

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
2:30 o'clock, Thursday, May 8, 1975

Opening Prayer by Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we proceed, I should like to direct the attention of the honourable members to the gallery, where we have 60 students, Grades 5 and 6 standing, of the Florence Nightingale School. These students are under the direction of Mr. Peter Rybak. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Inkster, the Minister for Mines, Resources and Environmental Management.

We also have 20 students, Grade 4 standing, of the Ashland School. These students are under the direction of Mr. Pankiw and Miss Laurin. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Osborne, the Minister of Consumer, Corporate and Internal Services.

And we have 50 students, Grade 9 standing, of the Grant Park School. These students are under the direction of Mr. Dooley. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for River Heights, the Leader of the Opposition.

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

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; Questions. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SIDNEY SPIVAK, Q.C. (Leader of the Official Opposition) (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister. I wonder if he can indicate whether there has been any communication from the Prime Minister, or his office, as to a federal-provincial meeting to deal with the continuing problem of inflation and/or the matter of the proposed guidelines for restraint.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. EDWARD SCHREYER (Premier) (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, in connection with that, I can advise the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that there has been communicated to us, at the officials' level, the request that we consider meeting in mid-May. But I must also advise the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that there has been no formal communication to that effect from the Prime Minister's office or from that of the federal Minister of Finance. We've been merely advised as to the possibility through officials' channels.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder if the First Minister's in a position to indicate to the House whether, at the conclusion or during the meeting of First Ministers dealing with the economy that was held at the time of the Energy Conference, there was some indication that the Minister of Finance would, either individually or collectively, deal with the provincial governments after the new budget had been presented, dealing with the proposals for voluntary restraint.

MR. SCHREYER: That is generally correct, Mr. Speaker, and accordingly each province was canvassed as to whom it wished to name as an officials' representative, and following an exercise of meeting in Ottawa at the officials' level once or twice, there was a view that it would be followed up by a meeting of Ministers of Finance. But, for whatever reasons, sir, that has not been confirmed as yet other than through, I suppose I could say, tentative feelers extended through the officials as to when such a meeting might be possible.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder, then, if the First Minister's in a position to indicate who the Government of Manitoba has designated at the official level. Is it the Deputy Minister of Finance or is it someone else in the department?

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, it is the Deputy Minister of Finance, although, more specifically, it is the Assistant Deputy Minister for Dominion-Provincial fiscal relations who has been attending, and I believe is attending today, with other provincial representatives, with federal officials.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health. I wonder if he can indicate whether his department has been consulted with respect to blood tests that have been ordered on the City Mosquito Abatement Branch dealing with insecticides that they handle. I'm sorry, I guess the Minister of Health may not have heard my question. I wonder if he

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(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) could indicate whether his department is involved or has been consulted with respect to blood tests that have been ordered for City Mosquito Abatement Branch employees who are handling insecticides, and I guess the Mosquito Abatement Program.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS (Minister of Health and Social Development) (St. Boniface): I'd have to take that as notice. I'm sorry.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Honourable the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources. I wonder whether or not the Governor of North Dakota, Governor Link, has had any contact with the Honourable Minister with respect to his recent comments about expanding the Garrison Project from its original size and scope.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

HON. SIDNEY GREEN, Q.C. (Minister of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management) (Inkster): No, Mr. Speaker, the communications that have been held still deal with the attempt to see to it that the assurance given by the United States State Department that the Boundary Waters Treaty - which says that whatever project is conducted in the United States, it will not violate this treaty, will not pollute Manitoba waters to the injury of health or property - is abided by. That is being done through the State Department of Canada and the State Department of the United States.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources. I wonder if he can indicate whether any representations have been made to him regarding increases in equalization of fishing quotas on Lake Winnipeg for the spring fishing season.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, there have been representations made to me on numerous occasions, but I think any recent ones would be made to the Minister of Co-operatives.

MR. SPIVAK: I'm sorry. Then may I direct the question to the Minister of Co-operatives? I wonder if he can indicate whether representations have been made for an increase in equalization of fishing quotas on Lake Winnipeg for the spring season.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Co-operatives.

HON. HARVEY BOSTROM (Minister of Co-operative Development) (Rupert's Land): Mr. Speaker, a number of fishermen groups have had meetings with staff in my department and with myself with respect to a number of regulations with respect to fishing on Lake Winnipeg, and one of the items discussed was quotas, although the recommendations of staff for this year will be that there will be no increased quotas on Lake Winnipeg.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder if the Minister could inform the House whether his department has undertaken any studies to establish what optimum fishing quotas on Lake Winnipeg might be established.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, this is under continuous review and study and research, and in fact, Mr. Chairman, the research that has been done to date does not provide evidence to show that there should be any increase at this time.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder - and I'm not sure that the Minister answered or gave an answer on the first question - but I wonder if he can indicate whether the government would be prepared, if he would be prepared, to sit down with the fishing groups and to discuss with them the question of quotas and the question of equalization of opportunities during this spring season.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Speaker, most definitely I have met with the Manitoba Federation of Fishermen executive. I've been to their annual conference. I've met with the Lake Winnipeg Fishermen's Association, I've met with individual fishermen, groups of fishermen, and a number of items with respect to the fishing industry have been discussed, and my office is open to their views at any time.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Apparently we are going to have the procedure of giving assent to some bills. I would ask that we recess the Question Period until that is over.

ROYAL ASSENT - BILL NO. 9 - THE BRANDON CHARTER

The Honourable the Administrator of the Government of the Province of Manitoba entered the House and was seated on the Throne.

MR. SPEAKER: May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly, at its present session, passed a bill which, in the name of the Assembly, I present to Your Honour and to which bill I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

MR. CLERK: Bill No. 9, an Act to amend The Brandon Charter. In Her Majesty's name, the Honourable the Administrator doth assent to this bill.

ORAL QUESTIONS cont'd

MR. SPEAKER: I do hope the honourable members are aware that their behaviour is being monitored from above and it may be emulated. The Honourable Minister of Tourism and Recreation.

HON. RENE TOUPIN (Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs) (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to respond to a quite lengthy question that was put to me yesterday by the Honourable Member for Virden. I wonder if I could have leave of the House to be a bit extensive myself. It's approximately a page long and I wouldn't want to be interrupted.

MR. SPEAKER: Agreed? (Agreed) The Honourable Minister.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, the first part of the question dealt with the recently announced \$10,500 increase in breeders' incentive grants for thoroughbred owners and breeders, and the honourable member asked, can standardbred owners and breeders also expect an increase in their grants? The answer to the question is, currently no funds are available for enlarging the breeders' incentive program beyond what has been announced already for this year. However, the entire program will be reviewed after the upcoming racing season and even before that, I'd like to inform the honourable member, in view of the trust fund that we have available.

The second part of the question is: why is one group of horsemen or horsewomen, thoroughbred, favoured even though the cost of breeding are about the same for both groups? The answer is, both the implied premises underlying this question, in our opinion, is erroneous.

Thoroughbred and standardbred breeding costs are considerably different, I'm informed, and the accusation of favouritism towards thoroughbred is wholly unfounded. It cost almost \$3,000 in 1973 to produce a thoroughbred yearling in Manitoba, according to a national association of Canadian racetracks study, whereas the average cost of raising a yearling standardbred was less than \$800. Clearly, the costs are not equivalent. The study indicates that the number of foals produced by Manitoba thoroughbred breeders was nearly two and one half times the number produced by their standardbred counterparts. The total cost of raising a thoroughbred yearling crop thus exceeds the cost of a standardbred crop by a factor much greater than the 2.61 split in breeders' grants this year.

Consequently the grants provide greater relative stimulation to the smaller standardbred industry. The province realizes over 2.8 times as much tax revenue from thoroughbreds, and the honourable member recognizes that because he mentioned it in his speech.

The province, taking into consideration the fact that standardbred are a developing industry, has always been more than generous in allocating purse maintenance grants to standardbred racing. In addition to providing special grant support to rural harness industry, \$13,000 this year, the province waived parimutuel taxes on behalf of the rural harness circuit. And finally, the purpose of the increase in thoroughbred breeder grants is to be extended to four-year-olds. Four-year-old standardbred are already eligible, as the honourable member knows.

In summary, by no stretch of the imagination has the province discriminated against the standardbred industry.

And the honourable member inquires, are there any other plans to help standardbred industry which is vital to a number of rural municipalities? My answer, Mr. Speaker, is certainly the province does recognize the importance of both the standardbred and thoroughbred industries, and to say again, my earlier comments, the standardbred industry is very generously bolstered by the province. Although it would be premature to get into any specifics - although we could during my estimates - it can be stated now that new programs are under consideration

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(MR. TOUPIN cont'd) for next year and, moreover, current programs will again be reviewed prior to the 1976 season.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a question of the Minister of Mines. Referring back to the question of the use of chemical spraying in the city, can the Minister indicate whether officials of his department and environmental protection agents, say, investigate the potential harmful effects of such chemicals as of Abate and methoxychlor and, if they undertake such medical investigations or health investigations, if they report those findings to the city or to the Clean Environment Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I think that in the experimental programs that have been suggested to the department and the Clean Environment Commission, there has been a suggestion that people who are doing the spraying receive tests, but I don't think that the city question had anything to do with . . . It may have been related to that kind of advice, but I believe that the city thing was a directive that every employee had to take a blood test. At least that's hearsay. I saw that through the media - I don't have it through any departmental information. But the department has been concerned with whether these things do have an effect and their experimental programs are directed to that. May I also advise the honourable member that the drugs and insecticides they use are all cleared for use through the Department of Public Health, I believe it is, and the department that deals with jurisdiction of drugs etc. at the Ottawa level, and that is where the clearance is made.

MR. AXWORTHY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Does the Minister have any information to indicate that such chemicals as are being used in these programs may have a toxic effect upon human beings or animals, and can he supply that information to this House?

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, when those matters come up they are referred to the Clean Environment Commission where evidence is given. I can try to make available to my honourable friend such material as we have on the question, but I repeat, Mr. Speaker, there are many things that can be toxic that are permitted to be used on the market. The way in which they are used and whether you drink them, for instance, I take it that if you drink bleach that you get to wash clothes with, that you will die, but most people are expected not to drink it.

MR. AXWORTHY: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the Minister considered referring the matter of the present chemicals being used in spraying, considering that they may have a harmful or damaging effect upon humans or animals, has he considered referring this to the Clean Environment Commission that such spraying be halted until such a time as tests can clearly indicate that they will not be harmful to people in the neighbourhoods where the spraying will take place?

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, the present position vis-a-vis spraying is that either by complaint or through other means it does have to go to the Clean Environment Commission, who then makes a ruling. I've not considered calling a halt to the use of these things until it is determined that they have no harmful effect. My inclination has been to the contrary, that if they are cleared for use by the Federal Government, who are to examine them before they are used, then used in accordance with the provisions under which they are cleared, it should be acceptable to the province, but we have not yet enacted such a regulation although I am very much inclined to do so.

ORDERS OF THE DAY - GOVERNMENT BILLS

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable House Leader.

MR. GREEN: If you would call the debates on second reading, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Bill No. 16, proposed by the Honourable Minister of Mines. The Honourable Member for Riel. (Stand)

Bill No. 17, proposed by the Honourable Minister of Mines. The Honourable Member for St. James. (Stand)

Bill No. 34, proposed by the Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs. The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. GEORGE HENDERSON (Pembina): Stand, please.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 31. The Honourable Minister of Labour is away. The Honourable House Leader.

ORDERS OF THE DAY - GOVERNMENT BILLS

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I move 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. In this regard, Mr. Speaker, I may say that committee will be meeting simultaneously in this Chamber and in Room 254 to consider the estimates of the Minister of Highways.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply, with the Honourable Member for Logan in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY - INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE

MR. CHAIRMAN: I refer honourable members to their Estimate Book, Page 31, Resolution 67 (f)(1). The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. HARRY E. GRAHAM (Birtle-Russell): Mr. Chairman, when we're dealing with Section (f) Transportation and the various sections under it, I would like to bring the attention of the Minister to one program here which he has in here for \$200,000 for Northern Airports Assistance, and the fact that in the present estimates he has not got the figures for other airports in there, and I was wondering if the Minister could give us information on how much money he has set aside for total airport municipal assistance in the province. Or is it all under Northern Airports?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

HON. LEONARD S. EVANS (Minister of Industry and Commerce) (Brandon East): No, Mr. Speaker, my understanding would be that it is not. The Southern Airports Assistance program would be included, as I would understand it, under item (f)(2) Other Expenditures. My staff will be down in a minute and I will check that with them, but the Northern Airports Assistance program is the new program and it was itemized separately on that account. But I will have that checked in a minute.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under regular - or if the Minister wants to refer to them as southern airports, I would hesitate to differentiate between classification myself. I think that if they're airports they should all be treated the same whether they're in Southern Manitoba or Northern Manitoba, but that's a different argument. At this particular time, I want to bring to the Minister's attention some problems that are occurring with some municipal airports throughout the province, and that is a problem where one arm of government seems to be at variance with another arm of government, or in contravention of another arm of government, and conflict occurring.

I want to refer the Minister to a particular problem which occurs in the Russell airport where the hydro lines are causing considerable difficulty to the operation of the municipal airport. Apparently, the cost of moving the Hydro line is beyond the scope or the capability of the local airport to handle on a financial basis. It would seem to me that if one area of government is trying to assist, I would hope that the offices of the Department of Industry and Commerce could be brought into force to try and have some co-operation at least exist between the Crown corporations of government so that the moving of these lines or the burying of these lines would be done at a fairly nominal fee, one which lies within the ability of the airport authorities to handle. And I would hope the Minister would give us some assurance that he will use his office to try and bring about an agreement with Manitoba Hydro where these things could be done at a nominal cost rather than leaving it as it presently is, causing a danger or restricting the use of the airport, and placing them in an almost impossible financial position if they do have to make the changes that should be made.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: Well I'm just checking to see whether the community of Russell has applied for any type of assistance. As the honourable member knows, we have provided assistance to virtually dozens of communities, and I would say offhand, you know, it's possible that this is a very special case. The money is usually spent for upgrading the particular airstrips to Ministry of Transport standards, up to the grade of permitting nighttime flying, so we're concerned with the length of the field, the lighting, for example, and so on. I don't believe we've had a case where we've had a request to assist the local organization in removing a particular potential hazard to the flying in the area. But I hope that we can check to see whether we've had any communication from the community of Russell in this respect.

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(MR. EVANS cont'd)

I know what the honourable member is talking about. I have flown into and out of that particular field and I'm very well aware of the danger that does exist, and I would hope that we would give that every consideration. If that is a serious cost obstacle, it's possible that there could be something in the way of assistance. But again, we would have to check to see whether the local group has applied and just what moneys are involved and so forth.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, I think the Minister has somewhat misunderstood me. I was asking if the Minister could use his good offices to try and persuade the Crown corporation to do these changes at a very nominal cost, where the cost now appears is very excessive - to many people anyway it appears to be a very excessive amount. I understand that they are anticipating a cost of something like \$4,000 just to bury a little piece of Hydro. I would hope that Hydro would feel that they have an obligation, and maybe the Minister could persuade those in Hydro to do a burying job there that had a very nominal figure which would very well lie within the realm of the cost of the authorities there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I didn't hear all of the honourable member's previous remarks. We certainly will have somebody get in touch with Manitoba Hydro and explore this possibility.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 67. The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West): Mr. Chairman, I had one or two more questions in respect to the discussion we had yesterday on the subject of the renewal of the air service to Western Manitoba and Northern Manitoba.

The Minister described the action that had been taken by the department to incorporate a new company - a new operating company - called Sky West, and he indicated that the incorporation proceedings would be complete in a week or two. I assume, Mr. Chairman, that there is a federal-provincial structure of some kind that serves as a commission or authority for this general two-year agreement, and I'm wondering if the Minister could describe to us just how this is structured, what representation is being given to the Federal Government and to the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Is there some kind of commission that has been established which will have overall authority for the administration and the supervision of the way in which this operating company will carry out the service?

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, the Sky West organization - Sky West Limited - is meant to be the vehicle by which the Federal and Saskatchewan Governments can participate with us in this enterprise, and that presumably the board of this company would act as the overseer of the operation. It, in turn, would contract with a carrier, who would have the direct aid carrier, would have the responsibility of flying the aircraft. The company would be the supervisory body, you might say, or the vehicle by which we could co-operate.

MR. MCGILL: Well, it was my understanding that Sky West would serve as the carrier, and that the operation of Sky West would be undertaken by the chosen operating group that now exists, but it would then become Sky West and would operate the service under that name. My question was, whether or not there was some commission that would provide some general administrative and operating authority to the operating group with representation by the Federal Government and the two provinces - some sort of aviation commission that would have this authority.

MR. EVANS: As I was attempting to explain, Sky West would be the agency which would facilitate the co-operation among the three levels of government, and it in turn would contract with a carrier or a body that would be responsible for the direct operations, somewhat I suppose, comparable to NorOntair in Ontario, where the Ontario Government has set up NorOntair as its aviation agency, and it in turn contracts out with the specific carrier that actually does the operations.

MR. MCGILL: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure of the specifics of NorOntair, but I think it probably does not involve two provincial jurisdictions. It may, but my understanding was that it was exclusively the authority and operating within Ontario. There is a somewhat different position here in that you cross provincial boundaries, and I would have expected that there would have been some commission with representation. However, in lieu of that, or if that is not the case, is there a formal document of agreement between the Federal Government

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(MR. MCGILL cont'd) and the two provinces? Has there been a formal document drawn up and signed by all three jurisdictions in respect to this operation?

MR. EVANS: No, there is no formalized, legal document. We have had an exchange of letters with commitments for funds. As I indicated just two days ago, I believe, I received a letter from the federal Minister indicating, in writing, their financial commitment. We have such letters and we have understandings and so forth. As I said, this matter is still in process. There is no formalized lease arrangement signed, for example, yet. These things are being worked on. We are waiting, hoping for the appropriate officials from the Minister of Transport to come to Winnipeg - we've been waiting for them for some time now - to help bring us along another stage or two.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, then you are operating upon Letters of Consent from the three jurisdictions. Are there any impediments to the commencement of this service other than the completion of the incorporation of the operating company? Well, other than that particular incorporation plus the decision as to which of the presently licensed air carriers is going to be chosen to be the operator. Are those the only impediments to the beginning or commencement of this service?

