raise a very very heavy boulder in the prison courtyard and there were witnesses to that. That's what happened, unfortunately, to the son of Mr. Fredrico Munoz who had travelled with me to Chile.

There were many others that this happened to in Chile and therefore I say to the Leader of the Opposition I think what is required at times in this House is a very clear statement about what is happening in this world, whether it be in Chile, whether it be in El Salvador, because let me tell you, 30, 35 people are killed on a daily basis in El Salvador, whether it be in Poland, whether it be in the Soviet Union, whether it be in Afghanistan. Let us condemn infringement of human rights and the taking of lives and torture. I'm not going to lengthen this, but I could tell the Leader of the Opposition about the people I'd spoken to, people that had been locked away in dark cells for 40-some days and had nearly been blinded in Chile as a form of torture. There's others that had been placed on a rack while they had been pregnant and aborted a child. So I say, let us not be too hasty in saying, well, that was all okay in Chile because it was communist. It was communist. —(Interjection)— Well, I heard a reference when I started my remarks, "Communist," when I referred to the overthrow of the democratically elected government of Allende. All that I know in respect to Chile is that there was a government that was elected by majority vote of the people; that the people had

expressed their trust in that government; that government had views - it was a socialist government, a government that wanted to bring about some fundamental changes in that country. Let me tell the Leader of the Opposition the poverty is so gross in Chile that the solutions that may be applicable in Canada are not applicable in Chile — (Interjection) — the Leader of the Opposition says "was." I've been speaking to Chilean folk that have been there recently and it's worse than ever, much worse than ever, worse to the extent that the poverty-stricken masses in Chile no longer have hope. So let us be prepared to condemn torture, disappearances and infringement of human rights whether they occur in so-called communist countries. I think that there are forms of bastardized communism in the Soviet Union. I think it's a form of bastardized communism. Let us be prepared to condemn human rights though when it occurs in fascist countries and in democratic countries, because there are democratic countries where there are serious infringements of human rights.

I wanted to comment on that because I just do not feel that hasty comments about my going to Chile with Mr. Munoz was to worship over the dead bones of Salvador Allende.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Chairman, to pick up on the last theme of the First Minister, I can assure him that on this side of the House there is never any question of condemning and indicting oppression wherever it occurs. The problem that we find very often, Mr. Chairman, with some of my honourable friend's supporters - I don't say for moment with him, because I think he is a genuinely compassionate person - is that as the old saying goes, the left is never wrong. I appreciate what he says in terms of the oppression in Afghanistan, the oppression in Hungary, the oppression in Czechoslovakia and the oppression in Poland because human oppression wherever it occurs under whatever totalitarian guise is unacceptable to us in this country. We've got to ensure that those institutions that we have in this country are not undermined and eroded by the addiction that certain people in this country have to those systems which have been proven to be the greatest enemy of individual freedoms of any system we have ever seen on the face of the earth.

I say to my honourable friend that the evidences that he gives of oppression of individuals in Chile find as much pain and as much compassion in the heart of anyone who votes for our party as they do in the heart of anyone who votes for the NDP. But, Mr. Chairman, to be kept in jail for 40 days is oppressive, it is foul and it is inimical to all we believe, but to be kept in jail for 40 years in some gulag was equally oppressive, is equally inimical and is equally foul to all that we, in this House, believe. It's when we see, Mr. Chairman, this kind of selective concern by not the First Minister necessarily, but indeed some of his colleagues from time to time about where their gaze should be cast in terms of looking for oppression. It's when we see this selective kind of oppression that they're concerned about in Chile and never hear a word about Cuba, then we begin to wonder about whether their concern is for

human dignity and individual freedom or whether their concern really, Mr. Chairman, is a concern that the left can never be criticized. That very often is the case.

