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DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

Speaker

The Honourable Peter Fox



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THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
10 a.m., Friday, February 13, 1976

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 95 students of Grade 6 standing of the Bedson Elm School. These students are under the direction of Mr. Maharan, Mrs. Orlesky and Mrs. Malcolm. This school is located in the Constituency of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia. On behalf of all the honourable members, I welcome you here this morning.

Presenting Petitions; Reading and Receiving Petitions; Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees. The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

REPORT BY SPECIAL COMMITTEE

MR. D. JAMES WALDING (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Honourable Member for Radisson I beg to present the First Report of the Special Committee on Land Use.

MR. CLERK: Your Special Committee on Land Ownership was appointed in the First Session of the Thirtieth Legislature to enquire into matters relating to property rights in lands within the Province.

By resolution passed in the Legislature on 18 June 1975, your Special Committee consisting of Honourable Messrs. Bostrom, Green, Toupin, Uskiw; Messrs. Adam, Barrow, Blake, Enns, Graham, Johannson, G. Johnston, Jorgenson, Minaker, Shafransky and Walding was reconstituted and reappointed to enquire into matters relating to property rights in agricultural and recreational lands within the Province and was authorized:

1. to hold such public hearings as the Committee deems advisable,
2. to report its findings and recommendations to the House at the next Session of the Legislature.

Your Committee held public hearings on Monday, 26 January 1976, at Winnipeg; Tuesday, 3 February 1976, at Virden; Thursday, 5 February 1976, at Thompson; Monday, 9 February 1976, at Swan River. These were in addition to the eight public hearings held in 1975.

Your Committee is appreciative of the interest shown by the citizens of Manitoba in the subject of land ownership and use, and of their sincere and deep concerns expressed in written and oral presentations for the need for responsible stewardship of our agricultural resources to protect the well-being of the present and future generations of this Province and the world.

Concerns over past and present trends in agricultural land ownership and use centered on the following major issues:

1. The need to preserve good agricultural land for food production.

There is increasing awareness that the earth's resources for the production of food are limited in relation to the needs of an ever-growing population. While it is recognized that it is not possible to preserve every square foot of agricultural land for farming purposes, many persons and organizations appearing before your Committee emphasized the need for wise land use planning and expressed the view that, when feasible, future industrial and residential development should be directed towards lands of marginal or no agricultural potential. Many persons stressed the point that agriculture cannot compete in price for land with urban and industrial users.

2. The effects of investment activity in land by persons who are not farmers.

Many people expressed the view that the activities of investors of foreign and domestic origin had the effect of driving up land prices beyond what would be considered reasonable in terms of the income-generating potential of that land from agricultural production.

3. The effects of certain types of absentee ownership on farmers and rural communities.

(MR. CLERK cont'd). . . .

In presentations made to your Committee the view was expressed that certain types of absentee owners of land do not contribute to the rural community. Further, it was felt that the investment activities of people outside agriculture and the resulting absentee ownership of land contribute to the decline in farm numbers, and diminish the potential prosperity of the rural community.

4. The effects of decreasing farm numbers on rural communities.

There is widespread concern that farm numbers and rural population may continue to decline. The view was expressed that declining population has the tendency to raise the cost and/or lower the quality of social services such as education and health care, that it threatens the commercial viability of rural centres, and that it has a detrimental effect on the social fabric of the rural community at large.

Presentations made to your Committee suggested that some farms had expanded excessively. Some recommended that legislation be enacted which would place restrictions on the size of farm any person or family could own; others emphasized the importance of programs to strengthen the economic viability of smaller farms and in assisting young persons in getting started.

5. The difficulties encountered by young people to get established as farmers.

The large amounts of capital required to establish a viable farm unit poses a formidable problem for young people who do not have substantial means of their own. The need for government programs to provide young farmers with the opportunity to obtain land without substantial outlays of money is becoming greater as the price of land keeps on rising.

6. The need to extend access to and to protect recreational land.

Concern was expressed by persons in northern Manitoba that adequate facilities for recreation be provided to improve the quality of life in the region. Some persons suggested an extension of freehold privilege for personal enjoyment and commercial development. Others emphasized the need to protect and ensure public access to recreational resources and did not favour the granting of freehold privileges.

There appeared to be general agreement that the effects of certain types of absentee ownership of land on farmers and the rural community were the same regardless of the place of residence of the absentee landlord.

There was also general agreement among those making presentations to your Committee that the owner-operated farm is the most acceptable form of land tenure.

In recapitulating, your Committee would observe the following:

While different persons and different organizations expressed themselves in different ways, they all shared two strongly held convictions:

The first of these strongly held convictions is that agricultural land is such a precious resource that it cannot and must not be considered as just another commodity, but should be reserved for agricultural use.

The second strongly held conviction is that the best existing form of land tenure is the owner-operated family farm.

Accompanying these strongly held convictions was the universally recognized need for programs to assist young people in establishing themselves as farmers. A most serious obstacle faced by aspiring farmers is the heavy capital requirements, the greater part of which consists of the cost of land.

Having heard the concerns of the citizens of the Province and having considered their views with respect to remedial steps to be taken, your Special Committee recommends that during this session legislation be considered reflecting these views and which would deal with the problems of certain types of absentee ownership and which would provide for measures to assure the continuation and strengthening of the family farm structure as the basis of agriculture in Manitoba.

With respect to the preservation of farm land in agricultural use, your Committee recommends that the Minister of Municipal Affairs work closely with municipalities in the Province towards the establishment of planning districts as provided for in The Planning Act, in order that comprehensive land use plans may be developed expeditiously.

Finally, government has the responsibility to protect the recreational value of the many and varied resources with which the Province is blessed for the enjoyment of all.

REPORT BY SPECIAL COMMITTEE

(MR. CLERK cont'd) . . . Industrial and commercial development must not be allowed to result in environmental degradation. Public access to recreational land should be extended and protected.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

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

MR. WALDING: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Gimli, that the Report of the Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

PRESENTATION OF NEW MEMBERS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel, the Leader of the Opposition.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Acting Leader of the Opposition) (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I have a ritual to perform here with you at this moment. I'd like to present the rest of it in front of you.

Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to you Warren Steen, Esquire, Member of the Electoral Division of Crescentwood who has taken the Oath, signed the Roll and now claims the right to take his seat.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Welcome Mr. Steen.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to you R. G. Wilson, Esquire, Member of the Electoral Division of Wolseley who has taken the Oath, signed the Roll and now claims the right to take his seat.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Welcome Mr. Wilson.

Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports. The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

HON. SIDNEY GREEN, Q.C. (Minister of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management) (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a Return to Order No. 8, which was previously distributed to various political parties I understand.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other Ministerial Statements or Tabling of Reports? The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Attorney-General, I would table a copy of all regulations filed under The Regulations Act since the opening of the last Session.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Any other Ministerial Statements or Tabling of Reports? Notices of Motion; Introduction of Bills; Questions. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

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MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Health and ask him if, at this time, he could give us a full report on the status of the problems at both the Misericordia and General Hospitals.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS (Minister of Health and Social Development) (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, all I can tell my honourable friend is that there was a settlement with the Superintendent at Misericordia and also with the engineers and maintenance people at Misericordia. Last night there was a discussion - I don't think it would help anything by revealing what happened at this meeting, it's not finished - dealing with the engineers at the Health Sciences Centre and I think that this afternoon the negotiating with the maintenance crew at the Health Science Centre will take place.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, my question was more directed at the well-being of the patients in these hospitals. Can he indicate at this point how many have been evacuated from the Misericordia; whether they're being moved back in and what the situation is in terms of numbers at the Health Sciences Centre as well.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I don't think I can give the exact number of the

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(MR. DESJARDINS cont'd) . . . people that are being evacuated from the Misericordia, but I can repeat to my honourable friend that an agreement has been reached and it'll be business as usual at Misericordia.

At the Health Sciences Centre there are some people that definitely cannot be moved and will not be moved and then as I say we'll know more this afternoon. Some people have been evacuated, have been sent home - like it is usually the way they do things when these things happen - and I would hope that maybe this afternoon or before the week-end that everything will be settled at both hospitals.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the Minister really is again to determine what numbers of people at this point at each hospital have been moved - or placed back in the hospital, in the case of the Misericordia. If he could, would he give us some indication of has there been any attempt to measure the impact on the patients of having to move them out of the hospitals and back in again?

MR. DESJARDINS: Well, really, the last question of course, I can say that this is done constantly. This is being done in a responsible manner. As far as the numbers at Misericordia I'll have to take that as notice. Of course by then it'll be changed because I am sure that they are getting people in as fast as they can do it in an orderly way.

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

MR. GORDON E. JOHNSTON (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Honourable the Minister of Labour.

In view of the Honourable Minister of Health's statement that he would engage in strike breaking if necessary with respect to the maintenance workers of the hospital, would the Minister of Health support such a manner to terminate a strike, or would he support the legislation on a legal . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Honourable Minister explain his point of order.

MR. DESJARDINS: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker. I'm not saying that the statement that was made was not correct but it was quoted out of context.--(Interjection)-- Well, just a minute. If you don't want an answer I won't try to answer it. Now the question was this: were we looking at legislation to order these people back to work and I said that this was always a possibility but that we weren't doing it at this time. I said that my responsibility was to make sure - I think that the question of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition was an indication of how important it is to make sure that the proper care is given to the people of Manitoba. I said that if need be we'd get other people in; we'd make sure. Because some places, certain hospitals cannot - some patients will not be able to be moved at all and I think that it is my responsibility. I was asked: is that strike breaking? I said certainly not as much as ordering people back to work. That's certainly strike breaking. If it was strike breaking there was doubt that then I would be breaking the strike because I would try, I would do everything possible to keep these doors to the hospitals open.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member from Portage la Prairie.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Honourable the Minister of Labour. Would he support the Minister's method of ending the strike or would he rather take the legal process of legislative action?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Honourable Member is asking for an opinion. The Honourable Member for Virden. The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I rephrase my question to the Minister of Labour. Would he tell us how he would take action to end a strike if necessary?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Again it's asking for an opinion and it's hypothetical. The Honourable Member for Virden. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the First Minister and ask him first of all whether the government does have some sort of position it would like to state in relation to the right to life and the right to health as opposed to the right to strike which has been alluded to by him, and ask him whether the government is not prepared to consider at this time legislation regarding vital services such as those at the hospitals involved?

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MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. EDWARD SCHREYER (Premier) (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, there may well be a statement on that at the appropriate time by the Minister of Labour. In the meantime I think that the honourable gentleman will realize that when matters are under very current negotiations, it is in the public interest not to attempt to satisfy intellectual curiosity and that my honourable friend I think will have ample opportunity to probe at this in due course.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the First Minister would be as to whether a person removed from hospital on intravenous or in a state of shock would be considered a matter of intellectual curiosity or a matter of crisis?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, we have been advised, and I assume that my two colleagues are advised on a more continuing basis, as to the extent of problem that exists at the time of a withdrawal of service at a hospital in which there are patients including specifically patients that are difficult, or perhaps in some few cases impossible, to move. However, movement of some patients takes place from time to time into and out of hospitals. I'm reminded of the fact that in the Province of Ontario in recent days some 5,000 patients have been moved out of certain hospitals because they have been closed administratively. So therefore these things have to be adjusted to from time to time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MORRIS MCGREGOR (Virden): Mr. Speaker, I would like your permission to make a very short, non-political and as per McGregor style, non-controversial . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Honourable Member have leave? The Honourable Member.

STATEMENT

MR. MCGREGOR: In the absence of the Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney - I would much rather he was here to make this statement - congratulating the provincial champions, the Lassie Provincial Champions, of Joan Mogk, Joan Consomto, Jean Moffat, Betty Devins and Karen Anderson who we know in Western Manitoba as young blue-eyes. Karen I might announce is a niece of mine and also the sports person of Western Manitoba this year. So I would just want the House to extend congratulations to them.

The question, Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct to the Minister of Labour: When is the Minister going to give a full report on the Fort Garry Court fire? And a supplementary: Will there be any major changes in the building code and fire code anticipated in 1976?

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MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. RUSSELL PAULLEY (Minister of Labour) (Transcona): It's not quite as controversial as the position you're in. Mr. Speaker, may I thank the Honourable Member for Virden for again exhibiting the fact that he is a gentleman because he did give me advance notice of his questions.

The first question: When is the Minister going to give a full report on the Fort Garry fire tragedy - and it was a tragedy. I'm unable to give any full report at this time, Mr. Speaker, because investigations are continuing and there is the possibility of a court action or legal action and it would be improper for me at this stage to give any other indication to my honourable friend and members of the Assembly other than that the report will eventually come. Seeing as it's a matter under investigation I cannot disclose where it is at the present time, although I may say reasonably knowledgeable.

The supplementary question: Whether there will be any changes in the building and the fire codes in 1976. I hope very shortly to have passed regulations to the Building Code as approved by the Assembly last year. As far as fire codes are concerned the fire codes of 1975 are being applied and will not require any further legislation by this Assembly because of the action we've already taken in our co-operation with the federal and other provincial jurisdictions.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

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MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a further question of the Minister of Labour in regard to the same subject. Can the Minister indicate whether the government intends to take any action on the recommendations of the Special Advisory Committee on Fire Protection and Safety that has been meeting for the past year? Can we expect some action this year on that report?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: The answer is yes, Mr. Speaker. The consultant, Mr. Claude Wright, did forward to me on behalf of the Advisory Board a report which is a public report and action will be taken on many aspects and suggestions, recommendations contained in that report. They're in the process of being done now and more will be done throughout the year.

MR. AXWORTHY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister indicate to the House what form these actions will take. Will he make a full report to the House at Estimates point or will he be bringing in legislation or will there be some announcement forthcoming very soon about the exact nature of the changes that will be brought about?