MR. EVANS: Well, the only other one, which is rather important, is the obtaining of a commercial licence from the Air Transport Committee of the CTC.

MR. MCGILL: Well, I understood from yesterday's exchange that that was going to be done almost instantaneously upon the obtaining of the operating authority and the incorporation. Does the company Sky West now have the delivery of two aircraft which would enable it to begin operations in full the moment these other two difficulties are overcome?

MR. EVANS: I don't think there'll be any delay in the delivery of the planes. One is ready and the second one is about to be ready. But we don't legally have the right to operate them yet because the completion of the incorporation is still awaited and the signing of leases with the Federal Government is still to be done, and there are a number of administrative matters. But I don't see that, the delivery of the aircraft, to be a major holdup in getting the service established.

MR. MCGILL: Well, Mr. Chairman, I wonder then if the Minister could give us some reading now as to when he would anticipate that this service will commence.

MR. EVANS: Well, I would be reluctant to give you a specific date because there are two other governments involved and it is possible that the Air Transport Committee may receive, for example, objections to the granting of a licence to this Sky West Limited or its carrier, and, you know, theoretically this could delay matters somewhat. I would hope this would not be the case but there are a number of variables at work here, so I would be reluctant to pinpoint a specific date. I can just tell you that we're doing everything in our power to get the service established as soon as possible.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. HARRY SHAFRANSKY (Radisson): Mr. Chairman, I would just like to announce to the members that the Department of Highways distributed some of the new licence plates that would be coming up in 1976. The members of the Opposition received a set and I was given a set to distribute to the members on the government side, and I'd like to have permission to have these distributed at the same time as they're being distributed in committee, in 254. (Agreed)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, I know that the Minister would find it impossible to give a specific date. Would he say that the service will commence before September 1st of this year?

MR. EVANS: I would certainly hope so, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): Mr. Chairman, I'd like to raise another point. We seem to be hopping back and forth between airports and railroads and I wonder if the Minister might not consider the advisability of, in this particular item, dividing it into two parts so that we could stay with one and then the other.

But the point I want to raise is in connection with railway line abandonment, and I know it's a subject that has been kicked around for a good many years and I don't profess to have read all of the material that has been made available on that subject. Indeed, it would take about a lifetime to read it all. But I wonder if the government, in their presentations on this

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(MR. JORGENSEN cont'd) subject, have considered the new dimension that has been added to the whole question of railway transportation, and that's the problem of possible energy shortages and the cost of energy in the future. I wonder if the government have given some consideration to presenting, in the light of this new development, arguments for the retention of a good many of those branch lines that are up for abandonment, to ensure that in the vent of energy shortage and certainly because of energy costs, that it might be more practical, more economical now, to retain those lines and continue to use them as opposed to the abandonment that is now being undertaken. It seems to me, sir, that a whole new set of circumstances have arisen now that provide us with a very different argument than those we have been presenting in the past, and I wonder if the Minister could indicate to the House whether or not that has been considered and, if not, if they will take that into consideration and have some studies made to take in this new dimension.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, we have considered that as an argument. It's a good argument. It's a valid argument. We have communicated this particular facet of the case to be made for more rather than less railway transportation in Manitoba, and indeed in Canada. We've communicated this certainly verbally to the federal Minister, if not in writing, in documentation at these many meetings we've had, and it would certainly be referred to in our brief to the federal Commission of Inquiry on Branch Line Abandonment, which has just now been set up.

MR. JORGENSEN: In that connection, I wonder if the Minister would ensure, whether the House is sitting or not, that copies of that particular presentation will be made available to members of this House so that we have an opportunity to look at them at the time that it's being presented.

MR. EVANS: Yes. Mr. Chairman, in due course. When we are advised of the time of the Hall Commission of Enquiry, at the appropriate time we will be presenting a brief. The brief will be made public, and I don't see any reason why we couldn't make sure to distribute copies of these to the members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba at the time that it is being made available to the public.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BOB BANMAN (La Verendrye): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Further to Sky West Air. I wonder if the Minister would inform the House as to whether it was Manitoba's stipulation when entering an arrangement that the carrier would be using Saunders aircraft.

MR. EVANS: Well, if the honourable member was around a couple of years ago, he may recall that the Prime Minister, during the last Federal election campaign stated that in response to a proposal that we made, or a demonstration project - inter-city, inter-urban demonstration project - be carried out with Saunders Aircraft, that the Federal Government responded positively, and the moneys they're making available are for the purchase, as you should know, for the two Saunders aircraft. And there is funding by the Federal Government to monitor the performance of the aircraft, some, I don't know, 70, 80, 90 thousand dollars, some substantial amount of money for collection of data - operating data - on the efficiency and general operating characteristics of the aircraft in this area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 67. (f)(1) - passed. (2) - passed. (3) . . . The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BANMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the Minister, under this particular item, where the grants towards the maintenance of rural municipal airports such as we have in Steinbach and the Member from Birtle-Russell mentioned, if those grants would be under this particular arrangement.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, I indicated a few minutes ago in response to another question, of I think the Member from Birtle-Russell, that that item was under (f) (2) Other Expenditures. That is, the assistance to the so-called southern airports, and we were discussing the airport at Russell, I believe it was, or was it Birtle?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can indicate the appropriation of \$200,000 of which \$50,000 is . . . the province in connection with the Canada-Manitoba Northlands Agreement, with reference to the transportation study that's being undertaken, I wonder if he can indicate the terms of reference and the objectives of the study.

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MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: I don't know whether I have the specific terms of reference with me. Offhand, I don't have the terms of reference with me but we can get them for you. You know, I can make them available to you if you wish.

MR. SPIVAK: If it's part of the Northlands Agreement, I would assume that it relates to a northern transportation study. If the Minister is in a position to answer, then I . . .

MR. EVANS: Yes, we have found the document, which gives you some general information on the purpose of the study and the delineation of what we hope this study will achieve. This study, as you can appreciate, is in conjunction with the general development agreement that we've signed with the federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion. One element of the agreement, one subsidiary agreement, pertains to Manitoba Northlands, and of course one of the very vital components of northland development is transportation. The study is being carried out under the guidance of a federal-provincial co-ordinating committee and both the various federal and provincial departments will be required to contribute data and, to the extent possible, government resources will be used to conduct this study. However, having said that, we do have some outside consultants actually engaged in part of this work to help pull together the relevant data and to do some surveying and analyzing for us.

The general purpose of the study is to determine what transportation infrastructure and services must be established in Northern Manitoba in order to optimize the economic and social development of the area, and transportation is to be viewed as a means to facilitating these developments and not as an end in itself. The study will delineate: (1) The characteristics of the transportation system at present, its capacity structure, usage and costs, taking into account transportation developments now under way. (2) The future demands projected to be placed on the transportation system. (3) The minimum requirements that must be met. (4) The optimum transportation system required in the future, the cost of achieving the system, and the benefits that can be expected.

Well, I can give the House a lot more detail. I'm not sure whether the House would like to obtain all of this detail, such as, for example, the date requirements; you know, the type of breakdown we're looking at - provincial roads; resource roads; winter roads; regional airports land or water; municipal or local government district air strips land or water; community air strips land or water; emergency air strips land, water; resource air strips land, water; rail systems; marine systems in general, and other private means of transportation over land or water. This data is being tabulated both in statistical chart form and in maps and so forth. Well, there's a lot of detail here.

The point is, however, Mr. Chairman, that this study is a study geared to help us answer some specific questions that will relate to joint federal-provincial investment in transportation systems in the North. It is a, if you want to call it, a practical study of transportation in the North, practical in the sense that it is the basis, it will provide the basis of making specific expenditures in Northern Manitoba. Rather than to go on in a general way to philosophize about transportation and so on, what we are doing is attempting to characterize the Northern Manitoba transportation infrastructure that is required to the year 1995.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder if the Minister can indicate the difference between this study and the study that was completed and known as the Mauro Transportation Study, Mauro Northern Transportation Study.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: Well, first of all, the Mauro Study is about six years old now and the data within it is eight to nine years old. You know, there's always a time lag with the data. Therefore, both our government and the Federal Government feel that this data, the material in this report, is not sufficiently current to make some of the transportation investment decisions that we would like to make.

We recognize, both ourselves and the Federal Government, in our Northlands Agreement we've stated that we recognize the need for up-to-date information on what was in place, you know, exactly what transportation infrastructure is in place, what is now under way - you know, what roads are now being constructed, what rail development are being

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(MR. EVANS cont'd) undertaken. For example, the CNR is upgrading its rail line to Hudson's Bay, to Churchill. We want up-to-date information on what the future can foreseeably hold for us from this point of time, not six years ago; what options for meeting the present and future requirements that we have; and what the anticipated cost and benefits from these options could accrue in total to the province and directly to the users.

I would point out that, you know, times have changed. Just to use one example, the Member from Morris made reference to the high cost of energy today, higher than ever before. This is an important factor that we have to contend with today. We were certainly in a different situation when the Mauro Report was conducted, so that alone, as has already been recognized across the way, is reason enough - is a good example of how we are living in a different situation.

The Northlands Study, I can advise you, was commissioned last November on a cost-shared basis, 60 percent to be paid for by the Federal Government, 40 percent by ourselves, and it is, as I said, a practical study considering that present state of the technology, transportation technology. At the same time, we will be looking at the social and environmental side of costs and benefits in Northern Manitoba.

I might add, by way of example, that . . . I'm not suggesting that we ignore what was in the Mauro Report. What I am saying is we need more information than what was available in the Mauro Report. In fact, the recommendations in the Mauro Report have not been ignored. Many of their recommendations related to the Federal Government and what it should be doing, but there were also those that related to provincial governments. And I might just give the members an idea of what has been carried out provincially in keeping with recommendations in the Mauro Report. In air transportation, minimum air infrastructure recommended for remote communities has been implemented in the 19 communities mentioned, except for Wabowden, which still does not have an air strip.

A MEMBER: . . . highways.

MR. EVANS: In highways up to - this is only up to 1973 - well, at any rate, up to 1973, I'm sure there should be other material more current, but at least up to 1973, there was reference in the Mauro Report that Provincial Trunk Highway No. 6 and Provincial Road 391 be connected. Well, this has been done. That we should pave Provincial Road 391 to Thompson - this has been done. That Lynn Lake should be linked to Thompson - this has been done. That Thompson to Gillam should be connected - and this is partially completed.

In addition, road construction not contemplated in the Mauro Report has taken place, including an all-weather road to Jenpeg and to Kinoosao on Reindeer Lake north of Lynn Lake.

Winter roads. It was recommended by 1978 a winter roads program that would allow the use of wheeled vehicles to Sipiwesk, Cross Lake, Norway House, Oxford House, Lake Narrows, Island Lake, Brochet, Berens River, Little Grand Rapids and Moose Lake. All of these recommendations have been implemented. This has all been achieved.

The Mauro Report recommended that the Provincial Government assume responsibility for the construction and maintenance of winter roads, and this has been done by this government.

Regarding water transportation, regulation of lake carriers has not been implemented as recommended, nor has the central control of communications on the lake been imposed. However, there have been improvements made to this system, I'm advised. Recommendations with regard to the Port of Churchill in the Mauro Report really relate to the Federal Government, but I think it can be said, Mr. Chairman, that we have been relatively successful in getting an investment program going at Churchill that includes dredging and in getting the resupply function initiated this year. I believe the figure, if I recall, was something like \$12 1/2 million for dredging and improvements to the port or harbour facilities at Churchill.

What I really want to emphasize is that the practical transportation recommendations in the Mauro Report have largely been brought to fruition, and its usefulness for further planning, I would submit in all respect, Mr. Chairman, is now limited. However, it has been used as one of the supporting documents for the current Northland Study.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Chairman, I listened with great interest to the Minister and would suggest to him that much of what he says is not accurate.

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(MR. SPIVAK cont'd)

Mr. Chairman, we have a problem here. The Mauro Commission was a major undertaking. It was completed and I believe filed either prior to the new government taking over, filed before the --(Interjection)-- Yes. No, no. Well, the submission date is April 1969, and I assume it was filed . . .

A MEMBER: Filed in the House.

MR. SPIVAK: Yes, I think it was - that is true. Yes, it was filed in the House. It may have been filed - it was filed in the House during the present administration.

I believe that a number of things have happened in the North, and to the extent that they can be allied to or related to recommendations of the Mauro Report, I think one can say that to that extent there may have been either implementation or partial implementation. But as far as I can see, the government has studiously avoided dealing with this report and its working papers. Mr. Chairman, as far as I can see, the government really looked upon this report, as it looked upon a number of other reports commissioned by the previous government, as being irrelevant to their particular concerns and there's no basis for any serious consideration. And, you know, I think we can document this - not only with this report but many others that were advanced.

The problem that I see at this point - and this is a concern that I think has to be expressed - is that for reasons best known to itself, the government ignored this report, ignored the kind of communications that should have been undertaken with the people of the North in dealing with the aspects of this report and in the implementation of policies that would be relevant to their particular needs, that is the needs of the people in the North, as well as the needs of the province; ignored the necessity of pressing the Federal Government for action to a large extent in those areas in which Federal Government action was required, supported by documentation and by the findings of the commission - and I suggest to you that this is probably the most substantial report on northern transportation ever produced in the history of our Federal Government, in the history of Canada, yet that report really was not acted on.

Now we have the government coming through and saying that we need now another \$200,000 to bring up the data and to review it. And I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that that data could be reviewed and could be brought up-to-date by any number of employees within the Department of Industry and Commerce, and should have been maintained on a regular basis, annually, so that the data was current, whatever data was required for consideration.

One of the problems we have is that there is always a tendency on the part of government to suggest that what we're doing now is we're doing things because we're studying. And then after five years we study what we have already studied and bring it up-to-date, and then after a few more years we then study that again, and then what we do is we have people employed studying what has been studied, and then that in itself means that we have, you know, improved - in the First Minister's words - the quality of the human condition. But the reality is that not very much has happened, and the reality here is that not very much really has happened and that there's been a failure to deal with this. In the first case, I think it had to do with the former Minister of Transportation who, among his priorities - and I think this was one of the matters that he had to deal with - felt that he had other matters that were more important to him, and although he may have dealt with this at one point in terms of his own personal rating, did not commit himself to a program with respect to it.

But I charge, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Industry and Commerce as being the one whose primary responsibility should have been to have dealt with and implemented and, you know, reviewed both the working papers and the final documentation of the report, to present to this House in the last few years, annually, programs that would have basically solved the full-scale and comprehensive planning and programming with respect to the implementation of this report. And the thing that is amazing to me is that in the study that's being undertaken - and again, this is the tendency - the Manitoba Northland Agreement is charged, or is heralded at least, as an agreement in which the government and the Federal Government, the Provincial Government and the Federal Government, are working together in the interests of the northern people; and of course very few northern people will be involved in any of the planning; very few northern people are going to be asked about what their wants and needs are; and very few northern people are going to be involved in any of the decision-making that's going to take place.

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(MR. SPIVAK cont'd)

But what we're going to have is we're going to have experts, consultants, again doing what they know best, which is to update data. But what's the purpose of updating data? To say that we've got it updated? And then when we've got it updated, what are we going to do with it? Now, you know, what planning really are we going to do? Are we going to wait then to see whether the Federal Government will support it with some programs, and if they do then we'll proceed, if they don't, we won't? Are you going to excite the expectations of a number of communities in Northern Manitoba as to what will take place? Is there really far-range planning with respect to northern transportation as it affects the total economic development of this province? And is the northern transportation really part of an overall economic plan that has been conceived by the government?

All we have, Mr. Chairman, is continual ad hocery, and that's all we have at this particular time. Ad hocery on everything that ever is undertaken by the government. And one time it may relate and one time it may not relate, and then what will happen is that the Minister will stand up and say, "Well, we've done a number of things." Well I would suggest in five or six years one would have to have done some of the things that would have been recommended here. But the reality is that this was a program which was proposed as a major undertaking, recognizing the needs of the North and the needs of the economy, the need to roll back, you know, to roll back, or uncover at least, the opportunities that existed in the North for development, for the growth of new population, and for the potential as far as the province is concerned.

What we really have is tokenism, and that's really what this is all about. That's what this \$200,000 is, which is part of - and I believe it's \$200,000 - which is part of what is being proposed with the Federal Government, and that to a large extent is what the Northlands Agreement is all about. Which is another question, because all we have is sort of continual studies. And again . . . and I think I can talk with some authority on this because I've talked to what I would consider are people whose position would mean that they should have some contact with the government with respect to economic matters. And transportation is an economic reality, an economic fact, as far as the northern way of life is concerned. And I can say, without any question, that the people in the North are not consulted, nor are they aware, nor do they understand, nor have they been asked to assist in, you know, the development and the creation in the finalization of the policy that will take place.

So, you know, in anticipation, I think, of what would happen, the Minister has read off what I would consider is not very substantial achievement with respect to a report that cost a great deal of money, that has been heralded by many as being the foremost report on northern transportation in Canada, that had and combined the expertise of a substantial number of people who had produced substantial data that largely has been ignored by the government, and now is being heralded as something that the government has seriously implemented. I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that the government really did nothing about this, as they've done nothing with respect to any kind of economic planning, and have gone their merry way, and now are at a point where some additional money is going to be funded, so that it's very good to have another northern transportation study, and to talk to the North that we're updating data and that a few things will happen, this means we have to postpone a lot of decision making with respect to certain pressures. But in reality the kinds of things that should have happened, have not happened. And the kind of developments that could have been undertaken have not been undertaken. Rather than having a comprehensive program of northern transportation and northern development, what we have is the continual ad hocery which simply allows the posturing, which is all this is all about, the posturing that something is going to happen when in reality nothing very much is happening. And one has to question at this point, the continual drain on the public purse for all of this.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, I don't know where the honourable member's mind was and attention was when I referred to these various accomplishments. They cost no small amount of money. The amount of money involved in these transportation improvements has been enormous. I would submit, Mr. Chairman, that more money has probably been spent on northern transportation improvement in the last five years than in perhaps any other period of time, perhaps short of building of the Hudson's Bay Route, the C.N.R. line up to Churchill. I don't know of anything else, don't know of any other period where there's been such intense activity

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(MR. EVANS cont'd)in the improvement of transportation, air, road, and even in rail there have been . . . I haven't taken the time of the House to discuss how we have had many discussions and consultations with the federal authorities on improving of rail service to the North. We managed to get certain northern freight rates down. We have lobbied long and hard for the improvement of the rail bed up to Churchill - this is now being done. We lobbied long and hard for improvement to the Port of Churchill - this is being done. We have, as shown in the budget here, we've now got a Northern Airport Assistance program to help communities in the North that weren't eligible before under the terms of our Airport Assistance program. We've worked on re supply in the North, and so on. But the fact is, Mr. Chairman, that there have been many many things been accomplished in Northern Manitoba that are equally as important as transportation. And I would say that you cannot . . . I would say just in a general way there's been more money spent in Northern Manitoba, more attention being paid to the social and economic development problems in Northern Manitoba in the last five or six years than ever before.