We have a small evidence of that kind of double standard going on in Manitoba today. The Attorney-General in his wisdom, in his whim, decides that for reasons of his opposition, the government's opposition and everyone's opposition that I know of in Canada to the doctrine of apartheid, that he is then going to take a product of that country with which we have normal foreign and ambassadorial relations; he's going to take that product off the market in Manitoba. Well, well and good, but people have said to him in this House, fine, that's the way of government expressing its objection to tyranny, to a form of social arrangement that we would not tolerate for a moment in this country. But, Mr. Chairman, why is it only South Africa that is singled out to have its products denied or pushed off the public market in Manitoba? What about the Russian cars that are freely sold down the street here in Winnipeg, those Russian cars produced with a form of slave labour in Russia? Is my honourable friend the Attorney-General not as equally worked up about that, that those cars probably came from the labour, in some cases, of factory people who were recruited from some gulag because they had no alternative? Why have we not then equally said to the manufacturer, to the distributors of those Russian cars in Manitoba, "We don't think that in accordance with what's right for individual freedom and in accordance with the method that we hold to be honest, upright and in furtherance of individual freedom that cars produced by slave labour in a totalitarian country should be sold in our province.?" Have we heard him stand up in his place and say that? No, we haven't.

My honourable friend talks about Chile and I, Mr. Chairman, share with him the compassion that he has for the people that he accompanied and for the story of terror that he heard down there. But, Mr. Chairman, I tell him that if he had stopped off on his journey, if he had been able to stop off on his journey in Cuba and if he'd been able to interview as freely in Cuba as he apparently was in Chile, he would have heard equal stories of terror and imprisonment, whipping and killing. Why is it, Mr. Chairman, that in this great nation of Cuba under Mr. Castro who is some form of a Marxist - God knows what form - that tens of thousands of people are escaping from that country by boat, by any means possible, to get into the United States? Why? That's the question that I think that any reasoned person participating in this debate on this kind of a topic must ask. Why?

When we make comments about the left, seeming to have a blind eye to the other tyrannies around the world; that more often than not is the case. But I'm the first to absolve my honourable friend, the First Minister, because he stands in the House and has the bravery to say - I believe him when he says - and the sincerity to say that he is equally opposed to the tyranny in Afghanistan. I thank him for that because we are too, just as we're equally opposed to people being imprisoned, having their doors knocked on at night, thrown into some form of prison and never being heard of again in all parts of the world regardless of what regime it's under.

If we read Solzhenitsyn and if we benefit from what Solzhenitsyn has said to us, we know that the tyranny and the generational tyranny that has been carried on in Russia since 1917 is probably the greatest example of tyrannical mass genocide that has been seen on the face of the earth. What are the words that Solzhenitsyn uses about the oppression of the czars? He said the oppression of the czars was something that should never have been tolerated. The country was working and trying to come toward some semblance of democracy, stumbling toward it, not making much success. He said at one time the final czar actually had in jail or had caused to be executed something like 10,000 or 12,000 people. What does Solzhenitsyn say? Multiply that by 10,000 or by 100,000 before you begin to understand the enormity of the tyranny, the loss of human dignity and the loss of freedom in Russia after the czars.

All I say, Mr. Chairman, is that when we're talking about tyranny, let's make sure that we're even-handed. Let's make sure that we identify always in this House that peace movements and everywhere else, the greatest tyranny on the face of the earth in the USSR, the greatest threat on the face of the earth to peace, the USSR. Let's not be one-sided about it and say as sometimes some commentators are inclined to do, oh well, the left can never be wrong because after all, some social democrats will say, many of the things that they advocate in Russia are the same; they come from the same wellspring. The ones who understand and know, the ones in West Germany who understand and know what the tyranny is; the ones who only have to go to Berlin to see the wall in order to keep the prisoners beyond that wall, that is the prisoners of East Berlin and the prisoners of Russia and the prisoners of that confounded system behind the wall. The wall is not there to keep freedom-loving people from going into East Germany; the wall is there to keep people who desire freedom from coming into the West.

So let's remember, Mr. Chairman, in the course of any of these debates, who our friends are; who share the same ideals that we do about individual freedom and dignity and about the best institutional way of preserving that individual freedom and dignity. Let's fall on our knees every night, and not enough of us do including the man who is speaking to you, Mr. Chairman, and thank almighty God that we live in a country where we have this kind of individual freedom; fall on our knees every night and thank Him and make sure that we preserve that freedom in this country and do nothing to erode it and do nothing even with the best of motivation, which some of us from time to time would be inclined to do, to say, well, if we pass this extra law and impose this extra bureaucracy, yes, it will take a little bit of freedom away from people - but what is that?