MR. PAULLEY: May I assure my honourable friend, Mr. Speaker, that a more complete report will be given in due course. I will be happy to discuss the matters related to fire protection and prevention during the Estimates or if it is the desire of my honourable friend for a separate report I would be glad to accommodate him, because this is one of the most important avenues of human endeavour, namely, fire protection.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MR. SIDNEY SPIVAK, Q.C. (River Heights): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the First Minister. I wonder if he can confirm as government policy the statement by the Minister of Health that there will be no provincial restraints in bargaining.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I think that the interpretation that my honourable friend seems to have on that is really not quite accurate, it's oversimplified. I can't cope with the question on that basis.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder then, Mr. Speaker, if the First Minister, by way of another question, would be prepared to indicate to the Chamber the average wage settlement with the Manitoba Liquor Commission employees--(Interjection)--The average percentage increase.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, that I think is also something better dealt with by way of Order for Return. I would point out to my honourable friend that the settlement has to do with the group that have come out of a 33 month contract and therefore is not to be simplistically compared with those who come out of a 12 month contract. That's a starter. There are other factors involved and numbers, ranges of numbers, and therefore really is best dealt with in written form.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, by way of another question then to the First Minister. I wonder if he can confirm whether the settlement with the Manitoba Liquor Commission employees will be referred to the Anti-Inflation Board?

MR. SCHREYER: That, Mr. Speaker, is certainly the case. It, in fact, could be said that it goes without saying.

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

MR. HARRY E. GRAHAM (Birtle-Russell): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Honourable Attorney-General. I'd like to ask the Attorney-General if he will advise when a full report will be made available to the House on all circumstances surrounding the resignation of Provincial Judge Anthony Pilutik?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. HOWARD PAWLEY (Attorney-General) (Selkirk): Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know what the honourable member refers to by "full report" but I would think the appropriate time for any discussion in connection with that would be during Estimate review process.

MR. GRAHAM: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the Attorney-General now completed his investigation into this affair?

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, they are terminated to the extent that the Judicial

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(MR. PAWLEY cont'd) . . . Council has made a determination on their part that there is no further grounds for further investigation or hearing in view of the resignation. Insofar as other investigations are concerned I understand that they had been completed. I intend to have a more full briefing by those that have been engaged on the matter within the next little while.

MR. GRAHAM: A final supplementary then. Seeing as how the investigation has now been completed can the Attorney-General tell us whether or not he is contemplating criminal charges in this matter?

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have been advised through my staff that according to the judgment of the Winnipeg City Police and the Crown Attorneys within the department, as well as the Chief Provincial Judge Harold Gyles, there is no basis for criminal proceedings.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege. The honourable member stated that I had made a statement that there would be no control or no ceiling. This is not correct. The statement that I have made is that the Manitoba Health Services Commission would be instructed that the Government was not placing any restraint or control on them, that they would have to deal reasonably, that it wasn't a blank cheque, deal responsibly, and of course everything would be subject to the Anti-Inflation Board. But any hospital, any board would have to have their suggestion approved by the Health Services Commission before the deficit is picked up.

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MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, then my question would be to either the Minister of Health or to the First Minister because I'm not sure under whose jurisdiction this would come. Can he confirm that the Anti-Inflation Board have in fact set guidelines for the variations, variations that could occur with respect to contracts. First can they confirm that?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, that's why I indicated in the first instance that it's rather difficult to respond to the honourable member's question in the form in which he put it. Now, Sir, he is asking a question which is based on the assumption that the Anti-Inflation Board operates by way of definitive prior restraint and by rigid ranges. In fact that is not the case. The Anti-Inflation Board operates by way of postulated guidelines and then by way of specific case examination. They do take into account historical relationships and just as important they take into account the duration of the previous contract and when it was entered into and on all of these factors it then does make a pronouncement. So that there is a process of restraint but it certainly is not of a simplistic nature.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question then is to the Minister of Health. Can he confirm that the Manitoba Health Services Commission has requested and received from the Anti-Inflation Board, guidelines with respect to the negotiations to be carried on by the hospitals in connection with their employees?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, this is something that I can't answer. We have a Chairman and a Board of the Commission and it's certainly within their right to try to get the guidelines, try to get as much information as possible. But that doesn't change anything of what the First Minister has just said.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Honourable the Minister of Education. I wonder if he could tell the House if his Deputy Minister was stating government policy and his departmental policy when he told the

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(MR. MCGILL cont'd) . . . Winnipeg School Board that the teaching of the so-called basic skills, the three "Rs" was now outdated.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. BEN HANUSCHAK (Minister of Education) (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I have every confidence that whatever my Deputy Minister said to the Winnipeg School Division, he did state government policy. But I'm not certain to the same extent about the accuracy of the reporting of what he may have stated.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the First Minister. Can the Premier indicate whether he has been in consultation or communication with officials from the City of Winnipeg to determine the effects of the transit strike that's presently taking place in this city, upon certain key groups in the community?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know for a fact whether in recent days representatives of the city have been in communication with my colleague, the Minister of Urban Affairs. As far as I am concerned I did meet with certain elected representatives of the City of Winnipeg at a luncheon meeting earlier this week and no particular dialogue or discussion took place along the lines that my honourable friend is inquiring about. So I guess my answer is no.

MR. AXWORTHY: A supplementary Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister indicate whether he, in that discussion with those elected representatives, discussed how the proposed assigning of anti-inflation guidelines might apply to city negotiations or negotiations between the city and its own workers and what the province's stand in that respect might be?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, there is a problem here in the sense that there is some difference of opinion within city council as how best to proceed with the negotiation in respect of the transit strike. I don't know that I'm in a position to properly comment on it. I would say this: that of the two different approaches that are manifest in city council, one of them in my opinion is right and the other is wrong.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Considering the quality of advice that the Premier is obviously offering to the city elected officials, of that nature, can the Minister however indicate, in transferring such ways of solving the problem, that the province has indicated what its own particular position is relative to the guidelines operative on civic employees in the City of Winnipeg?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I did not intend my last reply to sound somehow full of equivocation. So I will not equivocate, Sir. I believe that His Worship and others on city council know precisely what is the reasonable course of action in attempting to resolve the dispute. I don't think they need further advice. It's now a matter of determination within the city council whether they take one approach or the other.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOUGLAS WATT (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources. I wonder if the Minister could indicate, in short form, as to what extent are negotiations and discussions going on between the Government of Manitoba and the Government of Canada and the Government of Manitoba and the Government of the United States in regard to the diversion and the Garrison Dam or the Garrison Dam diversion?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, the matter is now in the hands of the International Joint Commission for consideration and recommendation. I hope that's short enough.

MR. WATT: A supplementary question. I would ask the Minister then, where does the matter stand now? Is the Garrison Dam project going forward while these negotiations or discussions are going on in the United States between the Government of Canada and the United States and the Joint Commission?

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I have been singularly unsuccessful in making this point clear and I will try again, perhaps with the same lack of success. There will be a Garrison diversion in the State of North Dakota. Of that there is no doubt and that is proceeding. The only question is whether that Garrison diversion will link with the Souris

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(MR. GREEN cont'd) . . . and the Red Rivers. That matter is now before the International Joint Commission. If the International Joint Commission finds that to do so, to link with the Souris and the Red, would constitute a violation of the International Boundaries Treaty, I presume that they will so find, indicate to the United States, who have a commitment that they will not violate the Treaty, and after that God only knows what will happen.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. HENRY J. EINARSON (Rock Lake): Mr. Speaker, I direct this question to the Minister of Agriculture. It pertains to the Commission of Inquiry report of livestock and meat products. Could the Minister indicate to this House when that report will be available to members?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Minister of Agriculture) (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, I would anticipate within a matter of a week or two at the outside.