When you talk about involvement of the people, the fact is that there has been considerable involvement. This government has had various committees. There was the study of the North. Surely, that was an effort to communicate with people - the Northern Task Force - people in the Indian Brotherhood were involved, the Northern MLA's were involved, the communities were visited, and so on.

The fact is that we are planning for expenditures that could possibly range in the order of eight to \$10 million per year for the next several years. This could come about. We're suggesting, and the Federal Government is suggesting, that in order to ensure a careful expenditure of these funds that we have to update our data and we have to prepare, not a report that's going to take four or five years to prepare, but a report that should be ready this summer. A plan of action. If anything this is an action report. There has been action, more action is being planned, and there will be action. So, I'm not going to stand and waste the time of this House simply repeating what I have provided a few moments ago in the way of accomplishments in the various forms of transportation improvements that have occurred in Northern Manitoba.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister of Industry and Commerce considers the Mauro Report on action plan. And if he does, then I would like him to indicate that what he has said is the action that they've undertaken. You know the problem that we face with the government is that they spent some money in the last six years. Well all one has to do is look at the estimates and aggregate to know that there have been, you know, additional sums of money that have been earned by taxation, and we are dealing now with a billion dollar budget when before we dealt with a \$300 million budget, to recognize that each year there's going to be additional money spent. And the fact is that a proportion of that money was spent in the North. The fact is that some of the things that have been happening in the North have relevance to the kinds of proposals that the Mauro Commission recommended.

But don't for one moment, Mr. Chairman, and I think this is important for the Minister to, you know, acknowledge this, don't for one moment suggest that somehow or other the government developed or undertook a comprehensive plan and developed a program in which they consciously knew what they were doing in the implementation of some, or a series of recommendations of a major undertaking with respect to the North which would involve and affect both the economic and social development of the area as well as the total development of the North and of the economy of Manitoba.

All I'm suggesting is that in effect, like so much of what has happened, and you know we can just go over and over again of the kinds of reports that never were handled. Essentially what happened here is we had a waste, we really wasted years, that's our problem. We've wasted years because there was no planning and there was no effective leadership in trying to seize the opportunities that were there and recognize that this documentation in this particular area gave us both a bargaining point for the Federal Government, and it also gave us the direction that should be undertaken.

I find it really regrettable, and I must say this, because I find it absolutely regrettable that we are here in 1975 now talking about another Northern Transportation study, now talking about upgrading data to be able to try and see whether we can work another arrangement with respect to the Federal Government for some additional funding. To find that we've wasted so

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(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) many years, literally we've wasted so many years because of the inability of the government to come up with the kind of economic development programming which would have included northern transportation as one part of it. I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that notwithstanding what the Minister says, and I'm not going to be able to convince him, but nor . . . no, I'm quite sure I won't convince him, but notwithstanding what he says, there is no way that he can suggest that the government in any way consciously went ahead to implement this report. They ignored it like they ignored so much of what happened with the previous government, or what was prepared by the previous government, and the people who have suffered are the people in the North.

What's being proposed for them now is something that, first of all, they don't know about. Secondly, it may or may not be tailored to their needs. Thirdly, there's no communication with them and there's no planning with them. And it seems to me that, you know, one has to with a fair amount of skepticism review what has been given to the Minister and say to him, "Well, oh hum, you have now another report. You are now going to get additional data. Based on your past performance, what likely is going to happen"? There'll be new additional money spent in the North. There's bound to be; the North is entitled to it. But I don't think anyone suggests that, you know, in any realistic manner, the Minister, the Cabinet, or the government, have taken hold of the situation, have a full understanding of what they are doing, have very clear objectives set forward for themselves, are trying to target in on those objectives. Rather what they're trying to do is muddle their way through, and you know, it's unfortunate that in some cases where there was no basic leadership shown by way of information supplied and decisions as a result of study, and that it was therefore understandable that no action could take place. In this particular area where there was direction, where there was planning indicated, where there were proposals that were recommended, where there was an opportunity for substantial gains, that we really wasted those years, and wasted a fair amount of the result that could have occurred.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, we've just heard a lot of balderdash. Absolute idiot statements. I just simply told you . . . I told you a few minutes ago, but you didn't listen, that every practical major recommendation made in the Mauro Report has been already implemented. Now what else is there left to be implemented? You tell me, what is left to be implemented? You talk about action. Everything's been implemented except one thing, and that is a highway from Thompson right through to Churchill, by the year 1978. And that, Mr. Chairman, is a phenomenal cost factor, and there are some major questions as to whether that is a practical way to proceed. Whether one should build a highway along side of the Hudson's Bay railway route, the C.N.R. route up there. I think that . . . talk about the waste of energy, etc., and funding, I question the construction of a highway at this stage in Manitoba's history between Thompson and Churchill. It would be far better I would think to promote the use of the railway between Thompson and Churchill in whatever way we might promote it.

But there are no significant recommendations in the Mauro Report pertaining to actual putting in place of transportation infrastructure or transportation improvements that we could have any control over, that have been missed. In fact I believe there have been none that have been missed. And the trouble with the Mauro Report is that we want to get on with the job of spending between eight to 10 million dollars a year for the next many years, and we can't get on with the job of spending that funding, of spending these dollars in an efficient, careful, rational manner without an updated set of statistics and a plan of action, which will be completed within the next two to three months. And that is the requirement of the Federal Government and we, too, would require . . . we would be utterly foolish to go ahead and consider expenditures of that magnitude in a vast area such as we're talking about, without some type of action plan. And that's exactly what we're talking about.

Mr. Speaker, for the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition to get up and decry the lack of action is utter nonsense. The fact is that this government, more than any government in the past, has paid attention to Northern Manitoba. Which government established the Department of Northern Affairs? The fact that we have an entire department dedicated to the North speaks for itself. And as I said, we've spent millions of dollars in the past five or six years. We've completed all of the major recommendations, and we're going on doing more. With the co-operation of the department of Regional Economic Expansion we expect to do an awful lot

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(MR. EVANS cont'd) . . . more of the people in the North in the years ahead.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has indicated that they are waiting to complete the study to be able to spend eight or 10 million dollars a year for many years. I'm not sure whether he said five years or six years. But we're talking maybe 40, 50 million. I wonder if he can indicate what they hope to accomplish with the 40 or 50 million dollars if everything that has been recommended in the Mauro Report has been done. What are they going to do with the 40 or 50 million dollars?

MR. EVANS: Well, you know, this is what the study is for, to . . . you know, I have some ideas what should be done. The Minister of Northern Affairs has an idea of what should be done. The Minister of Mines has an idea. The Minister of Renewable Resources has an idea. The people in the area have an idea. The MLAs in the North have some idea. The elected representatives in municipalities have some ideas. We are putting together a priority list of plan of action. Certainly in many areas, additional airport improvement, additional highway construction, and I only mention those as two. But there are other obvious areas of improvement, including water. There are many many things that have to be done, and will be done. But we're going to do them efficiently and rationally, and we're going to do them on a basis of priority.

MR. SPIVAK: My understanding of what the Minister is saying is that there is going to be Federal money available which the Provincial Government would like to get their hands on. And it could be available between eight and 10 million dollar amounts, but a study is needed, and then when we know the study, then we will determine what our priorities are, when we determine our priorities, then we'll decide what we're going to do. At the present time, by undertaking a study we're still not sure what we want to do, and that in effect the Commission's report that was commissioned some several years ago has been implemented. And, Mr. Chairman, I don't think that washes very well. I think that, you know, there's a great deal that has to be done, a great deal that was not done, or has not been completed from the Mauro Report itself. It was a pretty comprehensive undertaking.

The thing that concerns me again is, again the sort of ad hocery that appears to be the issue. We're going to get hold of some money, which the Federal Government will be funding a great deal of it, and we're going to try to set priorities, and we're going to try and do something. What we're going to do, we don't know because we have to determine it. The government has no basic plan but we'll hope that as a result of the data being brought up that we will then be able to determine it.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I come back to something else. Who best are the people to make the decisions as to what the priorities should be? I accept the fact that the government may very well have to make a decision as to the way in which they're prepared to fund, but the people who are going to know what the priorities in the North should be are the people in the North. You know, I asked the Minister if the Northern Regional Development Corporation - have they been involved in the planning of this transportation study? Are they even aware of it? Are they even aware that somehow or other there's going to be eight or 10 million dollars available for Northern Manitoba for transportation? And would it be important and relevant to hear what they consider are the priority issues as to what should be undertaken? Should there not be some kind of consultation with them to determine what they think should take place? Or are we going to have the data and then after we have the data, then you'll make the decision what the priorities are, and then you'll proceed? You see it just doesn't wash and it's not something that, you know, can be packaged.

You know, the Minister kept referring and, you know, he did this very slyly, he kept referring to a practical study. You know, a practical transportation study, when he referred to the Mauro Report. And he did that, and I say that, and I characterize it that way, as if somehow or other there was a suggestion that somehow or other this was an impractical report. I'm not so sure how impractical it is if, using his own words, they accepted all of it and they've done all of it. --(Interjection)-- The practical suggestions - so there were some suggestions that weren't implemented. But you just acknowledged that you said that everything that was required was done. Well, if you acknowledge everything that was required was done, then there's no point of suggesting in any way . . . --(Interjection)-- Well, if all the major action plans that were recommended, then I would say it was a pretty practical study. And then I do not see the reference continually - and he used that word several times . . . Well, but the

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(MR. SPIVAK cont'd)reference to practical study and practical transportation program gives a suggestion . . .which gives a suggestion of an implication which I think has serious implications and goes to the quality of this particular report.

Now again, Mr. Chairman, I find the whole procedure unusual. What I sense is that the government is going to have available to it some federal funding out of the extension of the DREE Northlands Agreement, that in order to get that money a study has to be undertaken, and then when the study is undertaken then they'll get the money, and then they'll do whatever they can do at that point. I find this a very unusual way of handling priorities and without an overall development program, and without, you know, a basic approach, I find that this is again a kind of ad hocery and tokenism, which may accomplish some results because the money is being spent, but certainly is not effective, and certainly it is not the kind of approach that should be dealt with in terms of Northern Manitoba. For the life of me, I cannot understand how a government can intend to set priorities with respect to the North without consultation with the people in the North, because the people in the North are in a position to indicate those priorities. They're the ones that should be part of that transportation study, and should have been there initially, not after the fact, and not after the decisions have been made, and not after the direction has been given, and not after the Cabinet has realized or the decision as to what the priorities will be. If anything can happen out of this debate that we have, is that the people of the North should be consulted because they'll be in a very clear position to start setting up where the priorities are.

MR. EVANS: Well, Mr. Chairman, you know, we can repeat, I suppose, ourselves, ad infinitum here, but I'm going to repeat this because the Honourable Leader of the Opposition keeps on suggesting that somehow or other the people in the North have not been consulted. The fact is, the people of the North have been consulted. The people of the North are being consulted. The people of the North will be consulted. And I'm especially pleased that the five senior spokesmen for the North are right here on the government side to speak loudly and clearly for their people, the five senior spokesmen who have been democratically elected in the North, the entire North is represented on the government side. And not only that, I believe three out of five of them are in the Cabinet, and one of them is the Minister of Northern Affairs. Now, if the North isn't represented in government now, I don't know how they can possibly, how we can possibly better represent Northern concerns than we are at the present time, in government - in government the voice of the North is being heard loudly and clearly.

A MEMBER: Too loud.

MR. EVANS: Too loud? Mr. Chairman, the fact is that our priority, our objective is to meet the needs of the people, all of the people in the North, not just one element, not just the people in certain of the larger centres in the North, but the people in the remote areas; all people, not just one segment of the community, not just the business community, not just the professional community, not just the labour community, but all the people, people in the remote areas as well as the people in the towns and cities in the North.

And, Mr. Chairman, the Northlands Agreement, which we have signed, allows for an ultimate raising or elevation of northern transportation standards to be equal to the standards of southern transportation, to the extent that this is possible. That is ultimately our ideal, our objective, to bring up the level of transportation to that which now exists in southern Manitoba. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition continues to talk about ad hocery. --(Interjection)--The transportation plan is only part of a general northern economic and social development plan. But on the one hand he accuses of ad hocery and in the next breath he complains that we're spending a couple of hundred thousand dollars to prepare a plan. So you can't have it both ways. You can't say that we're engaging in ad hocery, and in the same breath criticizing us for engaging in an action plan in co-operation with the Federal Government. We are planning our program. We are itemizing our priorities and we can't, I repeat, Mr. Chairman, we can't do a good job of the kind of action I'm talking about in the year 1967, 1977, 1978, and years following, based on statistics of a report that contains statistics on the situation that existed in 1966, 10 years ago.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder if the Minister is suggesting that there is a northern economic plan. Is the Minister suggesting that?

A MEMBER: Name the plan.

MR. EVANS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we have formulated elements of the northern plan

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(MR. EVANS cont'd)and are continuing to develop this plan. But you know, having said that, I want to remind the honourable member that we've had the Northern Task Force and we've had a great deal of communication and consideration of the future of the North and the problems facing the North, with the people of the North.

MR. SPIVAK: And then I take it from the Minister, that what he's suggesting is that this study is part of the elements of a northern plan.

MR. EVANS: Well it is part of a total plan. A total plan involves, you know - you don't do a plan forever and a day. A good economic and social plan is one that has to be updated every year. You have to. I mean, you have to see where you've gone, what you've accomplished, what you haven't accomplished. You have to take into account changing factors, and you have to make modifications. And it's an ongoing process. The fact that we have signed a major Northlands Agreement with the Federal Government I think is indicative of the carrying out, should be indicative of the carrying out of the various objectives and targets that we would like to achieve for the uplifting of the quality of life and standard of living of the people in Northern Manitoba.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Chairman, I think that we will probably conclude this item but I would just like to review what I think the Minister has said, and he may object to my interpretation and may want to rebut it.

My understanding is that what is being proposed here is a study which would be part of the elements of a northern plan, the study undertaken so as to determine how the provincial administration will be able to realize some 8 or 10 million dollars that may be available from the Federal Government, so that the elements of the northern plan really at this point is to see how much money we're going to be able to get from the Federal Government to be able to put up North and spend for something that could be worthwhile. I have to suggest, Mr. Chairman, that that's a very far cry from the development of a total objective or the setting up of certain criteria, or certain goals to be achieved, and directing one's attention to what one has to do. I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that the elements that he is talking about are the kind of elements of ad hocery to a total program, which I think, can be rationalized by the Minister by suggesting that something will happen. But really it is an indication of more of a bankruptcy of policy, and a failure in policy, than any kind of achievement.

The fact that money's been spent and as a result certain things have happened, the fact that there have been some gains, no one's going to deny. But one has to say, well, what does it really all mean, and where are we going and, you know, in total in terms of the kind of development we want, how are we going to achieve what we set as our targets? And I see nothing in anything that he's said that indicates that this has been done, and I would suggest that in many respects it really is a testimony to what I think has been the essential weakness of the administration, of which he is a part, in dealing with the problem areas, and in planning and in readjusting as one would have to when matters or circumstances alter and change.

But at this point, all I can see to a large extent, has been, you know, essential failures in the overall dynamic way that the government should have undertaken its economic responsibilities with respect to the North and one has to . . . you know, and one has to I think appreciate the fact that the Federal Government has been prepared to come forward with money to advance to the Provincial Government, to assist in the development of the North, and one has to be thankful, at least, for that effort on their part, because I think without that we would have had absolutely nothing.

MR. EVANS: Yes, you know, Mr. Chairman, I'm not going to prolong this. Obviously the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition, he says, "Well, you know, nothing has been done" or words to that effect. But you know, I would suggest linking Lynn Lake to Thompson is not "nothing;" paving PR391 to Thompson is not "nothing;" connecting PTH No. 6 with Provincial Road 391 is not "nothing;" the completion of air infrastructure, airstrips in 19 communities in the North is not "nothing."

A MEMBER: Right on.

MR. EVANS: There has been lots done. I think there's been so much done that the Honourable Member, the Leader of the Opposition is embarrassed by the amount of activity that has actually taken place, thanks to the concerns and activities, the action of this government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution (f)(3)(b)--The Honourable Member for Roblin.

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MR. J. WALLY McKENZIE (Roblin): One brief question regarding the Brandon area grain study that was carried out in conjunction with the Minister's office. I understand that in that study there was, according to the annual report of the Department of Highways, that considerable input was put into that study to develop a new transportation system, or a better transportation system for the area north of Brandon, and I wonder if the Honourable Minister would elaborate what that study has shown, and what kind of a transportation system we can expect in the area north of Brandon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: I don't know whether I heard the member correctly, but he referred to the report of the Minister of Highways. Is this pertinent to highway development? If it is, I suggest you talk to the Minister of Highways, or the Acting Minister of Highways - if it is highway development. You know, let's not get off . . . But if you're talking about a study, this was carried out by the Canada Grains Council, this was not our study. I think one of our members, one, maybe two, I don't know, may have served on some sub-committee or some technical committee. But we did not carry out a grain handling system study; it was done by the Canada Grains Council, I believe.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Chairman, it's spelled out here, unless this is not factual. But it says, "The Brandon Area Grain Study. A study commissioned by the Canada Grains Council and co-ordinated at the Provincial level by the Department of Industry and Commerce."