It's a building up, a layering up, of that kind of erosion of individual freedom that ultimately leads people into a state where they wake up some morning and find they haven't got it. Mr. Chairman, that can happen in a parliamentary democracy as well. So let's be ever vigilant in this parliamentary democracy, in this province, in this great country, that we are not eroding or permitting to be eroded those institutions and those forms of precedent and procedure that we

observe in this Parliament and all of that great tradition and history of ours that we have inherited which confers upon our people a degree of individual freedom that is beyond the belief of most other people on the face of the earth.

So when we talk with some feeling about individual freedom, we mean freedom as we know it. We know that the vast majority of the people on the face of the earth don't enjoy that freedom, whether they're oppressed by right-wing or left-wing governments or Marxist governments or killed by tyranny such as the USSR. To those people, as the First Minister has said, it's relatively inconsequential to the man whose head is on the block as to who's going to drop the axe; it's relatively inconsequential. But remember, Mr. Chairman, who's dropping most of the axes on the face of the earth today and it is people in communist Marxist regimes around the face of the earth. When we remember that fact, let's be ever, ever vigilant that never will any introduction of that form of government ever be permitted in our society.

Now, Mr. Chairman, it had not been my intention to participate on that topic in the debate but my honourable friend opened it up, quite legitimately, taking up a point that I had made in the course of my remarks. I think it's worthwhile from time to time that we have this opportunity to share a view, not only across the House, but from time to time we might share these views privately. I know my honourable friend's feeling and I know his conviction to individual freedom and I respect him for it. I think that he has the same understanding and knowledge of how I feel about it. We may differ from time to time as to the instrumentalities; whether a Bill of Rights or some other form of instrumentality is best equipped to maintain and to enhance that freedom, but let there be no doubt in this House for members on either side of the House that individual freedom is what we serve. By serving individual freedom, we thereby serve the public interests in the best way that we can.

May I get back to the more mundane matters that we were talking about? My honourable friend, quite properly, was saying to the Committee that he found it unusual that we would take objection to some of the matters that were raised in previous MFL briefs. He understood why they didn't want to have a hassle with us. That's why they dropped the brief off in the mail last year and didn't come in.

I have put a different interpretation on that in previous discussions in this Committee and I repeat it again, very briefly I hope. The difference is quite succinctly this: that we would listen to the Manitoba Federation of Labour brief and then we would make comments on obvious errors that were contained in the brief afterwards. I don't think that the leadership of the MFL, particularly Mr. Martin, liked the corrections that we were making to the misstatements of fact that used to be contained in his brief, particularly when those corrections were being made in front of his whole council of some 75 or 100 people, where he an open opportunity to argue the other side of the case if he wished.

That's why the brief was dropped off last year, not because we were unkind to them, not because we were discourteous to them, but because we used to take offense when the truth was mutilated by them. I

want to give an example to my honourable friend because I wouldn't want him to think for a moment that we treated the Chamber of Commerce or the Manitoba Federation of Labour or anybody else any differently. We treated them the same as he does. We gave them, in our time, a fair hearing. We gave them, in fact, much more time than the hour-and-a-half that my honourable friend talks about; that's inconsequential.

Here is the kind of thing that we used to take objection to from the Manitoba Federation of Labour and I'm reading from the brief of January 10th, 1980. Here are the words; now hear the echo of these words that appeared in the 1982 brief that I read just a few moments ago. I am reading from Page 13 of the 1980 brief.

"This province still has massive hydro-generating potential, a renewable resource that must be developed. The Federation was appreciative of the previous government for the manner in which they proceeded with this development in the first half of the '70s, which was a boon to the construction industry. Late in 1975, they had Manitoba Hydro apply for a licence to export power to the United States and the construction of a major transmission line. The Federation, in a brief to the National Energy Board, supported that application. The application was subsequently approved and construction proceeded with, by the previous government. Towers have been erected. However, the transmission lines have not been strung. Obviously, the Lyon Government is giving this a low priority as it has for the whole Northern Hydro development, which has been shut down through their restraint policy."