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

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Attorney-General. I would like to ask him when the House can expect to receive the report of the Law Reform Commission dealing with family law, community of properties, bequests and other matters of that nature?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the Law Reform Commission now has completed its recommendations and that they are being finalized for presentation and it would be my hope, Mr. Speaker, that we would be able to present that report very shortly because I'm anxious to encourage debate and discussion on the recommendations.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. STEVE PATRICK (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Industry and Commerce. I wonder if the Minister has any indication or can he report to the House what information he has that the dislocation in the business community, because of the transit strike, has now given us over five percent unemployment. Is this the cause or has the Minister any information?

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

HON. LEONARD S. EVANS (Minister of Industry and Commerce) (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, we have not received any representations or any communication from any individual business or group of businesses advising us of any adverse effects of the transit strike.

MR. PATRICK: A supplementary. Would the Minister be prepared to investigate if the dislocation in the retail trade and business community is causing an increase in the unemployment rate?

My supplementary question is to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. One question at a time. The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I suppose one could conduct a survey. But how quickly one could formulate a reliable sample of a type that would give us the information on the subject matter - maybe the strike will be settled before we've got the survey under way - but I would say that if it was deemed necessary we could conduct some sort of a survey. I doubt if the information that we could gather so quickly would be that reliable.

MR. PATRICK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that I understand the union leaders indicated they would be staying on strike until September, perhaps maybe the Minister should undertake that survey pretty quickly.

I have another question to the Minister of Health and Social Services. Can the Minister indicate if our senior citizens - what effect it's having on them at the present time and are they able to get to hospitals and to get to medical services and doctors' offices?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I haven't any reports on that other than things were going quite well and I understand there's been so many volunteers ready to assist

ORAL QUESTIONS

(MR. DESJARDINS cont'd) . . . these people that there hasn't been really any problem.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, would you call the only matter which is under consideration on the Order Paper.

MR. SPEAKER: Very well. Consideration of the Speech of His Honour Lieutenant-Governor is the issue before us. The Honourable Member for Wellington.

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MR. PHILIP M. PETURSSON (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Churchill, that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor as follows:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address us at the opening of the present session.

Motion presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. PETURSSON: It is with pleasure, Mr. Speaker, as it is with a certain amount of personal satisfaction that I rise to move the acceptance of the Speech from the Throne at this opening of the Third Session of the Thirtieth Legislature.

I offer my congratulations to you, Sir, on again having been named Speaker to this Assembly. Your past record in that office speaks for itself and gives assurance to the Assembly that its deliberations will be presided over in an orderly, disciplined and impartial manner. I look forward to sitting through another session under your guidance.

Felicitations must also go out to the Sergeant-at-Arms on his appointment to that post. I wish him well.

I wish also to thank the Honourable the First Minister for his good will in extending to me the privilege of carrying out this very pleasant duty, that of moving the acceptance to the Speech from the Throne. It is a privilege. It is a privilege which will also be appreciated by the large number of supporters in my constituency who were instrumental in electing me as their representative to this Assembly not once only, nor twice, but three times. And each time with an increased majority. This vote was not only an indication of confidence in my representation for that constituency but confidence to a greater degree in the government and in its leader. It is he who has played and still plays the most important role in the administration and the direction of this government.

This was fully indicated at the recent convention of our party when to a large audience our Premier announced in a forthright way that while he was in no way satisfied with the Federal Government's policy on the inflation issue, he believed it was better to give the government the opportunity to prove itself and then if it failed to fulfill its commitments, to withdraw and set up guidelines and a policy of our own.

There are some, perhaps many, who feel that the Federal Government has been perhaps giving a too explicit interpretation to a biblical saying in which the people are admonished in the words, "I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given. But from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away." This passage appears in the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 19, Verse 26. In its guidelines the Federal Government seems to be saying something that comes very close to this biblical statement. It seems to me that if I were writing the bible - heaven forbid - I would simply switch the injunction around and have it read, "I tell you that to everyone who has not more will be given but from him who has, even the little that he has will be taken away."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't think I would wish to be quite that ruthless even to those who have more than they need. I would like to be generous to them and leave them a little bit. After all we wouldn't want to swell our welfare rolls beyond good reason. But in effect this is what the Federal Government is saying and how do they rationalize that

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(MR. PETURSSON cont'd) . . . position - to him that hath; it shall be given and from him that hath not, even the little that he hath shall be taken away? However, Mr. Speaker, that's a matter for future debate.

I've been going to say a brief word at this point about my constituency but before I do that I would be remiss in my duty if I did not recall that last summer, the summer of 1975, a very important occasion was observed by the Icelandic community of Manitoba. Last year marked the 100th anniversary of the settlement in Manitoba by the first contingent of people from Iceland. They settled at Gimli, coming there on the 21st of October, 1875. Over the years others have joined them and still others settled at later dates in other parts of the province until now Manitoba has within its borders the largest population of Icelandic people, or of Icelandic origin, of any place in the world except in Iceland itself. We are a very rich and favoured province.

There have always been very close ties between the Icelandic people here and the country of their origin. Such that on this anniversary last summer the people in Iceland organized groups to come here to join in the festivities being held at Gimli and elsewhere to mark the centennial of Icelandic settlement on the shores of Lake Winnipeg. Altogether there were eight charter flights by the Viking Air - just so you'll get that little plug - which brought between 1,400 and 1,500 people to Manitoba from Iceland, by far the greatest of whom had never been in Canada before. Not only that but leaders of government in Iceland joined in the pilgrimage including the President of Iceland, the Honourable Kristjan Eldjarn, and the Honourable Einar Agustsson the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Ambassador to Canada from Iceland, Haraldur Kroyer.

There were in addition some Cabinet Ministers and Members of the Icelandic Parliament. Our Premier met many of them at Gimli, and many of these visitors travelled individually and in groups to different parts of Manitoba, including Glenboro where the Member for Rock Lake played host to them; to Baldur, to Brandon, to Lundar, to Arborg, to Riverton and many other places, including Hecla Island where some were present at the official opening of the new Provincial Park - the Hecla Provincial Park.

These visitors from Iceland included as well as the officials, included the National Male Voice Choir; the National Dance Group which performed at the Scandinavian Pavilion at the Folklorama Festival - or during the Folklorama Festival - as well as several other places.

The National Theatre Group and the Icelandic brass band were also a part of the several groups and they travelled to several communities to entertain and to be seen and to be heard as a gesture of good will.

Added to this, and later after the Gimli Festival, there was a plane load of farmers who came from Iceland - Icelandic farmers whose main purpose was to study farming methods in western Canada as well as they could in the short time that they stayed here. They by-passed the Centennial festivities at Gimli and went instead to Alberta, to the ranching country and to the grain growing areas; and while in Alberta these farmers went on a special pilgrimage to a small town called Barkerville, because it was there that Iceland's most outstanding poet of the present century had lived and worked. He was a farmer near Barkerville.