MR. EVANS: Yes. Possibly the provincial inputs of data, you know, the information might have been coordinated by our staff. But we did not co-ordinate that study. We may have helped co-ordinate the provincial inputs of data. We did not co-ordinate that study.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Chairman, we'd better get the Highways Department to withdraw that other annual statement because it's there. I'm certainly concerned because I represent the area north of Brandon as to, you know, what type of a transportation system do they come up with as . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution - The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: Yes. I think the honourable member appreciates that it was a study of the Movement of Grain, eh? It was a technical study that related to the optimization of grain elevators, you know, the location of grain elevators, and it related to branchline activities. And I, for one, am not happy with some of the results of the Canada Grains Council study. We are not associated with any conclusions or study or report of that organization.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution (f)(3)--passed; (4)-- The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BANMAN: I wonder if the Minister would tell us the \$200,000 for the northern airport assistance, is that earmarked for specific airports, and if so, I wonder which ones.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: They're not earmarked for specific airports. But there are two or three areas that might be coming forth with an application, I believe there is a town near - yes - places such as Leaf Rapids and Grand Rapids might qualify. Also places such as Bissett, Ilford, Pikwitonei, Pukatawagan, Sherridon, Thicket Portage and Nelson House might qualify, and they might be interested, but you know, I'm just giving you some examples but it depends on the initiative of the local community and as in the case of the southern airport assistance program.

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Chairman, do I understand the Minister correctly then, it's special assistance that will be granted to the northern airports along the same lines as was granted to the airports in southern Manitoba, the municipal airports.

MR. EVANS: Well, we have not finally set down the criterion for assistance or the - maybe that's not the way to put it - we haven't set down finally the levels of assistance that will be available. But I can tell you that the amounts will likely be higher than for a southern airport facilities, or southern communities for two reasons:

1. These communities tend to be more isolated than those in the south and don't have the same number of options for alternative forms of transportation; and
2. The costs of construction are considerably higher in the North given the mere fact of the relative remoteness of any of these communities.

MR. BANMAN: I wonder if the Minister, and I realize that we've passed that one particular item, but I wonder if he would just be able to inform us whether the \$500 maintenance grant which is presently being paid to municipal airports that did take advantage of the

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(MR. BANMAN cont'd) department's airport expansion grants, if that will remain stationary or if there was an increase budgeted for.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, this is a matter of policy that has yet to be finally decided upon. We're looking at the matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution (f)(4) --passed; Resolution (f)--passed.

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty the sum not exceeding \$3,306,200 for Industry and Commerce--passed.

Resolution 68(a)(1)--passed; (2)--passed; (b)(1)--passed-- The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BANMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just wondering, and I don't want to belabor at this point because I think we've gone through it before, we went through it while discussing Science and Technology, but I would be interested in knowing if the Minister will be doing a study with regard to Crocus Foods and the effect it will have on the small co-operatives as well as the other plants throughout Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, as I indicated earlier in this debate, that the primary responsibility for this is being handled by the Minister of Agriculture, who's also the Minister responsible for the Milk Control Board for Manitoba, and therefore that question and that problem essentially remains with that Minister. We are prepared, as always, to provide assistance, but the initiation and the implementation is the responsibility of that Minister.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder if the Minister can indicate whether his department dealing with the food industries has been dealing with a major potato processor for the commencement of a new plant in Manitoba.

MR. EVANS: I am advised by my staff, Mr. Chairman, that we are talking to two or three groups, but I don't want to go beyond that at this time. But that is under consideration and it is not in the public interest to discuss detailed names.

MR. SPIVAK: I appreciate that, but I have to indicate to the Minister that the Chairman of the Manitoba Development Corporation did mention one name at the meeting this morning, and it comes into play because he indicated that the person was either considering, or had been considering - but not personally, the company had been considering - coming into Manitoba. And the question came out - and I don't want to misquote him out of context, but it came out in dealing with the possible expansion of Morden Fine Foods into the potato-processing field, and I wonder whether there has been any discussion within the department, or any concerns expressed by those who deal with the particular corporations, that if the government enters into the food-processing or potato-processing plan, which will be involved in the proposed expansion of Morden Fine Foods, that it would in any way jeopardize the opportunity that could come here for a major potato-processing operation.

MR. EVANS: Well, I don't think we have enough information to answer that. I . . . Excuse me a moment. Yes, well we're not aware that the talked-of expansion of Morden would have a negative effect on these two or three groups but, you know, it's hard to say. You must appreciate the fact that in industry sectors there are often many companies that are, you know . . . Well, take the clothing industry. There are many firms involved in it. The same thing is true in the metal fab The same thing is true in meat processing and so on. And I think in this case, the more the better, you know. If there's an opportunity for additional activity, well so be it, you know, if there's a commercial basis for this.

MR. SPIVAK: May I put it in another way to the Minister? There is no reason to believe that an expansion, the government is at least not seized of any information or is in a position to believe that an expansion of Morden Fine Foods into a potato operation, frozen potato operation, would in any way jeopardize an opportunity that is now being discussed or considered - discussed with the department or considered for Manitoba, is he in a position to assure us that there is no possibility that that will prevent that opportunity from taking place.

MR. EVANS: You know, again, we're not in a position really to comment categorically on this. You know, we're dealing with two or three companies and I would not think that they would be detrimentally . . . their decision to go ahead would not be affected by a decision that might or might not be taken with regard to Morden Fine Foods.

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MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, you know, I have a question for the Honourable Minister at this particular time dealing in the food processing area, and it's a question that I want to ask him. Do you ever fight with your Minister of Agriculture, your colleague? I mean, the way I used to fight with my colleague, my leader, when he was the Minister of Industry and Commerce when we had, you know, serious and legitimate problems involving the marketing and the potential processing industrialization of some of our agricultural products. I see a smile on one of your staff member's face. I think he recalls some of those arguments. Why, some of those very same staff members even used to get nasty with each other, that's how involved these matters used to be. Never at the ministerial level, mind you, but these were the kind of honest, defensive and offensive battles that took place from time to time. But I'm referring specifically to, you know, the processing industry, the food-processing industry, and the degree and area of conflict that sometimes arises with the policies of your colleague, the Minister of Agriculture.

For instance, I don't know whether you were in the Chamber before when I quoted from this month's Canada Poultryman in another speech some time ago, and they speak, for instance, about the future of the chicken business, and I suppose wherever there's chickens there are sooner or later some eggs around, so we can talk about eggs too. But it talks about . . . For instance, this is the kind of thing that I suspect that your department should be concerned about, Mr. Minister, and I'm asking the question: Are you ever concerned about it? Do you ever raise it with your colleague, the Minister of Agriculture? Is there any position that the department takes on now, or have we now moved to the point already where we've passed that boat by and now it's just a question of whether or not one of your own government-sponsored operations are going to keep in or bring in or prevent a new development taking place in our province? Which would seem to be the course that my leader was just taking with you a little while ago with respect to a potential potato-processing industry.

But this statement, Mr. Minister, should concern you. Self sufficiency may be a dirty word today, just as "marketing board" was ten or twelve years ago, but it does make sense. You know, what they're saying is it makes sense to grow chickens and broilers in the Montreal area. And you know why, of course, it makes sense to the writer of this editorial? It's because we, the western grain farmer, with his tax money and the eastern tax money, we subsidize. We grow this grain out here and through the eastern Feed Trade Assistance Program, we pay up to \$10.00, \$12.00, \$15.00 a ton, so that our barley can be bought cheaper in Montreal than it can be bought in Beausejour, Manitoba. Oh yes, that's a fact. That is a fact.

Now, how can we correct that, Mr. Minister? And what is your ministry doing about trying to at least express some concern about that if we are going to develop, you know, the potential that I've always believed we have in this province, potential that my leader has spoken of very often as Minister of Industry and Commerce and as leader of our group, and certainly one that you can't have completely passed by, you know, the potential of the food processing industry in this province?

Now your colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, he agrees to this concept by sitting down with CEMA, by sitting down and forming a National Egg Marketing Board or Chicken Marketing Board, on which right from the start he knows that the same political muscle will hold place that exists in Ottawa on the political scene right now. He knows that he will be facing, he'll be sending one Manitoba delegate, one Saskatchewan delegate, and one Alberta delegate, to meet up with 18 Quebec and Ontario delegates around the CEMA Board of Directors. And they will decide and allocate where to produce eggs in this country, not where it's regionally economic sense to produce eggs, not where we can do it best, not where we can serve the consumer best.

Mr. Minister, I'm prepared to wish you all the luck, and I hope as a Manitoban that maybe our Flyer buses will come off the line successfully. I'm hoping that some day our airplanes will fly, with or without the help of the cartoonist depicting the Minister responsible right now. But nonetheless, I am sure, Mr. Minister, you share my concern that we will never really replace the golden, industrial triangle of Hamilton, Ottawa and Toronto in terms of being the major heart land of industry in this country. We will continue, by and large, to buy our refrigerators and our cars and our other heavy industrial appliances and machinery from that area. But surely, Mr. Minister, it's not unreasonable to suggest that we in the

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(MR. ENNS cont'd) prairies, the bread basket of North America, we can be expected to put some of the food products on the tables of those people living in Toronto, Montreal or British Columbia. And that's not going to happen. That's not going to happen. People in Ontario and Quebec will be producing our eggs and be producing our broilers. We get most of our broilers right now from California because of marketing board interference. Have you checked lately the product supply that goes through organizations such as Champs, or Colonel Saunders, and what have you, where their product supply is coming from?

Mr. Minister, these are some of the arguments that I think, if nothing else than for history's reason, you should be resurrecting every once in a while with your colleague the Minister of Agriculture around the Cabinet table. Mr. Minister, if you asked your staff, they could dig up some of the old arguments that my leader used to have when we argued about these matters. The only trouble is he didn't really have to argue all that hard because philosophically we were in tune. I suspect that the same thing is true today too, that philosophically you are in tune with your Minister of Agriculture, which is for a total supply of management, for abrogating our natural economic privileges in this area and putting them in the hands of a centralist board, a centralist board on which we know in advance we haven't got the clout, we haven't got the power to deal ourselves a fair hand. And we should not then complain if ten years from now, or five years from now, that has happened to our agricultural industry, and particularly that element that could be funnelled into the food-processing industry. We should then not complain.

Mr. Minister, I made the statement before, I make it again: I don't think there should be too many eggs laid in the Province of British Columbia, or chickens grown, or broilers fattened in the Province of British Columbia, not if it takes taxpayers' money to send Western Manitobans' prairie grain out there.

A MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. ENNS: I don't think there should be too many eggs processed, chickens, broilers raised in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario. Not if it takes western and Manitoba grain to be subsidized down there.

Now, before all this garbage started, 55 percent of the eggs brought into the Toronto market came from Manitoba alone, and we are now to the point where we're talking about self-sufficiency. Well self-sufficiency means stagnation, economic strangulation for us, unless, Mr. Minister, you are really prepared to give up the food-processing area in favour of the higher risk games such as Saunders and Flyer. Mr. Minister, I would hope that you would address yourselves to that. I don't know, do we go into Private Members at 4:30? Well then, all the better, Mr. Chairman. He will have time to resurrect, going back into the files of 1966 and 1967, check some of the files, some of the arguments that your staff prepared for the then Minister of Industry and Commerce for presentation in Cabinet on this very subject matter.

Also by the way, Mr. Minister, check some of the potential developments that could have come and were coming this way in this particular area, which are so natural to this region, so natural to our province, and ones that surely have to be given top priority. I hear so little about this subject matter from this Minister. I congratulate the Minister's efforts in the Morden area, the Morden canned foods. I would hope that that succeeds and continues to succeed. But, sir, it's this kind of garbage that is being flouted across the land that locks us into a position that is not acceptable, should not be acceptable to a Minister of Industry and Commerce in the Province of Manitoba, of whatever political stripe. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY - DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS

MR. CHAIRMAN (Mr. Walding): Order please. I would direct the attention of members to Page 28 in their Estimates Book. Before we begin are there any matters of procedure that members think we should clarify before we begin?

MR. McKELLAR: Mr. Chairman, I was wondering if the Deputy Minister will be able to reply in a committee such as this, like they are certain to ask questions that the Minister may be just not aware of the answers. Is that going to be . . . here?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, this is the Committee of Supply and exactly the same procedure will be in effect here as in the House, that the Minister will reply to all questions. The Honourable Minister.

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HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Acting Minister of Highways) (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Chairman, just on that point, it's my understanding that when we meet in committee outside of the House that it is permissible, of course if the Minister concurs, that a staff member could reply to a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Rules Committee that was meeting on this question, that there will be no difference in the procedure that the Minister answers, the Minister can confer with his Deputy, and it is no different than what the procedure is in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further matters? The Honourable Member for Virden. Use the microphone please.

MR. MCGREGOR: I just wanted to ask, Mr. Chairman, if there's any way of having maps of the province because we know this is a big program for some of us to talk to a corner that none of the rest are familiar with. Is there any way of bringing an enlarged map of Manitoba so we're pinpointing just where each problem is? Would it be easier to get our point across indeed, so the Acting Minister understands just what it is that we're . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I want to pursue the procedural question further. The House Leader advised me that in committee we would proceed on the basis that I would respond to questions directly, or if I chose I could ask a staff member to respond and on the basis of that information we were preparing our presentation.

Now, I wonder whether there's a confusion on the rules, or whether there's been a subsequent meeting and a subsequent understanding, because that was the latest information that was given to me.

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

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Chairman, the fact that the Minister of Agriculture is filling in, and obviously he's not going to be very familiar with the department, but I think that the Member for, or Mr. Shafransky is correct in saying that, well, we'll allow all the latitude we can. The Minister should really reply because many of the statements - they're going to be statements as well as questions - they are going to be political in a sense, and the Minister should take that responsibility. This is not to say that we won't allow all sorts of latitude to confer with the Deputy Ministers and any others that he wishes to, but I think that the Minister should answer for the department, even though it is rather awkward for the Minister of Agriculture.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, I was not a member of the committee which established the changes and brought these two - I understand there's going to be two departments taken out of the Chamber - but the understanding that I had in talking with the members that did make the rule change, was that we were to try an innovative program in taking a department out of the Chamber so that we could probably have a freer type of discussion than normally exists within the Chamber. So when the Member for Radisson says that we are going to follow the same procedure, sir, that does somewhat concern me because how are we going to effect change if we cannot try in a co-operative manner some other means of examination in which we get a freer exchange and additional information which members of the committee so often request. And I would hope that we would not be so hidebound and traditionally oriented that we cannot afford to try some new innovative methods. And I would hope that the committee co-operate and really try and improve our system of examination.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Mr. Chairman, I agree that we should co-operate, and I can't understand why the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell would try to change the rules as this committee is sitting, because the Rules Committee met on this issue over a number of days. The member on the Rules Committee was the Member for Morris and the Member for Fort Garry, were in agreement, in fact there were certain aspects of this that they had to take back to their caucus to get the concurrence of their caucus, that was brought back to committee, the rules were accepted on an interim basis to see how it works. For us to begin to try to introduce new ideas of a freer exchange - I'm sure that there's going to be a freer exchange - however the whole idea of two departments meeting concurrently to discuss the estimates was that they would follow the same procedure as if they were in the House.

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(MR. SHAFRANSKY cont'd)

Now, I think from there we should proceed and let the Minister proceed with the introduction of his department in the same manner as we've had the experience and the practice in the House.

MR. GRAHAM: That was a much better speech than last night's, Harry.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Yes, thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. If there are no other matters of procedure to be clarified, I'll call on the Honourable Acting Minister of Highways.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, let me first of all say that I regret to be in this position, and it's my wish that the Minister of Highways have a complete and full recovery within a very short period of time, and that he will be back with us in a position to, perhaps more fully respond and relate to the members of the Legislature with respect to programs over which he has responsibility.

The comments that I am going to make today will largely be his comments in that I'm going to go through the document that was prepared by him, and therefore I think that it will be almost as if the Minister himself were addressing the meeting.

Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to present the Department of Highways 1975 Estimates. The programs we are proposing will come as close as humanly possible to meet the needs of the citizens of Manitoba, bearing in mind the restrictions imposed on these programs by escalating costs. I am extremely proud of the performance of the department from the newest recruit to the seasoned veterans, and I would like to commend the Deputy Minister, Joe Brako, for his usual fine performance in the past year.

To start my remarks, Mr. Chairman, I would like to refer to the Highways Branch as part of the government's concern for people. The department wishes to see the total transportation picture in our province balanced in such a way as to provide the maximum mobility of people and goods no matter where within our province.

This road program, which I have tabled, outlines what I believe is an excellent approach to meeting the immediate transportation needs of our province and its people, as well as an excellent return for our dollars. Each of us, Mr. Chairman, knows only too well the effects of inflation over the last few years. Inflation, of course, affects our department, and possibly more so than others, since construction costs are one of the chief components of that inflation. So we have our largest budget ever, but I submit, Mr. Chairman, that from the time that we sent our program to the printers to the time it was received, the program was already a bit out of date because of inflation costs.

So, Mr. Chairman, I wish to emphasize that for the first time in several years this department has presented a program that we may find difficult to live with because of these escalating cost problems. I am therefore, requesting my colleagues in the House to consider this program as a priority program, and can only assure the House that every effort will be made to meet as much of this program as is humanly possible, weather permitting of course.

On a number of occasions I have heard the Opposition remark that this government is increasing the civil service at an alarming rate. I have also heard them say that the government is incapable of being good managers, and to this, Mr. Chairman, I would like to give a few replies using my own department as a measuring stick.

Despite the fact that the expenditures of this branch increased by 106 percent over the last five years, our staff increase only represented 4.6 percent and this represented some 14 positions. If this is bad management, Mr. Chairman, then I would like to know what we would call the increases in staff during years under the previous administration, which far outstripped the less than one percent annual increase for staff-man-years as occurred during the government's tenure in office.

Mr. Chairman, the Highways Branch expenditures may be broken down to the following headings: Construction \$48,000,000; Maintenance, \$20,300,000; Aids \$12,000,000; Administration, \$6,800,000.

The mileage of the various types of work that will be completed this year may be summarized as follows: Grading, 312 miles; gravelling, 258 miles; gravel base course, 268 miles; asphalt surface treatment, 148 miles; bituminous surfacing, 181 miles; concrete pavement, 8 miles.