Mr. Chairman, faced with the facts of the situation, faced with the prospectus that my honourable friend published as recently as March of this year, how would my honourable friend, the First Minister, expect our government to sit back and listen to that straight revisionist history? We weren't holding back the stringing of the transmission lines on that 500 kV line. In fact, we wanted it to be completed as did the people in Minnesota, so we could get that surplus power down to them as fast as possible. How would you expect a government, your government, Mr. Chairman, the government of the First Minister, to sit idly by and listen to that kind of nonsense being prattled at and the kind of nonsense about shutting down through our restraint policy?

Mr. Chairman, what does this government's own prospectus say, of March of 1982? I am quoting from Page 8 of the prospectus, "Electric power construction, which represented 15 percent of total construction expenditures in 1976, declined thereafter reflecting the decision made in mid-1977 by the Board of Manitoba Hydro to defer the construction of further hydro-electric generating capacity until such time as additional markets could be assured. Mr. Chairman, that's the truth. Were we to sit by idly and listen to this kind of errant nonsense, prattled by the MFL?"

Now, Mr. Chairman, the First Minister conveniently tries to put the Manitoba Federation of Labour into the same category as the Chamber of Commerce and the Red Cross and the other different organizations, the Council of Women, who come before government each year, the CMA, the independent business people

and so on. May I point out to him - and I know that this isn't necessary - a non-too-subtle difference between the Manitoba Federation of Labour and all of these other groups. That difference very simply is this: that one of the credos of the Manitoba Federation of Labour is that it and its membership, so they say, although it doesn't work out that way, are totally committed to the support of one political party in Canada, namely the New Democratic Party.

So, Mr. Chairman, the Chamber of Commerce isn't committed to the support of every Conservative Government in Canada or Liberal Government or NDP. I'm sure there are some that even vote NDP among the Chamber of Commerce, God bless them. But, Mr. Chairman, I don't know of any other organization that comes before Cabinet annually which has, as part of its constitutional reason for existence now under the rather dubious leadership of Mr. McDermott, the fact that at the federal level the CLC is only going to support the New Democrats and at the provincial level, Mr. Martin and his leadership people - and he hasn't even got all of them - are going to support the New Democratic Party. That's the difference and it's not a very subtle difference, I suggest to the First Minister, because we all know that the Manitoba Federation of Labour is the chief operating source of comfort and assistance for the New Democratic Party in Manitoba. They don't make any secret of it, so let's not try in this House, in sort of a Pastor Sam way, to present the Manitoba Federation of Labour as being just another group; it isn't. It's another group of people in Manitoba who are committed to the support of the New Democratic Party.

Now, my honourable friend says they represent 74,000 workers. I daresay that the constituent unions within the Manitoba Federation of Labour represent 74,000 workers and I daresay that one of the largest unions in that group is the Manitoba Government Employees Association, but by no stretch of the imagination, when I read a brief from the Manitoba Federation of Labour, do I believe that represents chapter, line and verse the thinking of 74,000 unionized people in Manitoba; it sure as the dickens doesn't. In fact, I have had people at the meetings of the Federation of Labour come to me afterwards and say, I'm embarrassed by the lack of quality in our presentation and thank heaven you and your Cabinet would stand up and tell the facts as you did. That's what I've heard at different submissions that have been made by the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

I know, Mr. Chairman, I hear some yipping and yapping from the young Member for Thompson, who's going to learn probably in the brief time that he is in this House that if he wants to participate in debates, he'd better get up on his hind legs and participate, because let me tell him a fact of life that he perhaps has overlooked. His constituency contains the largest community in Northern Manitoba, the City of Thompson. The City of Thompson on a per capita basis, must be the most highly unionized community in the Province of Manitoba. Mr. Chairman might tell me that Flin Flon rates on a per capita basis close to it, but in any event, let me tell the Member for Thompson that it is one of the most highly unionized cities in Manitoba. I remind the Member for Thompson, not in any sense of trying to put him down at all, but I remind

him what his majority was. His majority was what? Fifty-one votes in the most highly unionized constituency in Manitoba —(Interjection)— 72 votes, he says. All right, I'm sorry. I undercounted by 21 votes.

So, when the First Minister stands up and glibly wants me to believe that the Manitoba Federation of Labour represents 74,000 workers and that therefore when it presents its brief to government, it's speaking on behalf of all 74,000 workers, I say that's balderdash and he knows that's balderdash, because my honourable friend's party may garner the majority of unionized support throughout Manitoba, but he sure as the dickens doesn't garner all of it. There are an awful lot of unionized people that I know who don't like the support of the Manitoba Federation of Labour for the NDP, because they feel that's a constraint on their individual liberty. They feel that the compulsory check-off that they have to pay into the coffers of the NDP, which goes through the hands of the MFL, is not something that they like to see done.