It seems that we seldom associate poetic skills with farming, but this man whose name was Stephan G. Stephansson, and in his lifetime he produced more than 17 volumes of poetry recognized in Iceland as being of the highest calibre. The books were all published in Iceland. They gained a wide circulation both there and here in Canada and among Icelanders in the States. These farmers visiting Canada in tribute to the memory of this man, not only visited his home, his farm, and the memorial that the Historic Sites and Monuments Board has erected there in his memory, they made a contribution of \$10,000 for the restoration of this man's home which still stands on the land where he had lived and farmed. And while they were in Alberta the Icelandic clubs in Calgary and Edmonton played host to these visitors.

And when the Icelandic farmers reached Winnipeg, our Department of Agriculture and the Minister and the Speaker of this Legislature - the Minister of Agriculture, that is, and the Speaker of this Legislature - recognized their visit with a reception. It was held in Room 254, at which the Honourable Member from Rock Lake was also present as

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(MR. PETURSSON cont'd) . . . a Member of the Legislature and as one of the hosts to them in Manitoba, himself being a man of Icelandic descent and well able to speak the language.

Later in the fall in October after the large group had returned home, a three-day conference was held - the Canada-Iceland Conference - in the Convention Centre, followed by a trip down the Red River to Lake Winnipeg and to Hecla Island on the Lord Selkirk, a sort of a sentimental journey, retracing the steps of the original pioneers down the Red River to Gimli, that had been taken--(Interjection)--yes, it's hard to walk on the water, but on the ice it can be possible. This was in the month of October that the Icelandic settlers came down the Red River just before winter set in, and settled where Gimli now stands. On the voyage that was taken this past fall among the passengers was the Bishop of Iceland, the Reverend Doctor Sigurbjörn Einarsson.

A MEMBER: No relatives.

MR. PETURSSON: No relatives. Iceland has a State church and it is a Lutheran Church, but that doesn't prevent me as a Unitarian from being on friendly terms with the Bishop. I first met him when I visited Iceland, in his home in Reykjavik ten years ago, and it doesn't inhibit him from friendly relations with me.

MR. PETURSSON: Thegar allt kemur til alls, er ekki annad hægt ad segja en ad thetta sidasta ar hafi verid merkilegt ar hja islendingum her vestra. Eg vona ad hin naestu hundrud ar verdi okkur ollum jafn happasael og hin sidustu hundrud hafa verid.

TRANSLATION

When all is said and done, we cannot say otherwise than that the past year has been an important year among the Icelandic people here in the west. I hope that the next hundred years will be equally significant and as favourable as the past hundred years have been!

But now, Mr. Speaker, while I could dwell on these events of the Centennial of the Icelandic settlement for the remainder of the day, I must turn to other things, and among these is a brief reference to my constituency, the constituency which I have held since 1966.

It is made up of a very compact area, in what was called many years ago the west end of Winnipeg, but the city has expanded in a westerly direction far beyond even the western most boundary of the present constituency which used to be the old city limits at St. James Street. My constituency stretches from Maryland Street west to St. James Street, then from Ellice Avenue north to Notre Dame. It is made up pretty largely of middle income class people with a scattering of less privileged people. There has been quite a number of immigrant families from various countries in Europe and elsewhere that have settled into homes in the constituency and they find it to their liking. Many of them have taken out Canadian citizenship.

We have good school facilities for all levels in the school, including elementary, public, junior high and high school, as well as the Technical Vocational School and a school for the handicapped.

A MEMBER: And the new General Wolfe school.

MR. PETURSSON: And the new General Wolfe school that is being built across the lane from my home which will block my vision out of my upper windows . . . (laughter) out to Ellice Avenue. The first thing I do in the morning when I get up is to look out my bedroom window to see what progress has been made.

We are not blessed in Wellington constituency with too many parks. We have only one, Sargent Park. There is a tot lot and there is fairly easy access to a couple of community clubs, but both are outside of the constituency boundaries, one in St. Matthews, one in Logan, I believe. Work is now being done on the construction of a closed-in swimming pool at Sargent Park, which will be a good addition to the constituency.

Most people seem to like the area. There is easy access to the downtown section and also to the airport. It takes ten minutes from where I live to get out to the airport. I personally have lived in the constituency during the greater part of the time since 1913. My father bought a house on Alverstone Street in 1913 and I have now lived for thirty years in my present home across the lane from the General Wolfe school.

During that time, I could put on the record that the relationship has been very good; in the thirty years' time, only three windows in my house have been broken. (laughter) --(Interjection)--None. I don't think any of those three were broken by the school children

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(MR. PETURSSON cont'd) . . . themselves, but rather by commercial ball leagues who had the use of the grounds, and I made a complaint to the school board and they changed that.

A MEMBER: No more broken windows.

MR. PETURSSON: No more broken windows.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that accounts very briefly for my constituency. It takes its name from Wellington Avenue which runs through at centre from east to west. I hardly expect that as a result of this description that we'll be inundated by people who may be attracted to it, but I can assure anyone who wishes to know, that I regard that area as a good place in which to live. I wouldn't choose to live anywhere else in Winnipeg, and I think most of the residents feel the same way.

I think, Mr. Speaker, judging from the results of the most recent elections that the residents in my constituency are well satisfied with the present government, its leadership and its policies.--(Hear, hear!) (Applause) Those to whom I speak are pretty unanimous in expressing their satisfaction with our leader in the person of our Premier, and he will go down in history I believe as the most able leader of government that this province has had.--(Applause)--And his term in office will be remembered in history as the most outstanding six years in the hundred years that this province has been in existence.--(Applause)--(Interjection)--Seven years.

Mr. Speaker, I was referring only to the period in which we have been sitting here and not casting my imagination on into the future, but the future is wide open and it's a long future, and we'll still be here. I think I can say that. In contrast to what this government has achieved during the short period of time that we have been in power - and I keep thinking in terms of six years - the opposition during the same period will mainly be remembered for its general disarray and internal dissention. The leaders have been deposed or have resigned, and the new leaders have had no seat in the House and have been compelled to sit on the sidelines to direct debate by semaphore or other signals and by scribbled notes. It's not a situation that lends itself to effectiveness either in opposition or in internal organization.

For some reason, I am reminded of another Biblical reference, Biblical source after all I didn't speak from a pulpit in the church for thirty-five years without having some of that rub off on me - another Biblical source which seems to apply to the situation in which the Official Opposition finds itself. I am reminded of a story from the Old Testament in which a certain man turns himself against the dictates of the members of his group who wish to follow the beat of a different drum. He refused to accept the dictates of those who opposed him. Hence, according to the story, these Biblical characters seized him and cast him into a den, and it was a den of lions.--(Laughter)--Those who have read the story will know that this man was Daniel. References of course, were made to him in the Book of Daniel.