It would of course, be incorrect to assume that the actual volume of construction in each

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(MR. USKIW cont'd) of the last number of years was directly proportional to the amount of money expended; increased costs have taken their toll. Due to the limited number of comparisons possible, varying soil conditions, moisture conditions, design standards, etc., it is impossible to determine with any great degree of accuracy the extent to which costs have increased during the last few years. Our construction and maintenance fund have, I believe, kept pace with the increasing costs.

Every effort is being made to keep our construction cost at the lowest possible level, consistent with good construction practice. Three methods in particular are used to endeavour to keep costs to a minimum. These methods may be described as follows:

1. Advance construction programs are being planned and adopted. This advance planning gives utilities time in which to move their lines, allows adequate time for acquisition of right-of-way, and gives our engineering staff time to analyze all possible types of designs.

2. The following is an indication of the number and value of contracts awarded in recent years.

Calendar year 1971, the number of contracts were 169 for a value of \$23,346,000.

1972, we had 154 contracts for a value of \$25,354,000.

1973, we had 164 contracts for the value of \$29,568,000.

1974, 151 contracts with a value of \$32,886,000.

The value of contracts mentioned does not include materials supplied by the department. Costs of right-of-way, moving utility lines, engineering, etc., the cost of these items is added to the value of the contracts and the value of work done by contract becomes a very high percentage of our total construction expenditures.

3. By advertising a number of our projects during the winter months, a certain amount of winter work is created and both contractors and engineers have a maximum of time during which to plan their summer operations. In December, 1974, an advance advertisement containing projects having a total value of approximately \$12,000,000 was placed. As of now it appears that all but two of these will be awarded by mid-April. Construction costs of the new work in our 1975-76 program are presently estimated to be in the neighbourhood of \$59,000,000. In addition to our regular program this will provide funds for highway strengthening under an agreement with the Government of Canada and also for projects included in the Western Northlands Agreement with the Government of Canada.

The program also contains funds for acquisition of right-of-way at various locations which is in keeping with our announced intention of working toward a three-year advanced program. This will enable the department to proceed on such projects without undue delay when priorities indicate that they should be scheduled.

As you are probably aware, some of our weight in our primary system of highways has been increased to 110,000 pounds. Increases of 80,000 pounds have also taken place on some of our PTHs and PRs. Mr. Chairman, I want to emphasize that these weight increases will be of little benefit to the people of Manitoba, if the local authorities on highways in cities, towns and villages in this province do not pass complementary by-laws to allow these weights to enter urban areas. I have received many complaints in the last few weeks on this matter and can assure you that the province is not in a position to enforce these weight increases on urban traffic authorities. Unless these authorities' attitudes decide to pass complementary by-laws we may be forced to reevaluate our weight increase program.

The second item that I would like to mention, Mr. Chairman, involves criticism that I have received from one or two members who have made several statements in the last years that I have had my department investigated. Mr. Chairman, I am at a complete loss to find where he has received information. For example, they stated on several occasions that municipalities spent more money and kept the roads in better condition prior to the time that the province took over these PRs, and this I have found to be completely false. For example, in 1955 in the constituency of Arthur the municipality spent a sum of \$86,000 on road maintenance and construction, including the government grants. In 1961, under the same set-up they spent \$130,000, again the constituency of Arthur. Finally, in the last year of operation the municipality and the constituency of Arthur spent \$192,577.27. Compare that with, Mr. Chairman, with the fact that in 1965-66 after the province took over these PRs, the total spending was \$373,358. In 1970 the total was approximately \$400,000 up to the 1973-74 fiscal year. The province spent \$740,784 in the constituency of Arthur.

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(MR. USKIW cont'd)

I would also like to make a few remarks concerning the Motor Vehicles Branch of our department. This branch is also coping with major problems, but again I would like to commend this branch from the newest recruit to the seasoned veterans for the fine job they have performed, and I would like to especially commend Mr. Peter Dygala the Registrar of this branch. In 1974 there were approximately 450,000 drivers licenced, an increase of 30,000 over previous years. And in addition to a further 40,000 learners' permits issued. There were approximately 506,000 vehicles registered as compared to 486,000 registered in the previous year. There were 33,500 snowmobiles registered as of December 31st, 1974.

Although there was a reduction in the number of motor vehicle accidents during the period, convictions, driver improvement and control actions, together with public inquiries relating to driver insurance and driver improvement action, increased dramatically. Accidents decreased by 10 percent in 1974, but fatalities dropped by 15 percent and injuries were reduced by approximately 13 percent.

Studies are being conducted on methods of improving the accident report form in order to assist the police in the completion of the form, and also to make it readily understandable by the public. It is anticipated that the new Accident Report Form will be more easily completed and more readily processed.

There was approximately a 22 percent increase in the number of criminal code convictions, primarily in the area involving drinking and driving. There's also been a substantial increase in the number of convictions under the Highway Traffic Act.

In the Driver Improvement and Control field, there was an increase of approximately 19 percent in the number of drivers suspended in 1974 as compared to 1973. The total number of suspended drivers stood at 24,000 at the end of the year.

Over 4,700 hearings were conducted in 1974, and indications are in 1975 the number will be increased to well over 6,000.

Approximately 3,500 drivers were referred for driver improvement action at the various driver testing facilities throughout the province. It was proposed that in - and here I have a page upside down . . .

MR. ENNS: Read it anyway, Sam.

MR. USKIW: In 1975, hearings of drivers to show cause why their driving privileges should not be suspended will be extended to selective towns within the province in order to provide a better service to the public.

In driver testing, a total of 113,271 members of the public were served, including 17,421 who were dealt with in the driver improvement field. Work has been progressing to introduce the Class Drivers' License in 1975, which has resulted in the necessity to develop more stringent and comprehensive driver examination for each class of license. In addition, a Professional Drivers' Handbook will be introduced at the inception of the Class License Program.

Compulsory motor vehicle inspection continues throughout May to October 1974, utilizing two inspection units. The units were operated at two locations in Winnipeg and selected towns in rural Manitoba. Over 18,000 vehicles of 1968 and older were inspected, and once again over five percent of those vehicles were found to have hazardous defects, and a further 75.2 percent were in a less than safe condition. Included in the inspections were 555 school buses. In 1975 two additional units will be formed to conduct motor vehicle inspections, and I will try to see to it that a larger number of towns will be covered and it is hoped to inspect an increasing number of school buses.

In bicycle safety, the public information program during the past two years has utilized the radio and newspaper media in addition to the Manitoba Cyclists' Handbooks, and a series of bicycle safety posters. The bicyclist handbook has been completely rewritten and the new addition will be among the best in the field. The Uniform Bicycle Safety Training Program initiated two years ago will continue. In 1975 over 17,000 youngsters will participate.

The Snowmobile Safety Training Program, initiated during the winter of 1972-73 now has more than 330 instructors certified to conduct courses in more than 100 communities. 4,000 snowmobile operators have successfully completed the course and the certification of instructors will continue until the course is offered in every community in the province. Manitoba has one of the lowest snowmobile accident records in the country. Enforcement agencies are

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(MR. USKIW cont'd) having some difficulty identifying offending snowmobile operators due to the present method of affixing number plates to snowmobiles. To alleviate this problem it is proposed that a highly reflected number decal will be displayed on both sides of the snowmobile as a means of identification. Work is being conducted to have this decal available for use in 1976 when snowmobiles are due to be reregistered.

The vehicle registration plate has been redesigned for issue in 1976. The plate is made of a reflective material, very simple in design and will bear Friendly Manitoba as the central message. Because of the shortage, aluminum materials have been procured and arrangements are being made for the plate to be manufactured. I have a sample with me, Mr. Chairman, and members opposite I believe have had a distribution of the same.

In driver education, the course was expanded and offered in 115 schools involving over 230 instructors and 165 automobiles. It is anticipated that approximately 5,600 students will graduate from this program during the year under report. Efforts are being taken in 1975 to encourage more students, particularly males, to take the High School Driver Education course. Studies are being conducted on ways and means of getting increased participation in the program.

The department has been working with other departments of government in the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba in the preparation of a rehabilitation program for drinking drivers. The first pilot course was conducted in Winnipeg last week. If the course is found to be successful, it will be extended to other communities in the province. It is hoped that this rehabilitation program will have an effect of reducing the number of repeater drinking drivers, and reduce accidents in which such drivers are frequently involved. Although the department is deeply interested in the success of the program, credit must be given to the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba for their initiative in developing the course.

Manitoba's new class driver licensing system came into effect on April 1. The system establishes six classes of motor vehicles and seven classes of drivers' licenses. These seven classes range from Class 1, which will permit the operation of large vehicles, including semi-trailers, to Class 7, which will be for learners. The present drivers and chauffeurs' licenses and driver instruction permits will be gradually phased out during the conversion period of one year. Drivers with April birth dates whose licenses are due for renewal by the end of this month will receive renewal applications for the class of license for which they qualify. Questionnaires sent out to all Manitoba drivers last year provided them with the opportunity of stipulating the class of license they wished to qualify for. In these cases where drivers wish to drive only passenger cars or light trucks, it was not necessary to return the questionnaire. In these cases, drivers will be issued with Class 5 license for passenger cars, trucks to 24,000 pound gross weight, buses without passengers, and trailers where the gross weight is less than 10,000 pounds. Drivers now wishing to be transferred to a different class may complete a questionnaire at any Motor Vehicle Branch office or at any agent authorized to issue licenses.

Amendments to the existing drivers, driver and chauffeurs' licenses, for those persons who have qualified for a Class 1 to 4 license will be mailed in advance of their renewal date. A separate endorsement will be required on a license for all vehicles that are equipped with an air brake system. New applicants will have to pass a stringent practical and theory examination to demonstrate their knowledge. All new applicants for all classes of license will be required to pass a driving examination in the class of vehicle for which an application is being made and written exams will be administered.

New vision standards and new medical standards have been established for drivers in Classes 1 to 4. All new applicants in these classes must file a medical report with their application, and drivers' whose licenses are being reclassified automatically on the base of their past experience and ability will be required to file such a report within three months of obtaining their new license.

The Highway Traffic and Motor Transport Board. This board operates in two sections, one of which is responsible for the administration of regulations governing the operation of the Motor Transport industry and commercial trucks; and the other section, the Highway Traffic Board administers and regulates speed zones, approval of traffic control devices, the establishment of control areas adjacent to limited access highways, the approval of municipal by-laws respecting speed zones and weight restrictions, and also regulates permits for structures adjacent to limited access highways and access drivers.

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(MR. USKIW cont'd)

The Motor Transport Board section held a total of 65 hearings during the 1974 year dealing with 215 applications. Of this total, 195 were approved, 7 were denied, six were withdrawn, and two were cancelled, five are still pending.

Included in the 215 applications, there were 67 applications heard under the Motor Vehicle Transport Act (Canada) for extra provincial undertakings. Of this number, 51 were approved, 3 were withdrawn, one was denied and two are still pending.

Public Service trucks increased in 1974 from 2,855 to 3,187. Public Service buses increased from 305 to 323. Commercial trucks increased from 6,743 to 7,670 in 1974. Inter-municipal liveries also increased slightly from 606 to 647.

The present structure of the Dual Board has been found to be not conducive to an efficient and effective administration. Accordingly it is proposed to restructure the boards assigning specific responsibility to each. Also the enforcement of wage and other regulations is being transferred to the Highway Section of the department, relieving the board of these tasks and permitting the board to devote more time and attention to other vital and important transportation matters affecting the industry.

The Traffic Board Section and the Highway Traffic and Motor Transport Board dealt with 637 applications in 1974 as compared with 639 in the preceding year. Of these the vast majority, 537 dealt with applications for structures and access drivers. 69 applications were received concerning speed zones, 8 for pedestrian corridors, and a miscellaneous number respecting signs, weight restrictions, etc., of 23. The board held a total of 69 hearings in 1974, a slight decrease in the preceding year when the board held 76 hearings. However the board's agenda tended to be heavier than in the preceding year.

Driver License Suspension Appeal Board. This board is established under the Highway Traffic Act and is authorized to hear applications for remission from suspension or driver licenses for any costs. The board has had an extremely busy year with the applications for remission increasing from 2,342 in 1973 to 2,594 in 1974 for an increase of nearly 11 percent. The board held a total of 295 half-day hearings to deal with these applications. The majority of applications for remission of suspension resulted from convictions under the Criminal Code, mostly for driving while impaired or other alcohol related offences. These amounted to 2,029. The balance were appeals from suspension imposed by the registrar based on bad driving records, The courts and certain other mandatory suspension provided for by the Highway Traffic Act.

In concluding my remarks, Mr. Chairman, might I report that I am indeed proud of what the department has accomplished in the past year in spite of the many problems we have faced. The staff of the Department of Highways have put forth a commendable effort towards accomplishing our 1974-75 goals, and I am sure that the same spirit will prevail for 1975-76 year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That concludes the Minister's introduction under Resolution 61(a). I would remind members that comments of a general or philosophic nature should be kept until we return to this item at the end of the estimates. Resolution 61(b). The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MORRIS MCGREGOR (Virden): Yes, Mr. Chairman, in the expenditure of in excess of half a million dollars can the Minister indicate how many staff are involved in general administration and what are their duties? How many members are involved in this amount?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, while they're getting the answer for that, this is just a procedural question I wanted to ask. When we get to the subject on driver licensing there is much, a very close integration between driver registration, driver licensing and the insurance Autopac. Will there be staff from Autopac here when we get to that particular item in case there are questions that might conflict?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, on that point I would think that the people, the Autopac people, appear before committee to present their report and therefore that that would be in my opinion the proper time to relate to those questions pertaining to their operation.

I think as I recall the question, the question was, how many people were employed in that section?

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MR. MCGREGOR: Yes, roughly, general . . .

MR. USKIW: I see. 54 people are involved in that section.

MR. MCGREGOR: Are all these staff centred in Winnipeg basically?

MR. USKIW: Yes.

MR. MCGREGOR: In the last year have there been many new members, additional staff that's just replacement for retired, and additional over and above the replacement for a retired, but overall additional staff has been . . .

MR. USKIW: You will note, Mr. Chairman, that the increase in expenditures is 60,200 in the Administration Salaries area, so that that largely represents a general increase in salaries and increments. It would not reflect any substantial increase in staff component, just by the dollar figure alone, although there may have been one or two.

MR. MCGREGOR: Then how many are administrative and how many are clerical type within that . . .

MR. USKIW: I can give you a breakdown of the totals over a number of years. 1970-71 we had 12; in 1972-73 we had 17, and we've maintained 19 since that time. Yes that's in the Minister's office. And 35 positions - Oh I see. The Deputy explains that 5 positions of these were in Public Works before and were added to this department, which brought us from 12 to 17 when there was a change.

MR. MCGREGOR: Well then how many are administrative, and how many will be considered clerical staff of that . . .

MR. USKIW: We don't have that breakdown here, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell indicated he wished to ask a question.

MR. GRAHAM: No that was that question - it's coming up later.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 61(b)--passed; (c)--The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MCGREGOR: What is covered here by other expenditures, what is the general ball park that's covered here?

MR. USKIW: The note I have here says, provision for general rise in cost of office supplies. This appropriation provides for salaries in offices of the Minister, Deputy Minister, Chief Engineer, accounting personnel and central records. That's the explanation for that item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 61(c)--passed; Resolution 61, with the exception of the Minister's compensation--Passed; Resolution 62 (a) (1). The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MCGREGOR: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure if this would be in this area Operations and Contracts. But in the event, is there a higher percentage of tenders say in the last year that were open for tender and no bids come in and consequently there's a re-issue. Now is this in this area, and what is the percentage of bids that were not bid on, and came in late in the summer and lost the opportunity to rebuild, or whatever the contract was?

MR. USKIW: There were four contracts on which there were no bids.

MR. MCGREGOR: And they've been rebid and are successful now, would I take it?

MR. USKIW: Yes.

MR. MCGREGOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering if this has happened then, this could be the cause sometimes why some of the contracts are so late in the season. In other words, there are some areas where asphaltting is being done almost at the time of freeze-up. I know in my area there, I was just beginning to wonder on 258, whether it was going to be done at all last fall. I'm just wondering if that has any significance.

MR. USKIW: No. I'm advised that it is merely the volume of work that has stretched the activities, related to weather conditions, and so on, into the late period in the fall where conditions were such that they were able to do so.

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Chairman, then I see by the estimates then that this five miles on 258 from No. 2 south is going to be completed. Will that be completed? Can the Minister give us an indication whether that timing is going to be earlier this summer than it was last year?

MR. USKIW: That's on 258?

MR. EINARSON: Provincial Trunk Highway No. 2 for just over five miles south on provincial Highway 258.

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MR. USKIW: Well, I think what we have to say to all of those kind of questions is that the project is programmed for this year. But one doesn't really have complete control, (a) on the number of successful contracts that will be entered into, and of course the weather that plays such a large part as to the size of our program ultimately. So, the intent is there but again we run into the usual problems that may vary our programming a bit.

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Chairman, that's my very point, and I'm wondering since it was started last year is their assurance given that it's going to be completed this year?

MR. USKIW: Yes, the indication is that as far as the department is able to commit itself, that the intent is to complete the project. But, you know, you do run into situations where . . . well there's always a possibility of a contractor not being able to fulfill a contract, either because of bankruptcy or some other unforeseen circumstances, in which case the department would then have to submit new tenders, and so on. If that were to arise with respect to this particular area we really wouldn't be in a position to assure a completion. Although that is the intent. It's doubtful that that will occur but it has happened.

MR. EINARSON: Oh, I see. Well then in other words the Minister cannot give an assurance definitely as to whether that will be done or not. I mean, he isn't really . . . I'm trying . . .

MR. USKIW: Assurance of intent, yes, but in terms of the practical problems that we may run into, as we do from time to time, one has no assurance of performance other than when the time arises and when the contractor is able to perform. You are aware, of course, that all of the contracts that are issued are bonded contracts and therefore there is recourse on the part of the province to pursue. But that doesn't mean the project is completed. All it means is that we may recover on any financial losses through the retendering process, and so on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. HENDERSON: Mr. Chairman, is there a general shortage of contractors in Manitoba for the highway work?

MR. USKIW: Generally speaking, I'm advised that we're not. We were short in the area of asphalt production. But there have been two new plants added in the last year, so that it appears to be reasonable in terms of the needs of the department.

MR. HENDERSON: Well then I wonder, Mr. Chairman, why some projects we had slated for last year haven't been done.