So, Mr. Chairman, I merely —(Interjection)— yes, the First Minister says, you can check out and then you can face some of the kind of harrassment we know that can face people who stand up for their individual rights. So that's why, Mr. Chairman, there was an amendment a few years ago put into The Labour Relations Act for people not to have to belong to unions if they felt, as a matter of conscience, they shouldn't. After all, we feel and I think the majority on the other side feel, that you're loyalty to God comes before your loyalty to the Manitoba Federation of Labour and we expect that section will remain untouched in the labour legislation of this province.

So, Mr. Chairman, we don't need any lecture about the constitution of the Manitoba Federation of Labour and I don't want to take the time of the Committee to mention some of the other misleading statements that were made. This book is full of them; I have them marked and we responded to them, but don't let the First Minister try to put words into my mouth and say that the Manitoba Federation of Labour brief this year contained a whole series of misleading statements. I pointed out one or two. I also said it wasn't nearly so bad as it used to be.

Let me say this, Mr. Chairman. Let me point just to one other example of what I call a real kind of misleading rhetorical evidence that was brought to the Cabinet in the 1980 brief. On Page 20 of that brief, under the heading of "Economic Policy," here's what they tried to pull off, and I don't think that he would sit silent in the face of this anymore than we did at the end of the brief. I'm quoting from their brief:

"Before analyzing specific provincial economic performance indicators, the Manitoba Federation of Labour believes it useful and instructive to sample survey a substantial number of actual cash payouts of tax dollars to business, community groups, individuals, etc., within Manitoba, as well as tax dollars outflow beyond provincial boundaries. This sample survey best illustrates your government's administrative interpretation and implementation of economic policy at the practical level. Also, in this way, the government's accountability as public trustee of taxpayers' funds are placed in proper perspective."

Hear those words. Then on Page 21, they took from Public Accounts a list of expenditures that were paid

out that anybody could see, very selectively though. They took and they used, for example, Mr. Chairman, one of the biggest expenditures they picked out and were holding this up as some example of the fact that we were doing business outside of the province or paying tax dollars to big corporations, or whatever their left-wing hangup is. Here's the one, Mr. Chairman, "Canada Life Assurance Company, Toronto, Ontario" - I presume that's because of where their head office is - "In 1977-78, \$2,384,880; 1978-79, \$2,463,566," and they held that out as being representative - what did they say? - a sample best illustrates your government's administrative interpretation and implementation of economic policy at the practical level and in this way, government's accountability as a public trustee of funds are placed in proper perspective.

So I said, what's wrong with that payment? Well, you're paying money outside of the province and so on. Well, we didn't have to point out to the researcher who did this because I am sure they did it with malice aforethought, but the First Minister knows and I know and all of the 14,000 civil servants of Manitoba know that payment goes to the Canada Life Assurance Company as part of the group insurance plan for the employees of this province. To have the Manitoba Federation of Labour hold up that expenditure as being something that indicated that this government was somehow or other feeding big corporations tax dollars and not doing business in Manitoba is the kind of half-truth, misleading statement that I know the First Minister of this province at the present time would have no part of and that I would have no part of, nor would my colleagues.

Did we interrupt the Federation of Labour to complain about that misuse of statistics? You bet your life we did and did Mr. Martin like it? You bet your life he didn't. That's why Mr. Martin didn't come back last year; that's why he left his brief like a fugitive at the door, because he didn't like the truth. He didn't like the truth to be told about the methodology that he and his little coterie of people were using to try to mislead the members of their own union. When the facts were pointed out when they were all there, he didn't like that one bit. That's why, Mr. Chairman, the Manitoba Federation of Labour didn't come back, because they weren't prepared to be responsible and honest in their brief in certain respects. When that was pointed out to them, they didn't like that fact being bandied around in front of their full membership because many of them, as I pointed out to the First Minister, came to us afterwards and said, thank heaven you pointed out these misstatements. That's why we didn't get the brief last year.