After the lapse of a certain length of time the doors of the den were opened and out came Daniel all in one piece. He had survived the ordeal in the lions' den; and following this, those who had committed the evil deed of throwing Daniel to the lions were themselves thrown into the den whereupon they were torn apart--(Laughter)--whether from conflict among themselves or by the beasts that were in the den--(Applause)--In other words, they were done in.

A MEMBER: Well done.

MR. PETURSSON: Now this is a parable that has many applications. If we stretch things a little bit, we seem to have some kind of a parallel to this story right here in our midst, a parallel that seems already to have been recognized. We do not have a lions' den as such, but we do have the semblance of a Daniel who has been deposed, suffers the ostracism, a victim who figuratively was cast into a lions' den, but like the Daniel of old was, for the time being, spared. But the question is, when will his enemies be torn asunder? Only the future will reveal the answer.

However, be that as it may, our government does not involve itself in the internal rivalries of the members of the Opposition.--(Interjection)--While they occupy themselves with their own shenanigans, let me call it, the government continues to carry on its work, and during the last few years since coming into office the government has taken great

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(MR. PETURSSON cont'd) . . . strides forward in the development of the province and most particularly and most spectacularly in the North. Until the present government came to power the North had been, to all intents and purposes, largely a neglected wilderness; whereas now after the few short years that we have had in power, the northern communities have begun to live, to be recognized as an integral part of the province and an important part in its concerns.--(Applause)--

But there is much still to be done. The job is nowise been completed, as only too many are ready to point out. But compared to the hundred years of virtual neglect prior to the advent of the present government, the transformation even as limited as it has been, has still by earlier standards been almost beyond belief. Name almost any sector in the North and it will be found that this statement holds pretty well true. The question arises, what was the North at the close of the first hundred years of this province? By comparison, just look at the transformation that has taken place during the period in which this government has been in power.

Of course it will continue to be the role of the Opposition according to its understanding, to criticize, to oppose, to hold a tight rein when it deems necessary, to ferret out whatever weaknesses it may feel exist or that it imagines in government policy or administration. But we hope that whatever their criticism or opposition may be, it may be done in a constructive way and not merely for the sake of criticism as it most often has seemed to be during other sessions. And in this statement I feel that I'm being very charitable.

Now may I, Mr. Speaker, make reference to just one instance that stands out in my mind, where the government has been accused by certain individuals across the way, and it has to do with housing. During the last session and during the period between sessions, we have had drummed into our ears a steady - well, can I call it a torrent of complaints about there being a lack of adequate housing and about the urgent need for more housing. I don't believe that anyone on this side disagrees too seriously with these demands, with these cries, about the insufficiency of housing, except perhaps for the loudness and the length of the verbal clamor with which these arguments have been presented. The fact is that the problem of housing is recognized, it is known efforts are being made even now to increase the pace to provide housing because the need is and has been known and understood, and no amount of yelling from any source will alter that fact. Action is being taken. But I would like to ask my friend, the housing expert among the Liberal remnant who makes so much noise, where he was while his party was in power? Was he shouting at that time?--(Interjection)--Then what was his party doing at that time? Why did it not at that time act more expeditiously than it did? And what did the Liberals or the Conservatives for that matter do during the 100 years that they were alternating in power in this province? What was their policy then and how did they attempt to carry it out?

A MEMBER: That's a long story.

MR. PETURSSON: Yes, it is a long story. I can tell you what their policy was. It was to threaten men with jail if they advocated what my friend has been pressing for. If my friend across the way had spoken then, as he has frequently spoken at great length during the last couple of sessions, then he would have been labelled as a "Red", as a revolutionary, or even worse.

A MEMBER: One of us.

MR. PETURSSON: I am thinking as I speak these words, I am thinking of the time that J. S. Woodsworth of sainted memory, was threatened with jail because he demanded what my friend the Member for Wolseley has been demanding, and that's quite some years ago.

A MEMBER: Fort Rouge.

MR. PETURSSON: The authorities . . . Fort Rouge, I'm sorry, it's Fort Rouge, I'm insulting whoever comes from Wolseley. The Member for Fort Rouge. The authorities, the representatives of the Liberal and Conservative parties, have now had a . . . Oh, they did have a change of mind about jailing Woodsworth, whom they thought was a revolutionary, and they changed their minds only when they discovered that he had been quoting from the Bible. But it had been regarded as a revolutionary statement, even as

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(MR. PETURSSON cont'd) . . . a Communistic statement, and someone suggested that it was a good thing that the prophet Isaiah who wrote the words that Woodsworth repeated; somebody suggested that it was a good thing that Isaiah was not alive at that same time, he would have been working with Woodsworth and those who were his associates. But it's an interesting quotation because it had in part to do with housing, it had to do with justice, it had to do with human rights and it is all there for anybody to see in the Bible. And I'm tempted to think that my friend has just recently begun to read his Bible, he has discovered some remarkable statements about housing, about social rights, about social justice, about human needs, about righteousness and equality among men. And he begins to advocate these same things as though they were new, upbraiding this government for failing to do in the short time that it has been here, failing to do what the Liberals and the Conservatives failed completely to do during the 100 years of the history of this province.

But now, what was this passage that Woodsworth read, that he quoted, what was the passage that he was to be jailed for uttering? I think it should be on the record. It is to be found in the book of Isaiah, Chapter 65, Verses 21 and 22. There it is said, "And they shall build houses and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build and another inhabit, they shall not plant and another eat, for as the days of a tree are the days of my people and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." This was in 1919. This was seditious.--(Interjection)--That's right. And this is very plain language and easily understood. The lesson it teaches has a history of upwards of 2,500 years. Isaiah's words have thundered down the ages, and if my friend across the way deludes himself into thinking that he has recently seen a great light not seen by others before, that he has had revealed to him a great revelation, just let him stop dreaming. That same message has sounded out over the ages, but his political forebearers ignored it, they didn't want to recognize it, and they were ready to send to jail a man who had the temerity to proclaim it.

The main trouble appears to be that the old line parties have always been ready to hamstring any effort to do the very things that my friend across the way - I like to call him my friend and hope that he may be - now so vehemently urges. If he is sincere in what he is urging - and I would like to think that he may be - if he really means it, I would think that he might take the initiative, or that I might take the initiative and invite him to cross the floor and come over and join hands with those who are even now working to do the very things that he is urging. If he does not really mean it, then let him sit in his seat where he now is and continue to make loud noises and we'll recognize that he just loves to hear himself talk. Or perhaps it may be that some of our policies, our aims or objectives, are too strong, too rich for his blood and he will prefer to entertain himself with taking potshots at the government without any other responsibilities than to rattle along hours on end like a nut in an empty shell.