MR. USKIW: Well again I go back to the fact that that is a historic pattern. The department always tries to program on the best of expectations. That is, if all goes well we expect to do so many projects valued at so many dollars. But we always run into a percentage of our program not being carried out due to things unforeseen and uncontrollable on the part of the department.

MR. HENDERSON: But in this particular case they were never tendered.

MR. USKIW: Oh, you're saying that you're aware of a project that was to take place that never did take place. Would you be specific so that we can get an answer.

MR. HENDERSON: I'm referring through to La Riviere, in the Pembina Valley.

MR. USKIW: Well I'm advised that there could be a number of problem areas as to why the tenders were not let. One area is the lack of the design in time for tendering, and so on. The possibility of property problems, although these are generalizations, not specific answers. Those are very common to projects within the Highway Department.

MR. HENDERSON: Well I know they have problems, and I know there were problems there for many years because it was tendered . . . I mean it's been surveyed since 1965, but I thought when it was on the program last year that it would finally proceed. So I'm wondering is there a shortage of contractors after they do make up their mind?

MR. USKIW: Well I think it would be fair for me to take that question as notice and try to give a specific answer to that particular project. We don't have it at our fingertips here.

MR. HENDERSON: And is not all tendering . . . I mean surveys completed before projects are put on for the next year on program.

MR. USKIW: As I understand the program expresses the intention of the department, so that there may be variations because of those unforeseens that I have mentioned. The program that you have been presented with is the intention of the department to be carried out in the coming year, coming season. Now the extent to which we will be able to fulfill those intentions is another question.

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MR. HENDERSON: Now I don't want to dwell on it much longer except that there was so many surveys went on in this area and then when we saw it go on for last year - we are still seeing them surveying again this winter - and it was never tendered, whether it is a shortage of contractors, and trying to keep the staff. --(Interjection)--Well, I suppose it's wise to use the staff in the wintertime sometimes, but I mean the people down there are considering it's a joke, that amount of surveys that's going on through that area.

MR. USKIW: Well, one of the problems about the public reaction to frequent surveys is that the public doesn't really understand the nature of a survey, what is involved, and I've always had the same impression until I got to know something about it. It's not that much but whatever I did learn is that you have different surveys for different purposes. While it appears to the general public that you're re-surveying the same area for the same purpose, that is not the case. It usually involves a change of policy, change of design, or change of direction, or for other purposes. You know, we have telephone surveys, we have hydro surveys, we have highway department surveys. The public doesn't really know who is sort of in charge of the survey. You may have three different crews for three different purposes on the same site. So, it does have that appearance, but it isn't the way it is.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MCGREGOR: Yes, Mr. Chairman. As we know a lot of your construction is by contract, but also there is hourly-rated types of . . . and how often or when is an increase to be expected with the inflation? Say, when was the last increase on the per hour machines? Will there be one this coming year?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: There's an increase being printed at the moment, Mr. Chairman.

Further to the question on the part of the Member for Pembina. Many surveys had been done but actual location not decided until last year. So we may have had a number of surveys in order to determine the location, the best location, to which we would want to proceed with a final survey. After the location was decided then additional surveys were done for design purposes, and so on. So that explains the frequency of surveying, and so on. That is not an unusual situation.

MR. HENDERSON: I hope it is unusual because it's gone on since 1965.

MR. USKIW: Well I think you have a very particular and peculiar situation in that area with respect to location. So I would not be surprised to learn that many routes or possibilities were surveyed, but that no decision would be made until a number of alternative routes were looked upon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. FERGUSON: Mr. Chairman, is this where you can bring up land acquisition, under this clause, or where does that come up? Surveys and Titles?

MR. USKIW: Yes.

MR. FERGUSON: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney. . .

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I just want to raise a point of order there. The land acquisition really is a matter to be dealt with under another department who is in charge of Land Acquisition Branch. This department does not acquire property. The Land Acquisition Branch acquires property for the department. So that your opportunity to debate that point would be at the time of the estimates of the department responsible for the Land Acquisition Branch.

MR. FERGUSON: This will include right-of-ways or land described as being expropriated, The whole bundle, eh?

MR. USKIW: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney.

MR. MCKELLAR: Does the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose got something on this subject?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: . . . the point that I believe that that comes under the Department of Public Works now, land acquisitions, I believe.

MR. USKIW: Yes, that is correct.

MR. MCKELLAR: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, I was just wondering if any contracts

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(MR. McKELLAR cont'd) are done on a cost-plus basis, any of the contracts during your program?

MR. USKIW: . . . none.

MR. McKELLAR: Also on the contracts that were taken, people that signed contracts last fall, early last fall and didn't complete their work, with inflation does a contractor, does he have his contract increased, or is that binding, is that a binding contract regardless of inflation.

MR. USKIW: I would presume that it would be binding unless there was a clause in the contract that allowed for it. Yes, that's correct. Oh, yes, there is an allowance for truck-haul rates which the government itself puts in place from time to time. They establish the rates through - Orders-in-Council, is it? Yes. So that is the only allowance that is allowed.

MR. McKELLAR: I see. Nothing on dirt moving at all, like on a . . . ?

MR. USKIW: Just on the truck-haul rates.

MR. McKELLAR: I see.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 62. The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to ask the Minister, or through the Minister to his department, under the Operations and Contracts, is there any contractual work done by the Department of Highways for other departments of government, such as, parks, maybe Department of Northern Affairs, etc.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Yes, I'm advised that a good example of that would be the Hecla Island road works which was carried out by the department itself for the Parks Branch.

MR. GRAHAM: Has that type of arrangement worked out to be very satisfactory?

MR. USKIW: It's all contracted. I don't know what the member means when he says satisfactory. Perhaps some elaboration.

MR. GRAHAM: Well the main reason for asking the question, I believe the Department of Highways has the expertise, the people that know how to build roads, and that, and I was wondering if other departments were availing themselves of that particular expertise, and probably doing a more efficient job of building roads.

MR. USKIW: I'm advised that two of them for example have some capacity of their own in that connection, but they do engage the department as well.

MR. GRAHAM: Has the Department of Northern Affairs ever approached the Department of Highways for the use of their staff and their expertise, and in fact their equipment, for some of the work that they are carrying on?

MR. USKIW: Would you be specific, sir? Do you have an instance that you would like to pursue?

MR. GRAHAM: Well perhaps, Mr. Chairman, maybe I should make a general review of it as I see it. It's always been a concern of mine that there is a tendency in government for empire building in each and every department. We know in Agriculture, and Industry and Commerce, that in those departments they seem to go their own different ways, even dealing with a common program I've always felt that the most efficient operation is one where you have a complete department which is fully qualified, and I'm sure the Department of Highways is fully qualified in all aspects of road building, and it seems to me somewhat of a folly that other departments then start their own department of road building, such as the Winter Works Program, or the Winter Roads Program, carried out by the Department of Northern Affairs. I have felt, as one member of this Legislature anyway, that probably that aspect of the operations of the Department of Northern Affairs, could be far better carried out by the Department of Highways who have the expertise and the know-how which seems to be sadly lacking in the Department of Northern Affairs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before the Minister answers I wonder if that topic wouldn't be better pursued under Resolution 63, Highway Maintenance and Construction.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, we're dealing with Operations and Contracts, and I would suggest to you, sir, that if there would be a liaison between departments, it would probably come under a contractual arrangement between the departments.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure whether I'm allowed to respond to that. Did you rule otherwise?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I didn't make a ruling.

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MR. USKIW: I'm advised that Northern Affairs is very much involved in training programs, and that part of the effort as far as road building is concerned in Northern Manitoba is directed towards the training side of the program, and therefore there is an element of participation on the part of Northern Affairs in road building in the North with the co-operation and supervision of the Department of Highways. So that the two are working together.

MR. GRAHAM: Can the Minister indicate the degree of co-operation and the input that has been put into that program by the Department of Highways? What programs are they involved in, to what extent, and the number of personnel involved?

MR. USKIW: The supervisory manpower are the manpower of the Department of Highways, but two other departments are involved, Education and Northern Affairs, to the training component where they involve indigenous people of that region. That's the whole thrust. They take them out of Keewatin College and put them through the program as a training portion.

MR. GRAHAM: Are highway engineers directly involved?

MR. USKIW: The highway engineers are the supervisory authority of those programs, yes.

MR. GRAHAM: How many are involved?

MR. USKIW: It follows the same rule as it would follow if the project was given to a private contractor. The same supervisory element is provided.

MR. GRAHAM: These engineers, do they come from the general administration, or do they come from various district offices.

MR. USKIW: They come from the district offices, sir. I might point out that if the member is alluding to the Winter Roads Program, then that properly comes under the Department of Northern Affairs, not this department.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, I did refer particularly to that program because I have felt, and I am sure many other members in the Legislature feel, that if the Department of Highways was in charge of the operation of the winter roads program, that we would have a far more efficient winter roads program than presently exists.

MR. USKIW: Well Mr. Chairman, I don't know that I can comment on that. The department is not in a position to comment on that; they are not seeking to be the empire builders either.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Charleswood have a question?

MR. MOUG: Mr. Chairman, I see by the program that they're planning construction of an interchange at Roblin, Route 105, and the Perimeter Highway. I wanted to ask the Minister how long the construction would take on this from the time it's started to completion, and if it would be started this year, and could it be expected to be finished in 1976, or just what is the programming on that type of construction and how long it would take?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: The information I'm provided is that it usually takes about two years from beginning to end of that kind of a project.

MR. MOUG: And that complete to concrete, bar landscaping and odds and ends like that, but that's complete to concrete, I suspect.

MR. USKIW: No, that would take us into a third year, sir.

MR. MOUG: The concrete would be a third year.

MR. USKIW: Yes.

MR. MOUG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Pembina. Do you have a question?

MR. HENDERSON: I was finished.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 62 (a) (1)--Passed; (2)--Passed. (a)--Pass. (b) (1)--The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MCGREGOR: What programs have been developed to improve the construction standards of the roads? Have tests been conducted in an attempt to prevent frost penetration in the road beds? And what kind of tests? Have they been evaluated on a cost-plus basis.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: I'm advised that several test programs have been carried out and there's also an interchange with other provinces, so it's really sort of a national approach to that question, sir.

MR. MCGREGOR: It's a national problem . . .

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MR. USKIW: Well, no. We try to compare notes and develop our expertise hopefully benefitting from each other.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 62, the Honourable Member for Virден.

MR. MCGREGOR: I would like to follow that up with another. What kind of research is being done to replace gravel as a fast depleting product, and also in the light of oil and the shortage of oil for your other blacktop bituminous bases? What is an alternative, what is the future . . . as a substitute when these become non-existent?

MR. USKIW: The Department advises that they haven't come up with anything so far that appears to be suitable as an alternative to gravel. They are undertaking studies, and so on, but they haven't come up with any solutions to that particular problem. There's a possibility, I am advised, that they may have to go to, for example, rock crushing and add a percentage of sand, and so on, to get the proper mixture. But that's the sum total of . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Thanks, Mr., I'd like to explore that a little further, Mr. Chairman. In the Province of Manitoba there is a great deal of gravel which has up to now been ruled unsuitable for asphalt because of shale content. Can the Minister indicate what it would cost, or what would be the anticipated cost of shale removal, and at what point would it become economical to bring into use these inferior types of gravel?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: The Department advises that they have looked at that but they haven't come to any cost factor on that approach. It's too preliminary to give a good answer to that question.

MR. GRAHAM: Another question I'd like to ask following the questions of the Member for Virден. We've seen articles in papers and scientific journals dealing with the use of what we call pollutants, such as old tires and the throw-away type bottles. Have they significant use in the construction of roads, and have they done anything in that direction at all?

MR. USKIW: The Department has received a lot of information in that respect, but they advise that research is certainly not carried far enough to formulate conclusions on it.

MR. GRAHAM: The department is constantly looking at the question, though, are they?

MR. USKIW: They are collecting information from whatever sources are available, mainly in Ontario as I understand it. So that we are getting the same information that is now being supplied to the Government of Ontario.

MR. GRAHAM: There's another question that has bothered me, and I'm sure it's bothered many others, and that is in today's society with the rapidly increasing cost of oil and the bituminous products, at what point, or have the department considered at what point it would no longer become economically feasible to use an asphalt-base road and have to look at some other alternative means. Have they done any studies in that respect because it must be a concern to everyone?

MR. USKIW: Well before I consult with the Deputy, my observation would be that that perhaps is a question as to what values on transportation, road transportation, society places, and that will determine how much they're prepared to pay for those systems, but, Mr. Deputy, what do you . . . The alternatives, of course, I'm advised, is concrete mainly, which is more expensive than the asphalt at the moment. Now at some point in time it may level off, or be equal or less, but at the moment it's still a more expensive method.

MR. GRAHAM: Can the Minister indicate how much more expensive, or what is the price differential at the present time between concrete and asphalt? On a mileage basis?

MR. USKIW: Roughly two to one, I'm advised.

MR. GRAHAM: So we could have the price of oil double, and we would still be in a fairly good economic situation in comparison to concrete?

MR. USKIW: I wouldn't think that would be an accurate statement, I believe that two to one reflects total cost of each component, and oil is only one portion, so that whether it's double or triple or four or five times, is really . . . that's right, it's not the main cost.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake. Resolution 62.

MR. MCKELLAR: I wanted to ask . . . because of the fact that you raised some of your highways to 110,000 pounds, what changes have you made in the construction to warrant that extra . . . ?

MR. USKIW: Well we have an agreement with the government of Canada, a five year package involving some \$64 million federal and provincial funds on a 50-50 basis, which

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(MR. USKIW cont'd) provide for the upgrading of those highways that we have upgraded and the weights on, which means essentially a thicker layer of asphalt. It may mean another layer on top of what we now have, and the strengthening, which is . . . structures.

MR. McKELLAR: The base itself then is sufficient base there in the road to hold . . .

MR. USKIW: Generally speaking I am advised that that is correct, but it does require greater thickness of asphalt, and certainly the bridge system has to be upgraded to carry those extra weights.

MR. McKELLAR: Have all the provinces changed on the Trans-Canada to 110,000 now? Have they all gone to the same?

MR. USKIW: Yes. Well all the western ones, I'm advised are.

MR. McKELLAR: Ontario?

MR. USKIW: The Ontario Province is higher than 110.

MR. McKELLAR: It is, eh? Is this about the maximum weight that they expect to go to, or is this going to continue on like from year to year? How big are these trucks going to get? Are they going to tow by two trucks together to try to save on gas, or what's . . .

MR. USKIW: I'm advised that the weight limits are governed by axle weights, so one has to envisage how many axles one would have under some future mode of truck transportation. That is the formulation, and the length of 65 feet. I may make one observation which may not be palatable to my staff here, and that is that my intuition would be that we should have stuck with rail.

MR. McKELLAR: Mr. Chairman, when you're talking about 65 feet, is that the trailer itself. That's not the tractor. Tractor and trailer, or trailer.

MR. USKIW: The whole thing.

MR. McKELLAR: Tractor and trailer, eh? I see.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I hadn't intended to raise it here, but seeing as how the question has already been on the agenda, there is a concern in some areas of the province when we see just one east-west highway being raised to 110,000 pounds, the impact that has on other sections of Manitoba is relatively significant. I would like to ask at what point in time we can expect the same weight restrictions to apply to the Yellowhead Highway which is the alternative and a superior route to the Trans-Canada Highway.

MR. USKIW: I would suspect that the Member for Birtle-Russell is somewhat parochial when he uses the term superior highway . . .

MR. GRAHAM: Those are not my observations. They're the observations of many tourists.

MR. USKIW: I'm advised that as soon as the structures are upgraded, that that highway will also be designated for 110.

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. McGREGOR: Is your testing or laboratory work, is that all done here central at Winnipeg, or is there test stations throughout Manitoba, different terrain and underground currents, and all this . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: I'm advised that the central testing operation is in Winnipeg but they have satellite operations and on-site operations, so that it's a combination in fact.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. EINARSON: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to take the Deputy Minister back a few years. On Provincial Highway No. 258 from No. 2 north to Carberry where the soil is very light, a real sandy texture, the top sort of blew off, and I believe a machine was brought in from Alberta to put a bituminous surface on that. The pure sand, if I'm not mistaken, was used as a compound for bituminous sand. I'm wondering if we can get some comment on that as to whether it's feasible to use that material, and if so, if it is, then we have the Bald Head Sand Hills there, which is an endless amount of material. I was just wondering of what value it is.

MR. USKIW: The department advised that they have looked at this very carefully and the costs are still excessive. They don't feel that they can . . . I see. Comparatively the costs are high.

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MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. McGREGOR: Yes. Well if we're in this laboratory, and I'm not just certain if this question fits, but we did have an incident over last weekend where our 259 leading into the Assiniboine Valley on a slant, and the whole side went out. What testing is done to find out if there are many roads on side hills that just simply go out, and I can think back in my more hilarious days I could have easily drove into that coming home, but I must congratulate your district staff who are right on their toes, and I have a lot of respect for any of the district men who I see and have worked with, but what is being done today? There may be other roads unknown to anyone that that's just simply . . . and that, as the Deputy Minister is quite aware, it's a long ways down, went out and the top just came with it, 20, 30 feet down.--(Interjection)-- I'm still sober too, Joe. I'm going to start again, but that road scares the hell out of me.

MR. USKIW: Well first of all let me make the observation that the Member for Virden is still hilarious. But I'm advised that the department monitors those situations where they expect them to occur on an ongoing basis. There is no testing that's done but they do a monitor on these locations.

MR. McGREGOR: Mr. Chairman, then was there an indication prior to that happening that it might happen, you know. Was there any advance warning?

MR. USKIW: The department advises that whenever you have highways built on the side of hills that they always expect those problems and try to keep alert to the possibility of occurrence, and so on, at a given point of time. So they are aware of that on an ongoing basis.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I want to raise a question or two about the highways department sign shop, and I'd ask for your direction, sir, as to whether we're under the right vote here.

MR. USKIW: No, I'm afraid not.

MR. SHERMAN: What section of the resolution, or what resolution will that be? Age, equipment and Tools?

MR. USKIW: I'm advised that we should do it under Maintenance.

MR. SHERMAN: Under . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 63.

MR. SHERMAN: Under Maintenance. Resolution 63?

MR. USKIW: 3(a).