So let there be no misunderstanding about that and, if my honourable friend wants me, I can take the rest of the afternoon and tonight to go through Federation of Labour briefs for the last three years and point out every misstatement, every half-truth, every political, rhetorical trick that they used to try to fulfill their constitutional obligation to support the New Democratic Party.

Well, that's their business, but the truth is the truth and all we did was point out the truth as we continue to point out the truth and will continue to point it out to them, to the Chamber of Commerce, to the Federation

of Business or whomever. Because the truth remains the truth, no matter out of whose mouth it is uttered.

So, Mr. Chairman, I just want to set the record straight for the Minister of Labour and to say to him that, while we appreciate his pontifications in his best pastoral manner about treating with respect the different groups that came before government, we did treat them with respect. But where they showed no respect for the truth and where they showed they were nothing more or less than a political arm of the Opposition party, we had to point out where they were saying things that were contrary to the truth and/or contrary to the public interest as we saw it. We did it and we did it courteously and my honourable friends across the way may feel that they can sit like silent dodos while this kind of misinformation is being peddled to them, but the people on this side of the House couldn't and wouldn't. We're not made that way and we're not 'in thrall to' the Manitoba Federation of Labour, the Chamber of Commerce or anybody in this province, any more than my honourable friends.

Let not my honourable friend, the First Minister, forget that the Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress - and we've all seen the little brag piece that the Canadian Labour Congress put out about the 500 full-time workers that they put at the use of the New Democratic Party in Manitoba and that's fine, 500. I've got the document if my honourable friend would like me to table it —(Interjection)— during the election —(Interjection)— well, that's what their brag piece says and I can only - my honourable friend has just finished saying, we've got to believe everything that appears in union briefs. I'll give him another union brief where he can tell us about that piece.

Now we didn't hear him speak, Mr. Chairman, about the development tax that I asked about, that was recommended by the Federation of Labour and one further question has come to my mind since I sat down. There was a reference in that brief, at the end thereof, for better identification for the First Minister, it's Page 2 and 3, following the main body of the brief. This was a recommendation which I suggest, Mr. Chairman, is scary. I suggest that the people of Manitoba and the Civil Service of Manitoba have to be a little bit worried about this recommendation because sometimes what is a recommendation, as I said before, one year in one of these briefs, under a New Democratic Party Government becomes policy the next year.

So that's why we want to hear right now what the First Minister has to say —(Interjection)— the MGEA is one of the unions and one of the unions, Mr. Chairman, that does not however feel comfortable with this mass subscription that the MFL tries to impose upon all of their 74,000 members to support only one political party. Under various leadership, the MGEA has said - and thank God they have in NDP times and in Conservative times - "We don't think that our individual freedom should be run by the MFL" and they won't have any part of it. I congratulate the MGEA for that. That is probably why some of my honourable friends opposite - and I don't say the First Minister - would be quite happy to see the MGEA replaced by CUPE, because they know that CUPE would be much more loyal than the MGEA. They, Mr. Chairman, would be

relatively more ideologically comfortable with CUPE. —(Interjection)— well, maybe the Minister of Cultural Affairs would care to dilate upon that topic at some time.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Certainly, the Minister of Community Services would like that to happen.

HON. S. LYON: Page 2, Mr. Chairman, following upon the letter to the Minister of Labour, "Proposed Amendments to Labour Relations Act and Employment Standards Act." I want the record to be full of this. In fact, I may get an extra copy and file it so that the subsequent historians will be able to see the documents from which we quote and to see why we are concerned about this umbilical tie.

Here's the recommendation that was made, Mr. Chairman, about our Civil Service Commission in Manitoba, "We have maintained that workers should participate in decision-making which affects their working conditions. We urge the Manitoba Government to show employer leadership in this area by amending The Civil Service Act to allow for a more representative Civil Service Commission. We recommend one appointee to represent government, one appointee to represent the labour force and one appointee selected jointly by both. The Civil Service Commission should be a nonpartisan body if it is to function as an appeal mechanism for Provincial Government employees. For some years, however, the neutrality of the Commission has been questioned. We urge the government to restore a greater neutrality of representation to the Commission and give meaningful representation to its labour force."

I describe that, Mr. Chairman, as a scary recommendation. I would like to hear what the First Minister says about it.