But now, Mr. Speaker, I wish to touch briefly on another subject, not because I am particularly knowledgeable about it but rather because it is of concern to me, as I believe it is of concern to all who give thought to it, and that is what is called the "energy crisis". I am no expert on energy. And how aware the world is becoming of the impending depletion of such non-renewable resources as oil, petroleum, gas and other related resources. The realization of the developing scarcity of these supplies has had an interesting impact on me, realizing as I do that my life spans the period of the greatest exploitation of these resources until now, when we have come near to the bottom of the barrel. During my lifetime I have lived as all who have lived, during an interim period between the time when the petroleum resources first came into large scale use to the time that is fast approaching when the last drops will be drained from the last barrel. As a small boy I saw my first gasoline buggy when I was 8 years old. A salesman had come over the dirt roads from Yorkton to the town I lived in in Saskatchewan. And there he ran out of gas and had to wait until the next train came through with supplies. And now as my years advance, I have nightmares in which I see the last car burn up the last pint of gas and then just sit there on an isolated wind-blown trail while the driver heads out over the prairies looking for a team of horses. I don't expect to see that happen in actual fact, but I can't but suggest that that is the heritage we are leaving

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(MR. PETURSSON cont'd) . . . for our children or our children's children in the not too far distant future. I have a grandson who recently married, six months ago, now will his son be witness to this final chapter of mankind's profligacy during this century, and this question haunts me.

In a sense we have sold our birthright down the river to the unimaginable financial advantage of multi-national corporations who have reaped all the profits, and at the end the people will stand with empty hands. This is the heritage we leave for the generations to come. The resources that have lain in the earth for millions of years have almost reached depletion in a single century. In a perverse sort of way, I am reminded of the words of a writer whose name I can't recall. They're couched more in the form of poetic imagery than prose, they do not have poetic form but they're more in the form of prose.

I ask your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I'm almost finished, for just another moment while I read this passage, it's very short. And this man says, "Children of a common, mysterious origin are we all, flung up by forces beyond our comprehension, fragments of some inscrutable but wondrous power. We are likewise co-partners in a common mysterious destiny; here on a little planet island in a vast ocean of space for a brief moment, in a vast expanse of time, we are brought together and we must live together and make the best of our common lot. If we have wisdom we shall strive to be comrades in the quest for the high places of life, we shall protect the art of helping one another and the science of mutual understanding. We shall continually keep our faces toward the light, we shall gladly shoulder our share of duty, however far we may be from solving the riddle of its meaning. We shall realize that we are the indispensable link between the world that was and the world that is to be. We shall resolve to pass on the torch of knowledge at least undimmed, and if possible, with even brighter flame. We shall bequeath to those who come after us a better and a kinder earth than we have known." Now, we have our idealistic dreams, but there are realities that cannot be ignored, and that is and must be one of our deepest concerns. And so on that note, Mr. Speaker, I close my address as mover of the Throne Speech, and would now therefore move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Churchill, that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor as follows: "We Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in Session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present Session." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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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 40 students from Temple of Aaron from St. Paul, Minnesota, United States, under the direction of Mr. Robert Fisher. On behalf of all the honourable members, I welcome you here this morning.

The Honourable Member for Churchill.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (Cont'd)

MR. LES OSLAND (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I rise at this time to support the Member from Wellington's motion of acceptance of the Speech from the Throne.

I'd like to take this opportunity to express some thoughts and concerns I have with regards to the past, the present and the possible future happenings in our province, and particularly in the North.

Before I do, I would like to, through you Mr. Speaker, welcome the two new members that have joined the House since we last sat here. I hope that their job will be light and there will be some rewarding experiences for them.

MR. BARROW: Don't treat them too good, Les.

MR. OSLAND: No, I won't be too nice. But thank you very much, I'd just like to welcome you again.

Mr. Speaker, I've been fortunate to be appointed the Legislative Assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Minister of Industry and Commerce and this is about a year or a year and a half ago, and it's been an excellent experience for me, namely because they gave me a free hand. I was just to go north and I was to go up there and - following the Member for Wellington's speech, maybe I should say I went up to preach the gospel - mostly of the gospel of local government whereby we would start developing more and more authority and responsibility at the mayor and council level.

This speech I would like to dwell mostly on the Minister of Municipal Affairs and my assistant position there with his department and merely talk about what has happened with regards to these local governments up there. I think that all in this House will agree that we are in desperate times right now. I think this country is going through a real soul-searching time. I think we're kind of looking critically and I hope positively down our throats and trying to come up with some answers of what has actually been happening to our society, where our family life is going to, where we as individual people stand. We often hear the business, the point that morally we are going downhill. In some ways, I suppose, on the surface I can agree with this. When you read the newspaper, primarily the newspaper is composed of hacks that are always making news. This I don't think really is the real true pulse of our society, and really out of all the sort of upset that is going on throughout our society today, I think we're going to come out with a better moralistic society and a less hypocritical one.

I have a theory and I've been promoting this wherever I've gone throughout the North talking to the people. I believe that there are five levels of government in this country and I believe that number one level of government starts right here, right inside this breast, right inside every man and woman's breast in this country. And until the day happens with us that we look at ourselves critically and accept this, that we have got to stop turning to the other person and always blaming everyone else for what's happening but no blame for ourselves. Number one level of government is inside my breast.

How I react on my family becomes the second level. If I animate my family and I react on my wife and my children they also in turn will react within our community and the Churchill community automatically either benefits positively or negatively from how ever my family reacts in that setting.

That brings me to the third level then. It brings me to the mayor and council, and now under this Minister of Municipal Affairs we've gone from a position where we really weren't recognizing or giving enough responsibility or recognition of that local government - even if it's in some cases possibly merely verbal at the beginning, it is certainly starting to change the texture of the democratic system. Just the very fact of calling the local chairman in the past, calling him a mayor now and these councils, and making people listen to them.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. OSLAND cont'd)

The community level then reacts on the provincial level and the provincial level reacts on the federal level. This, I feel, is how the democratic system should be working.

What's happening? Somehow or another by either accident or by design the local municipal government really has not had the proper homage paid to it. This has been my objective, my aims and by being given a free hand I've walked through the North talking to people, not primarily to the mayor and council per se or the chief and council at the reserve level, but mostly to people trying to animate the people to pay the homage to their local government and make it become a viable organization.

In 1970 the Federal Government began a system here in Manitoba promoting the responsibility for the Indian reserves to the chief and the council at the local level in that reserve. There has been a lot of heartbreak but there has been some really wonderful things come out of this. I joined the Department of Indian Affairs prior to getting into politics in 1971 and I became part of that promotional scheme in Manitoba here. At the same time in parallel in time the Department of Northern Affairs started a Community Development Program at the local level of the remote communities. These are communities that would start possibly at 75-80 people and maybe go up to 250-300 people within this community. Very small organizations.

The Minister of Northern Affairs promoted the idea that when the mayor and council of this small community spoke, that the people, by supporting their own mayor and council, that he would recognize that mayor and council and therefore give it viability. I think this has really started to bring on some real democratic responsibility at the local level. At the same time the Minister of Municipal Affairs at the provincial level also, started promoting this total idea for the local government district area of the province under the Municipal Affairs and he started promoting the mayor and council to become a viability at this level also.

I would like to present just three examples of what has happened up there and I think possibly you'll be interested in seeing just how people develop and how it actually works. I would like to, for the local government district, speak about the Town of Churchill because I feel that it has come a long way and I'm very close to that one particular one. It has given this government more problems than any other community in the North because the Churchill people are not exactly quiet complainers, believe me. We believe in speaking our minds and I don't know, maybe that's why I ended up here.