MR. SHERMAN: Under Resolution 63, 3(a).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Top of Page 29.

MR. USKIW: That's on the next page.

MR. SHERMAN: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 62(b)(1)--Passed; (2)--Passed; (b)--Passed; Resolution 62(c)(1) - The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, probably I'm a little more concerned than others because of a responsibility with the Attorney-General's Department where the Land Titles Office is located. Can the Minister indicate if there are some areas in the province where the department is having more problems than other areas with respect to titles and land transfers, etc., or land acquisitions?

MR. USKIW: I'm advised that the department itself doesn't run into that problem because the Land Acquisition Branch undertakes that responsibility. The branch simply buys the property for the department as such, so they wouldn't run into those problems directly. I think it's a better question for Land Acquisition.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, then can I ask the Minister what is the average length of time between the first attempts at acquiring land and the time that final title comes through to the department. I'm not going to talk about months, I'm going to talk about years.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I think that one has to make one observation, and it takes me back to the earlier comments on the part of the Member for Birtle-Russell, wherein he indicated that he preferred that all things being done of a similar nature should be done by one department for the sake of efficiency, and, you know, since coming into government several years ago I find that that may be efficient but may not perform as well. And here I relate to the problems that the Land Acquisition Branch has in trying to respond to a number of departments who have some priority on their program and who require land, and therefore the Land

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(MR. USKIW cont'd) Acquisition Branch is torn apart as between the priorities of Department A versus the priorities of Department B, and is subject to the pressures of those departments for their time and personnel. Often it arises that some departments undertake to second land acquisition staff in order to expedite an acquisition of land, or whatever, to get around some of the tugs of war interdepartmentally for the time and use of the facilities of the Land Acquisition Branch. So we are subject I'm sure in Highways to some of those similar considerations, although I would believe that Highways has perhaps the almost No. 1 if not the No. 1 priority of the Land Acquisition Branch's personnel.

MR. GRAHAM: Well Mr. Chairman, the Minister's reply almost demands another question. Does the department now find that the acquisition by the Land Titles Branch to be a much slower process than it used to be when Highways acquired the land by themselves?

MR. USKIW: I'm advised that it is slower in many cases but the department does not want to attach blame as to the service of another department but rather perhaps relate the question to the volume of activities that we undertake today compared to some years ago when the department did its own acquisition.

MR. GRAHAM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think it's commendable that no department tries to tear another department to pieces, but at the same time if there are problems, I think that they should be aired, and probably this committee is a place to air them. If we're having troubles, we want to know about it and perhaps we can do something about it. Maybe we can speed up the Land Acquisition Branch.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. It's been pointed out to the Honourable Member on several occasions that land acquisition does come under a different department. If the Honourable Member has concerns on that score he should raise them when that matter comes before the committee and not take the time of Highways for it.

MR. GRAHAM: At the same time, Mr. Chairman, if we don't find out that those problems occur and the only way we can find out is ask questions, then we will deal with Land Acquisition at the proper time. But we want to know if there are problems, and if there are, maybe the department has some suggestions to put forward, that we can when we get to Land Acquisition bring about changes so that these problems can be eliminated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Chairman, to pursue this front that my colleague from Birtle-Russell has pursued I think is a very important one, and I can recall when land acquisition was a problem in regard to the long delay in settlement of property where the Highways Department was buying land to improve a roadway, a highway road. I think that we have to be concerned here in the Department of Highways as to whether the Minister is approaching the land acquisition in such a way that he is, in a constructive manner, and pursue with the Land Acquisition, informing them that he's not satisfied with the service. I don't think there's anything wrong with that. I think this is an important part here, and I think my colleague from Birtle-Russell is dwelling on something that is in order. Certainly we can deal with it when we deal with Land Acquisition, but we want to know, what is the Minister's position when he's confronted with problems like this. Is he pursuing these matters in the way that he should be as a responsible Minister of Highways?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I am fully familiar with the problems that arise in this area having been so much involved in land acquisitions for another department. I know that unless Land Acquisition is given very explicit direction as to the time allocation towards certain programs, that they are in an impossible position from time to time, at peak loads of activity, peak periods of activity, rather, to respond adequately to all the demands placed upon them. That of course results in the fact that government each year in its budget considerations tries to hold the line on expenditures. In the meantime programs get under way and the demands are ever increasing, and so on. So that the Land Acquisition Branch find itself in a terrible position during these peak periods.

But I think that one should perhaps take note of the fact that the Highways Department two years ago convinced the government that we should have a more systematic approach to this problem, wherein they launch their land acquisition program two and three years ahead of need. You will notice in your estimates here today that there is a good deal of right-of-way mentions in your program that was distributed, which indicates that while those right-of-ways may not

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(MR. USKIW cont'd) be needed for one or two or three years they are going to be purchased this year. That is to sort of get the jump on that question so that we don't have to, at the last minute, try to armtwist another department to acquire land for us, that we have pre-planned sufficiently ahead of time to get away from most of that kind of difficulty.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Well Mr. Chairman, to be specific - and I will cite a particular case - not too long ago I had correspondence from a constituent who lives just south of Russell on the Yellowhead Highway where highways four or five years ago acquired additional right-of-way, the man still has not received title to his property; he has a prospective buyer for some of that property and he cannot get title to his land. Whether the fault lies with the Land Acquisition Branch, or with the Land Titles Office, or with the Highways Branch, I would like to know at what point in time this individual can expect to receive the title to his property so he can proceed with the sale of that same property.

MR. USKIW: The Deputy Minister seems to be fully knowledgeable on that particular situation, and advises that that individual can sell the land with a caveat outlining the circumstances, and therefore there is no problem with respect to the possibility of sale. No legal problem there.

MR. GRAHAM: How many caveats can be registered on the same piece of property?

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I couldn't advise my honourable friend, but I'm told that legally it presents no problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Committee of Supply is about to rise for Private Members' Hour.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The hour being 4:30, I am interrupting the proceedings of the Committee under House Rule 19(2), Private Members' Hour, and we shall return to the Chair at 8:00 p.m. this evening.

IN SESSION

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Private Members' Hour. The first item is Public Bills, Bill No. 12, proposed by the Honourable Member for Morris. The Honourable Member for Radisson. The Honourable House Leader.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Chairman, just before you get to the Private Members' Hour, I understand that there was an argument in the other Committee of Supply as to whether the Deputy Minister could speak, and I have to say that it was agreed, or understood, contrary to what was subsequently decided at committee, that if the Minister called on the Deputy to answer a question, or any of his staff to answer a question, that that could be done, but the staff could not be questioned directly by the members of the committee.

Now I understand that what they had done was say that the Minister could only get him information from the staff. Now it was brought to my attention quite properly by the Member for Morris, that one of the whole reasons for going out of the House was to facilitate a Minister who wanted to get a Deputy to talk, that that was agreed to, so there's no harm done as far as today's business is concerned, as long as it is understood that it is the Minister who calls upon the staff if and when he wishes to, that a staff person can give an answer under those circumstances.

MR. SPEAKER: That matter of procedure agreed to? The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, as the House Leader pointed out, when we discussed this matter we felt that there was hardly any point in sending a particular department to another committee to try it out on that basis unless there was a reason for doing that, and the reason for doing that is to try out the idea of having the staff members providing answers at the request of the Minister and I'm in perfect agreement with the House Leader that that system should be employed in the other committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable House Leader.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I gather that that's not what they said at the committee today but that in the future that that will be the way in which the affairs are conducted. It may result in the same thing. You may have a Minister who ever wants a Deputy to answer a question. But, on the other hand, you may have the reverse, and that's what was intended to be allowed to happen.

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

MR. GREEN: I have some announcement here that there are four copies of the report of the Independent Review Committee on the office of the Auditor-General of Canada now available in the library. If any of the honourable members wish to be aware of that, there are such copies.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: Public Bill No. 12 proposed by the Honourable Member for Morris. The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Stand.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 4. The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BANMAN: May I have that matter stand, Mr. Speaker?

BILL NO. 33 - TOWN OF PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 33. The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. GORDON E. JOHNSTON (Portage la Prairie) presented Bill No. 33. an Act to repeal an Act respecting the Town of Portage la Prairie, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

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

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, in 1903 the Town of Portage la Prairie had the right to have the Legislature enact a law on their behalf, and this was done. At that time it gave the then Town of Portage the right to assess lands that were farm lands but within the boundaries of the town, on a different basis to what a normal house or a business lot and buildings would be assessed. And at that time the mill rate was fixed at a very low nominal rate so that it wouldn't unduly affect a farmer's operation. Now if I'll . . . I'll just refer to my notes.

In the year 1903 the Town of Portage la Prairie wished to expand its boundaries, and approaches were made to the various landowners involved regarding this expansion. It appeared at that time that the expansion should go beyond the normal urban development, and in order to obtain the co-operation of the landowners, a by-law was passed, being Chapter 34 of the 1905 Statutes of Manitoba, validating by-law No. 393 of the Town of Portage la Prairie.

The land involved at that time was used for farming, although not necessarily owned by farmers. The Act stated that "all lands within the said corporation, assessed as farm lands on the assessment roll for the year 1903, shall so long as they shall be used for farming purposes, be liable only for the following taxes."

The administration has recently experienced difficulty, and past administrations, in interpreting the term "used for farming purposes" as there is no definition in the Act to state what this means. The administration is unable to use the Municipal Act for definitive purposes as this is a separate statute. Cases are presently being appealed through Courts of Revision and being taken to the Municipal Board based on the wording of the Act. The Board seems to take the attitude that if a neighbour comes under the wing of this Act, the property in question should not be discriminated against.

The Act lays out the form of taxation, which requires that the land pay the levy for school taxes and, in addition, a maximum levy of 3-1/2 mills on the dollar for general purposes of the town. It also states that no other rate shall be levied on the land by the Council of the City of Portage la Prairie.

The mill rates of the day were very minimal - I'm talking about 1905 - and bear no relationship to either the present mill rate or the requirements of the Council to operate the city. It can be presumed, I believe legitimately, that all land holders of that day have now passed on, since the statute is 70 years old, and a great deal of land is now being held for speculation. The Act therefore provides a bonus to speculators in the City of Portage that is not available to any other community in Manitoba. So where persons are legitimately farming on farm lands within the city boundaries, the present Municipal Act will come into play and normal exemptions will apply in the same fashion as any other municipality. It might be of interest for members to know that in 1974 the Portage City mill rate, municipalities mill rate share was 47.581, and it appears that the 1975 mill rate will be between 60 and 65 mills.

So, Mr. Speaker, in asking for this Act to be repealed, the Council of the City of Portage have taken the stand that the original intent of the Act had been served and no longer serves any legitimate purpose, and would place any farm lands in the city boundaries under the Municipal Act, not under an Act that is only for the City of Portage.

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

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Flin Flon, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 36 - CITY OF PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 36. The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. G. JOHNSTON presented Bill No. 36, an Act to vest Title to Certain Land in the City of Portage la Prairie, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

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

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, this is a miniscule piece of land that many many years ago did belong to a person who is long since deceased and he has no heirs or no records of any heirs. The land is completely surrounded by city-owned property, not privately-owned property, and there has been no taxes collected on it for these many years. So, on the recommendation of the surveyors retained by the City of Portage la Prairie, and with concurrence of some officials within the Municipal Affairs Department, it was felt that this was the most reasonable solution, to take title to this small piece of land which is cut off, as I say, by land owned by the city. I believe the exact amount of land referred to it 0.00032 acres, which is a very few square feet. I think it's 13 or 14 square feet.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Churchill, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 32, proposed by the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge. The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Stand.

BILL NO. 35 - THE COMMERCIAL CLUB OF WINNIPEG

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 35, proposed by the Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. SHAFRANSKY (Radisson) presented Bill No. 35, an Act to amend an Act to Incorporate The Commercial Club of Winnipeg, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Mr. Speaker, an examination of the Club's Act and Corporation and Amending Acts disclose that there are limitations on the amount of property which the club may acquire and an amount of money which it may borrow. These limitations were imposed in 1903 and are, of course, totally inappropriate to present economic conditions and price structure. The bill is required - briefly to recapitulate - the bill is required for two reasons: Firstly, to incorporate into the Club's Act and Corporation the provisions of an Order-in-Council made the 23rd of February 1911 by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council of Manitoba, whereby the name of the club was changed from the Commercial Club of Winnipeg to Carleton Club.

The club has operated under the name Carleton Club since that time but its Act has not been officially amended accordingly. This bill hopefully will accomplish that fact.

The second purpose and provision of the Act is to remove the restrictions on the value of the real property and other property which the club is entitled to own, and to remove the restrictions on the amount of borrowing against its properties which the club may make for its purposes. Originally the bill proposed increased existing stated limits in both categories, but subsequently on the advice of the Legislative Counsel, and approved by a resolution of the club, the limitations were removed altogether on the grounds that the Legislature should not and would not concern itself with the value of properties owned by private organization, nor the extent to which it had borrowed against them.

The bill is necessitated by the fact that the Carleton Club has been expropriated by the City of Winnipeg from its present site on Main Street between Portage Avenue and Graham. The ongoing Trizec project and the City of Winnipeg project on this site necessitates removal of the club to other premises. It is for this purpose, therefore, that the bill is required to be enacted. Solicitors for the club will be present when this bill goes to committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Member from Assiniboia, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 7

MR. SPEAKER: Resolution No. 7. The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose has 10 minutes left.

MR. ADAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's been quite some time since this resolution came to the floor for debate, and I believe there have been some honourable members that have made their contributions on it and I believe that when we last dealt with this resolution I still had a few minutes left. I believe that I was commenting at the time about, if I recall correctly, I felt that the resolution is perhaps narrow in scope since it refers only to beer bottles as a problem, environmental problem, and I believe I was speaking on the fact that there are many other areas of problems in regard to pollution insofar as littering and containers of many other descriptions.

I was commenting on the fact that where particularly sportsmen travel up in the northern areas of the province, and not only in the northern areas but on our inland lakes by boat or by aircraft, that generally speaking, when the sportsmen travel out in isolated areas, they bring in their supplies. They may go tenting or camping for a few days and they bring in their containers with food and what else have you, and when they leave these generally are all left behind. They load up their fish or their ducks or their wild game that they go out hunting, and they leave all these cans and containers behind. So it's a much larger problem than simply beer bottles.

There are other problems as well. Particularly, I know that on many many occasions I have seen where we were fishing with maybe several boats in the area, it's not uncommon to see cans floating down on the lake or bottles thrown overboard. Banana peels, chocolate bar wrappers, just about everything you can think of are thrown overboard. It's a very very bad habit. I think if people would only consider the ramifications of what they're doing they perhaps would change their ways.

Many of these containers sink to the bottom as well. I don't know what impact that would have on the fish life, cans in the bottom of the lake or bottles in the bottom of the lake. I'm not sure just what effect this would have. But I do believe that certainly there has been a . . . I understand, before I was elected, there was a task force of some kind that did look into this problem many years ago, perhaps four or five years ago - I don't recall exactly but some of the honourable members may recall. --(Interjection)-- 1971? My colleague from St. Matthews indicates that there was a task force set up to look into this problem. And I believe there . . . have been some changes, because we have seen in recent times there are soft drink stores, now pop stores, where they sell large . . . You can buy it by the case and it's more economical and people bring back their containers, and I think this has compelled some of the other distributors of soft drinks to go back to returnable containers.

I know that certainly the cans should be done away with as soon as possible. I don't think anything could agitate a bus driver more than a bunch of cans rolling on the bottom of a bus. You know, after you've stopped at a bus stop there's always people bringing these cans on, and for the rest of the journey you listen to the harmonizing sounds of cans rolling up and down the bus. I think this is certainly very inconsiderate for anybody to do that, but nevertheless if the cans were not there we wouldn't be faced with that problem. And . . . yes, it's a rolling can quartet or symphony or whatever you want to call it. I understand that some of the breweries are now considering doing away with the beer cans. Now I don't know how much credence there is to this rumour, but we certainly hope that they will do away with these cans.

As far as the Resolution itself, I think it could be acceptable in the way it's worded. Certainly for my part, and I think for the majority of the members on this side of the House - I only speak for myself, of course, though - I think it would be acceptable because it's worded for the government "to consider the advisability of." However, I would like to caution that those who would like to hoard, just because this Resolution may be acceptable to the members on this side of the House, I would certainly caution everyone not to start hoarding in the hope that they're going to make a profit on bottles, and it may be some time before we could consider this particular resolution.

With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I can say that most of us on this side would accept this resolution. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Charleswood.

MR. ARTHUR MOUG (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I just rise to add a few words of support to the resolution of the Member for La Verendrye. There's some amazing figures go along with it. When you talk to brewery people, some two million dozen bottles disappear

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(MR. MOUG cont'd) . . . annually, and I'm sure that many of them are at the bottom of the lake, many of them are at roadsides, and if you go into an area like Dauphin River - I was over at the airstrip at Dauphin River one day and it's practically wall to wall glass, just with beer bottles, it's a handy spot for any of the people in that area that travel around with their cars, it's a good place to park. These bottles are being purchased at a cost of 8-1/2 cents each and the breweries, of course, don't get them back. The cost of that glass that they don't get to reuse is passed on to the consumer of their product. So I think it's a resolution that's well worth looking into. The province of Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and B. C. all have 60 cents a dozen deposit on their bottles and reports from those provinces they claim are very very satisfactory and they're getting their glass back.

I think what creates a lot of throwing away of bottles is the fact that a hotel will only give you 20 cents a dozen for them. They keep 10 off the 30 cents the brewery charges for handling them in their own hotel, which I think is justified because they can't be handled just for the benefit of the sale of the beer. There's not that much in it for the vendor sales in the hotels. I think that keeping an eye on secondary roads as you travel through Northern Manitoba and right around the southern parts here as well, you'll see kids picking up beer bottles. I think the incentive would be that much greater if they were going to be rewarded with five cents instead of two.

So with those few words, Mr. Speaker, certainly I support the resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I feel compelled to say just a few words on this resolution, too. I say, and partly, sir, from my very brief experience as Acting Minister of Highways and therefore the problem of bottle littering, particularly bottles as compared to even cans - although I agree with the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose that cans are every bit of a great nuisance. He related a particular nuisance that seemed to contain it to the harmony of cans, I think he referred to it, on buses, cans rolling back and forth in buses that seemed to attract his interest in this resolution more. I suppose that says something about the depths of his environmental concern, namely buses, and that sooner or later all buses are going to be government-owned as purchased through Flyer Industries, so that he takes a personal concern about it from that point of view. I might take a little different attitude and simply suggest to the private operators of buses that if they don't want cans rolling underneath their seats, they don't let them on the bus, or whoever brought them on cleans them up.