HON. H. PAWLEY: I'm sorry. I hate to do this but I just missed the last part - neutrality - what commission was that?

HON. S. LYON: The Civil Service Commission.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, I assume we're coming back later this afternoon to look at the exact recommendation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some time ago I deferred to the Leader of the Opposition; I wish I hadn't. I might have gotten down to talking about something of interest to the public of this province in terms of the public business, but it seems the Leader of the Opposition - to use his phrase - has something of a fetish about the MFL.

I've sat here now, I guess, for well over an hour with his latest tirade about the MFL. I must say it's getting a bit much because I understand as a newcomer to this House that there are certain traditions in terms of Estimates, that in Executive Council the Premier's Estimates, one can bring up virtually anything, but when I was told that as a new Member to this House, I thought that "anything" would refer to the public bus-

iness of this province, not a particular brief put forward by a private organization. Why the Leader of the Opposition has chosen to continually harp on and on and on about this, I really don't know. —(Interjection)— well, the Member for Radisson has a particular suggestion there that I think has some merit.

I must say, Mr. Chairman, that there were some issues raised when the Leader of the Opposition was referring to the brief which are issues that deserve to be discussed and, at first, when I stood up and I deferred to the Leader of the Opposition, I thought he might be wanting to question the Premier on those particular issues, but I haven't heard a question in regard to that for a good hour or so.

I was referring in terms of the specific issues to the reference in the brief to the need to review transportation rates in the north; review costs of such things as hydro in the north because these are things that I've heard from my own constituents, Mr. Chairman. We have rather high transportation costs and we have rather high hydro costs and as the First Minister added, we also have high gasoline costs. I would be very interested in seeing some kind of an investigation into a number of these.

For example, with gasoline costs in the north, we pay considerably more right now at approximately seven to eight cents a litre in Thompson and it's that much more the further north you go. Now, if one talks to the bulk operators in Thompson, the independent gas dealers, one will find, Mr. Chairman, that they often are very concerned themselves about the high cost of gas.

I had a gentleman last week come up to me - a former bulk dealer in Thompson - and bring up this very question. He said that he can't understand, as a former bulk dealer for one of the major oil companies, why gas prices are so high in Thompson as compared to Winnipeg. As the First Minister indicated, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs has been looking into this question, following some feedback he got when he was in the north just recently, when he was in Thompson and Churchill specifically.

I must say, Mr. Chairman, this shows the different kind of attitude that this government has towards northern problems. We don't sit here in this Chamber and listen to the nonsense of the Leader of the Opposition and consider that to be our duty as public servants. We get out into our constituencies. The Ministers come up and visit our constituencies. They get feedback and they follow up on it. There was feedback contained in the brief the Leader of the Opposition was referring to in regard to that problem, the problem of transportation costs and energy costs. There was feedback when the Minister came up to Thompson and Churchill; he's following up on that, and that I think is a key particularly when it comes to the north because we're isolated up there, Mr. Chairman. Even though we now have jet-age communication, jet-age travel, we still have that distance of 500 miles.

I must say, listening to the members opposite, that there's also another barrier in between this and that is sometimes those members across the way seem to view the north as some hitherland, you know, some place which they avoid when they travel around their province. I notice, for example, the Leader of the Opposition who a few minutes ago was lecturing me

on Thompson, wasn't even up in Thompson during the election campaign despite the fact the Leader of the Opposition, now Premier, was up twice; so I would suggest that if he would travel up there a bit, he might learn something.

I could refer also to the infamous statement in regard to the population of Thompson that he made when he did finally come up there once, not to speak to the people of Thompson, mind you, but to speak to the western Premiers. He said well, you know we have 19,000 in Thompson. Well, at that time, Mr. Chairman, we had 14,000, if that. In fact, if the Leader of the Opposition had just taken time to check, he would have found there were Provincial Government statistics which show that was indeed the case.

So there's a lesson in this, Mr. Chairman. That lesson is, instead of running off with fetishes about briefs from the MFL; instead of wasting the time of this House for one hour, how about listening to what the people of this province have to say and get some feedback.

I notice it's 5:30, Mr. Chairman. I will continue my comments at 8 o'clock.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 5:30, I interrupt the proceedings and will return to the Chair at 8:00 p.m. this evening.