However, the resolution before us, sir, deals with bottles and I know, sir, from some experience the amount of outright cost to the public purse bottles littering our roadways, ditches, shoulders due to, for instance, just one area alone and that is the equipment of the Manitoba Department of Highways crews, when they, particularly at this time of the year, as the drying winds and the sun dry up the ditches so that they can commence on their beautification program, which the department is to be commended on, and make our roadways look well attended to, well groomed, as they do with their swathers and with their rotary mowers and their tractors, and we see these noble public servants at various angles driving on these roadways, manicuring our road allowances. But hidden, lurking in the grass, rises the ugly beer bottle, not to say any other bottle for that matter of fact, and all of a sudden, sir, it causes blown out tires, machinery disruption, and anybody that's purchased tires for anything even slightly bigger than passenger vehicles, realize the cost that's involved. The costs can be really quite alarming. It runs into, I would say, thousands and thousands of dollars at this time of year that the taxpayer has to pick up the tab for, because of the damage done to government property in this essential maintenance work.

Mr. Speaker, I think that here we have an opportunity where, at no cost to the public purse, we can save some of this money, some of this annual outlay of wasted taxpayer's dollars in keeping our equipment on the go, simply by offering an incentive, by offering an incentive to, first of all, place a greater value on these bottles on that person who all too nonchalantly now throws that bottle out of his vehicle, and the other incentive that's already been indicated by the Honourable Member for Charleswood, the incentive to somebody picking them up and trading them for dollars or cents.

This can all be done, Mr. Speaker, without any great involvement by the public sector, no added staff has to be hired to the Honourable Minister of Mines and Natural Resources, Clean Environment staff or anything like that; no Minister of Corporate and Consumer Affairs

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(MR. ENNS cont'd) . . . has to add additional staff to run or organize this kind of a cleanup program; no extra tax dollars, public tax dollars are involved at all. And we can, by not merely considering the advisability of this resolution, Mr. Speaker, but by acting upon it, by acting upon it, with some despatch, this Session, Mr. Speaker, this Session Mr. Speaker, let's indicate for once that the wheels of democracy don't have to always turn that slowly and that they will not wait a year or two simply so that the Member from La Verendrye you know, be refused any credit or acknowledgement for having introduced this resolution in the House, but rather let it sit and become old then until the Member from Radisson or the Member for Ste. Rose can introduce a similar resolution to the House, and then act upon it. I mean, that kind of toying around with a relatively straightforward simple matter like this really shouldn't have to take place.

This is a resolution that, as I've already indicated, is not calling for any public expenditures, so from that point of view we are not in any way usurping the rights of the Treasury Bench to move that kind of an action in this House. We are asking essentially the co-operation of the public together with the private sector to clean up what has become an annoying and costly nuisance, both in the - from the aesthetic point of view, the litter, the unsightliness that empty bottles littering our roadways create. And then, as I already indicated, the actual costs involved to equipment to those people in authority who have responsibility for cleaning up our roadways.

This isn't only restricted to the Provincial Department of Highways. I've made mention of them. It's of course just as applicable to the many municipalities throughout rural Manitoba that do maintain a good portion of the roadwork under their jurisdiction.

I have mentioned costs. There's of course the added, you know, physical hazard involved of the operators who, you know, when these machines, particularly the rotary mowers make contact with these bottles. Most of you who have pushed just a little lawnmower around your lawn the first time round in the springtime, you've come upon Rover's bone or, the dog itself, and you have to step nimbly sometimes as the debris, you know, spreads around at a pretty amazing clip. These mowers used in this operation are heavier, of course, and bigger commercial variety, you can imagine with the kind of ballistic type projectiles that can be thrown from the sides and the back and the front of these mowers as they go about their municipal and public and provincial duty. Duty, that's a fine word - duty.

Well, now, Mr. Chairman, I believe that I am slowly but surely gaining support from honourable members opposite. (Hear Hear) I have a feeling, Mr. Speaker, that if I just about sit down, they may even do more than consider the advisability of. In fact, Mr. Speaker, there is just that chance that we will, you know, with reason and with kindness, that they will be moved to action on this very worthwhile resolution as presented in this Chamber by my friend and colleague the Honourable Member for La Verendrye. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. WALLY JOHANNSON (St. Matthews): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was very impressed with the speech of the Honourable Member for Lakeside. He gave his usual dramatic performance on a matter of great substance - beer bottles. In fact I got the impression that he was rather anxious the debate wouldn't proceed to the next resolution. So I'll help him out in his purpose.

Mr. Speaker, in 1970, the Legislature referred a similar matter to the Municipal Affairs Committee. The matter was Bill 102, The Beverage Container Refund Act, which I believe was sponsored at that time by the Honourable Member for Brandon West. This was referred by the Legislature to the Municipal Affairs Committee and I happened to be Chairman of that committee. We held a series of about nine or ten meetings in Winnipeg and throughout the province dealing with the matter of the beer bottle litter problem, the general problem of litter, the problem of cans and non-returnable bottles and we got a pretty thorough discussion, a pretty thorough public airing of this whole problem of litter and bottles.

The committee, after holding these hearings, finally came down with recommendations. They at that time didn't recommend any action on Bill 102. They recommended that it be referred back to the committee for further study, and I gather that the subject matter was studied further and it wasn't eventually proceeded upon. Now the honourable members opposite come forth with a resolution which is much more restricted in nature than the topic we were dealing with in that committee. And I think that after hearing that very persuasive speech by

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(MR. JOHANNSON cont'd) . . . the Honourable Member for Lakeside, we will probably consider the advisability of the resolution. --(Interjection)-- That's what you call Tory progress.

Mr. Speaker, I had no intention of speaking on this, but after listening to the honourable members opposite speak on this with great spirit the last time we discussed the resolution and now again, I decided that I would speak on it, just for the sake of my constituents.

The honourable members opposite have been painting a pretty grim picture. The Conservative members of the southwest have been painting a picture of their constituents being literally covered with beer bottles. Then the Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney, both in the House here and in committee, brought up the startling fact that 90 percent of the convictions for impaired driving occur in the rural areas. He told us, Mr. Speaker, he told us twice that this wasn't because there was more drinking taking place in the rural areas, but because people in the city weren't being caught.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to come to the defence of my constituents. I have good people in my constituency. Very good people in my constituency. And the reason that they're not charged with impaired driving and convicted of impaired driving is because they're good people, not because they're not getting caught. The first WHEREAS of the resolution states that "the littering of beer bottles is becoming an ever increasing problem both in rural Manitoba as well as urban centres." And again I'd like to come to the defence of my constituency. I keep in fairly close touch and I travel through my constituency and there is no problem of my constituency being littered with beer bottles. It's a good constituency. Not even wine bottles. No. I don't even have wine bottles littering my constituency.

Some of the members on this side and on the other side just came back from Quebec City and while in Quebec City I spent some time walking on the ramparts and the old walls of the city and one of the things that did distress me a bit was the sight of broken wine bottles and unbroken wine bottles, beer bottles and beer cans. However, I still enjoyed the tour of the walls. But I must once again insist that this is not a problem in my constituency. But in spite of the fact that it isn't a problem in my constituency, I'm going to support considering the advisability of this resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye shall be closing debate.

MR. BANMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say I appreciate the support I've been getting on this resolution. I would just like to underline several things. No. 1, that we have been over the last year losing more than two million dozens of bottles, the return rate for this year is definitely down from what it was the years previous to it, which would indicate that the bottles are being discarded, whether it be through the disposal system or on the roadside and in the lakes and streams of our province. The other thing I would like to point out, that the more bottles we lose of course it costs the breweries in Manitoba money and of course in the final analysis it's once again the consumer that will be paying more for the purchases he makes.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those few words I would like to urge the government, if this resolution is accepted, to implement as soon as possible, so that we do not have as mentioned by some of the members, hoarding being taken place and that the people of Manitoba through the vacation time that we're coming to right now, would make a special effort in either picking up the bottles that they do see on the side of the road or retain them and not throw them out. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION put, 'RESOLUTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Resolution No. 8. The honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Roblin, THAT WHEREAS the Workers Compensation Board has a heavy workload of responsibilities in the field of fair treatment and compensation for workers injured on the job; AND WHEREAS it is not always possible for the board to acquaint itself as fully as it might wish that all the individual aspects of a particular compensation claim; AND WHEREAS there exists therefor the possibility of a miscarriage of justice in the disposition of a claim; AND WHEREAS there is limited process of appeal against decisions of the board, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this government consider the advisability of strengthening the machinery whereby decisions of the board can be reviewed.

MR. SPEAKER: Moved by the Honourable Member for Fort Garry, seconded by the Member for Lakeside, the resolution as read. The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

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MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, whenever the subject of labour comes up in this House, honourable members opposite very quickly demonstrate that they suffer incurably from a particularly severe paranoia and a particularly severe astigmatism. And nowhere did we receive a more vivid example of that, sir, than during yesterday's Private Members' Hour and the government's response to my Resolution No. 21, having to do with the proposed summit meeting of labour ministers to consider the whole area of industrial unhappiness and industrial unrest in the community.

I have noticed that kind of reflex action on the part of honourable members opposite and particularly on the part of the honourable Member for Radisson, time and time again when this subject has come up, Mr. Speaker. They seem totally incapable, they seem totally incapable of viewing labour and workers in the labour field and the working field through any but the narrowest of doctrinaire lines. They seem totally incapable of understanding that the Minister of Labour in this province, or in any province, or in any jurisdiction under our system, has a responsibility for the whole community of labour, the whole spectrum of labour, and there are two or three or five or ten sides and elements to that community.

It's essential, Mr. Speaker, that for good industrial relations and good labour harmony, quite obviously I should think, that all sides, labour, management, government, all sides that have an input and that have a responsibility and that have a share in that community be viewed with a sense of equal importance and given a sense of equal importance by persons in authority such as Ministers of Labour in provincial and federal jurisdictions. What happens, Mr. Speaker, is that we always get the reflex action from that side that anything that we suggest in the area of labour, industrial relations, workers compensation, the study of unrest in the working level of the economy, is always somehow some kind of loaded and contrived thrust that comes from a philosophical position that is somehow opposed to labour and to the working community. And nothing, sir, could be further from the truth, and the fact that I can say that with impunity and conviction is that it's demonstrated through the history of the Conservative Party, federally and provincially in this country. That the Conservative Party under past leaders all the way from Borden to Giefenbaker have demonstrated and under Duff Roblin in this province, have demonstrated their interest in the workingman and in the working woman of this country and have introduced legislation and stood behind it and backed it to support that element, that critically important element of our society.

But these trained jackalls and puppets on the other side so brainwashed, so blinkered, so astigmatized as I suggest, Mr. Speaker, by the doctrine in which they have been reared and raised and which they've never been able to escape from, continually regard everything that we suggest in this field with cynicism, with suspicion and with, as I've suggested, incurable paranoia. They duck, they feel that somebody is out to get them, they feel that somebody is undermining them, they feel that they're continually being hunted and haunted, if anybody on this side of the House, on this side of the political philosophical spectrum, makes any suggestions at all in the area of industrial relations and labour. So that we have come to accept that as a kind of trained reflex action that we're going to run into. We saw a perfect example of it yesterday when the proposal that was contained in my resolution was distorted beyond all recognition by that shambling speech, if I may even give it that. . .

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if I may remind the honourable member we are on Resolution 8 and not yesterday's.

MR. SHERMAN: I recognize that, Mr. Speaker, and I shall follow your admonition, but I'm trying to link the anticipated reaction of today with the reaction on the record that has always met resolutions of this type. I'm moving quickly, sir, to the substance of today's resolution, but I just want to emphasize that the reaction from that side yesterday is in keeping with the reaction to any proposals we make in this area, and I'm quite sure, I'm quite sure that the honourable members opposite have already fixed themselves in that 19th century posture with respect to the resolution that's before them at the moment, Mr. Speaker. So let me just say that I recognize the tactics implicit in their speech making response yesterday and I expect that the same kind of attitude will greet the resolution before them today.

I want to try to say, Mr. Speaker, before it's distorted out of recognition again on that side, that there is nothing in this resolution that suggests that the Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba is not doing a good, in fact, an excellent job. What there is in the resolution, I think, is a sincere attempt to find a solution to certain problems that come up from time to time

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(MR. SHERMAN cont'd) . . . and to pose the possibility that there might be a way of lightening the work load of the present Workers Compensation Board and future boards of that kind, in such a way as to insure that the possibility of error is reduced to the ultimate minimum.

The Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba is led by a dedicated chairman, served by a dedicated staff, and I have had close communication with it on many occasions which has only served to reinforce and underscore my firm conviction that they are serving the people of Manitoba well. But, sir, like all the rest of us in this world, they are quite possibly over-worked and they are certainly only human and there are areas in which additional help, additional expertise, from time to time, could, I suggest, in all humility, be used to advantage and would no doubt be accepted gratefully by board members. That's what this resolution suggests, Mr. Speaker, that there might be some way of spreading their workload in such a way as to bring the fullest possible degree of harmony to workers in the Province of Manitoba and the board which functions in the compensation area which they from time to time individually find it necessary to pursue.

I have had it suggested to me and heard it suggested through other agencies and areas that there might be some merit in a kind of a legal appeal recourse against decisions of the Workers Compensation Board, the kind of machinery that would perhaps permit access to the courts, and I want to state for the record at this juncture, Mr. Speaker, that I would be firmly opposed, totally opposed to the introduction of that kind of machinery into the institution. I believe that the introduction of recourse to the court type of machinery would have far more disadvantages, far more disadvantages for workers than advantages. There is no question in my mind that if it came down to the point of fighting a claim, of fighting a ruling, of pursuing a particular compensation bid or fighting a particular decision by the board, if there were access to the normal sort of legal processes that are represented by the courts, that employers would be in a far more advantageous position than individual workers would be. Employers would be able to utilize their own batteries of legal staff members or employ their legal counsel retained independently and bring to bear enormous forces of argument and influence that would not be available to the individual worker.

So when certain individual workers have suggested to me, and some have, that they would like to see a review procedure that consisted really of an appeal procedure that would be rooted in the court system, I have told them, Mr. Speaker, that I think that they are asking for a disaster. I think they are asking for something that would be no service to them, would tend to overload the game even more fully on the side of the employer and against their best interests. But I say to you, sir, that it has been suggested to me, seriously, by some people, notably members of the Injured Workers' Association, that they would like to see an appeal procedure that consisted of this kind of machinery. I would hope that my conversations with them and the conversations they have had with others, including officers of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, would have convinced them by now that that is the wrong kind of avenue for them to pursue. But I think that there are, sir, some available channels of administration and activity that could be utilized more fully than they are to beef up the work that the workers Compensation Board itself has to do in the area of compensation claims to lighten their workload and to help satisfy aggrieved workers more fully than some of them are now satisfied apparently, that their claims are receiving every consideration.

One of those channels of course lies in the Ombudsman's office, Mr. Speaker, and I raise the question as to whether this government might not give consideration to expanding the machinery in the Ombudsman's office to a degree in order to accommodate a heavier workload in this area of compensation claims and requests for review of compensation board rulings, compensation board decisions. I note in the Annual Report from the Ombudsman that in the year 1974, the calendar year 1974, there was a total of 30 cases involving Workers' Compensation Board decisions in which the principal who felt himself or herself aggrieved took his case to the Ombudsman for review. Thirty of those appeals in 1974, as compared to what I read to be one in 1973; but because the mathematics are structured differently for the two years in the report that may be incorrect, it may be that it was ten in 1973, but in any event, sir, it was 30 in 1974, and so the trend is upwards, the trend is toward a heavier workload in that area, the trend is to a greater seizing of the opportunity by aggrieved workers to go to the Ombudsman to have their cases re-examined.

The trend is probably going to continue if past performance is any indicator, and although

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(MR. SHERMAN cont'd) . . . the Ombudsman, Mr. Maltby, recently added an additional investigative assistant to his staff, it may well be, sir, that this government should be giving consideration to adding a further investigative assistant who would spend part of his time, perhaps half his time, perhaps all of his time if the workload demanded it, making himself available to review these particular cases, because although the Workers Compensation Board no doubt has brought all the expertise it can to bear in making its decision, there are, as I suggested, workers in our community who feel that they have not had the fullest consideration that they would wish to have. And even though they may have had such, even though they may have had such, if they feel that they haven't had it, Mr. Speaker, then I believe that we as public representatives, have a responsibility to try to alleviate that sense of anxiety and insecurity and try to prove to them that society is doing right by them, and that society's agencies and elected officials and officers are doing right by them. I would think that there would be merit in considering an expansion of the Ombudsman's office to permit a fuller assumption of that kind of workload as the appeals themselves build up in volume.

The situation in which I have tried to address myself to this resolution, I quite candidly admit, Mr. Speaker, has really been brought specifically to my attention by the Injured Workers' Association of Manitoba itself, and I would like to make in the few seconds still available to me, one closing recommendation. That is, sir, that some official or quasi official status or recognition be developed and afforded that association simply to give it the assurance that it needs that it is part of the community too. I think at the present time there are injured workers who belong to that association and some perhaps who don't belong to that association, who feel that they're the castaways, who feel that they are the excise of the labour community, of the working force in Manitoba. And that is not a harmonious or happy condition either for them or for Manitobans generally to have on their hearts and on their consciences.

I believe, sir, that a great stride forward could be made if some kind of recognition could be given even in a semi-official way to this association. And the keenest step, the most effective step that could be taken to ensure that would be to allow representation from that association on the advisory committee to the Minister of Labour, which the Minister of Labour has promised for many months that he's going to set up. If that were done, if they had a voice on that committee I think you'd find, sir, that their grievances would be pacified and their feelings would be reassured, they would be reassured and we wouldn't have the kind of unhappiness that now exists. That, sir, is what the purport of the resolution before us really focuses on.

MR. SPEAKER: The hour being 5:30 I am now leaving the Chair. The House will resume at 8:00 p. m. in Committee of Supply.