I'm going to describe two council meetings and three years ago the one I went to, the council meeting I went to, I sat in and of course the administrator was boss. He was paid by the Municipal Affairs Department; he set up the agenda; he sat with a gavel in his hand and he ran the meeting. The chairman and elected council, they sat around. I don't know just why they ever designate a chairman as the . . . The lady chairman at the time complained to me, she said it would make no difference, you know, I might just as well have been one of the councillors as be the chairman. The meeting would open; the first item of the agenda would be mentioned and then there would be a great debate, it would go on for an hour. No motion. So eventually after three-quarters of an hour or an hour they would ask if there was a motion on the subject and then, because nobody really wanted to make the motion on the thing, they would have a big debate on, you know, why somebody shouldn't make the motion. So it would go on like this and very little was accomplished.

In November, I went back up to Churchill to make a little run through and I attended their council meeting. Mayor Howard Brown came in; the administrator presented the agenda that had been made up for the mayor and the mayor proceeded with the meeting. He mentioned the first item of business; asked for the motion; one of the councillors wrote out the motion; sent it to another one to be seconded; forwarded it to the Chair and the discussion was under way. Eventually a vote was taken and we started that meeting at 7:30, left at eleven o'clock and it was a full agenda, some twelve items passed.

The Provincial Government in concert with the Federal Government have redeveloped Churchill right from the bottom up. It is absolutely a beautiful redevelopment. I just

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(MR. OSLAND cont'd) . . . hope that every member of this House can sooner or later come up and see it. To describe it would take another hour. But it is very very beautiful - the building is. We put the building there, the infrastructure, now the people have got to take charge of it; develop their own expertise at their own level and make it a place where any man and wife can raise a family in there and be proud of the community in which they live.

The second little experience I would like to describe is the experience I had at South Indian Lake on December 5th. This is the first time I ever saw our Premier out of his depth. He just got caught up in it and I'll tell you it was one of the most, oh . . . sort of meeting I had ever attended and we had been called there to the official opening of their Town Centre and the dedication of their new school. This council - and an awful lot of credit here goes to a chap by the name of Jock Gibb who took over the position under Northern Affairs in the community of supporting and developing the community council. The mayor, Rod Baker, and his council are really something to watch. No one can put anything over on them. They know where they're going; they run a tight ship; they develop a very very tight run budget and they are taking charge of that community 100 percent.

During the afternoon at the end of the ceremony they came to the part where they were going to dedicate the school. The school was being dedicated to a chap by the name of Oscar Blackburn who 38 years ago, he and his wife were the first white school teachers to enter South Indian Lake and they wanted to name their school after Oscar. This Oscar is quite a person. I worked with him when he was with Indian Affairs and I was in Indian Affairs myself. It came to the undraping and Oscar knew nothing about the fact that this school was going to be dedicated to him and they had him on the stage with the Premier and the Minister of Northern Affairs, you know, a whole group of officials. Then they asked him if he would do the unveiling so Oscar got up on a chair and this kind of a drape was hung on a series of nails over the top of the sign and as Oscar got halfway down the sign in undraping he realized it was his name that the school was being dedicated to. And he completely broke down. There was an absolute dead silence throughout that whole area. The gymnasium was just packed with people but you could have heard a pin drop. Actually Oscar wasn't able to recover himself and speak again so the Premier got up and tried to pick the meeting up and tried to get it going again. He started off and he started saying - I'm going to paraphrase him here - and he said something to this effect: since I have been made Premier of this province I have opened a lot of schools but this is the most emotional one - and that was as far as he got. He broke up. I'll tell you quite candidly the tears were running down my face and I don't think there was a dry eye in that building.

You know you go to a lot of gripes up there. I think that the North does more griping per square inch than anywhere else in Manitoba. I've got the ministers up there and they've wondered why they ever got invited in the first place. But you know it's beautiful because it's democracy. This doesn't upset me, this sort of complaining, this sort of upset. When I walk out in the hallway and see a bunch of beef producers and they're all standing around all six-foot people and there's the little Minister of Agriculture about five foot nothing. You can't see him for nothing and there's all the farmers and they're telling him what it's all about. To me this is democracy. And when the labour people came down here from the convention, the conference that they had here in Winnipeg, they came down into this building and they were yelling we want Schreyer and so on and so forth. A lot of people got upset. I'll tell you I didn't because I'm going to tell you something. The more of this the better. There was one - was it me that invited him? This sort of demonstration never bothered me. It is beautiful to see this building being used; that we as elected members are sitting here waiting to be paid attention to. Some difference from the old days when the main steps here had a great cord across it so that no Manitoban could walk up those main steps.

MR. THOMAS BARROW (Flin Flon: That was democracy.

MR. OSLAND: I better not get all wrapped up here. I'm going to go on to the third example that I would like to describe here and that is the reserve and I've got

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(MR. OSLAND cont'd) four local government districts, I've got four Northern Association of Community Councils and I've got 11 reserves. I would like to describe what happened here on January 14th at Tadoule Lake where the Chipewyan people from Churchill had returned to the barren land. I was invited out by the Regional Director of Indian Affairs to come out and attend the Band meeting that they were going to have with the Band and we went out. We went into this Band Hall - and these are the people that I had worked for up in Churchill and they were beautiful - and it was really something to see them out there all healthy and what they wanted to talk to the Department of Indian Affairs and Social Development, and the Medical Centre, Medical Services, Federal, about was getting their services transferred from Thompson where they had done this unilaterally - the government had. They wanted it transferred back from Thompson back into Churchill. The meeting commenced shortly after we arrived. The Band Hall filled right to overflowing. There were men and women sitting at their husband or their wives' feet and the place was completely packed right to the door. They had all us dignitaries sit up at the head table and down the side was the chief and his council. Chief Peter Thorassie opened the meeting and we went for four and a half hours without moving and there was never a dull moment. You talk about democracy --(Interjection)-- Thank you, Gordon, you're absolutely right.

There is something about an Indian meeting that - they're not frightened of a silence. Somehow or another we are. You go to any meeting that we attend and somebody has got to be talking all the time, all the time. And saying very little quite often. At that meeting, that four and a half hour meeting, the chief took charge of it from the beginning. He invited his councillors to follow his opening address up. The three councillors each got up and added some few remarks and then Sandy Clipping, one of the elders, more or less spoke for the whole community. When we left there there was certainly a different feeling with regard to all of us than when we came in on the plane. When we went back out an awful lot of us had all of a sudden seen the real democratic system under way.

I'd like to, just in closing, speak a few words on co-operation. We've got a Federal Government which is as strong - I don't know whether it is strong or not but it has got many civil servants. We have many civil servants here and if both the provincial and the federal levels will co-operate, what is happening in the North can be completed in the next, I would say, five to ten years. But we have got to work in support of those communities. We can't see continued the hundred years of mistakes that we've had in the past whereby we have done things to people instead of with them. We've now got a system of communication going with the small communities. Our civil servants now are pretty well all in tune with the idea that when they go to the community they will listen, they will talk to and they will make their communication before anything really starts to happen.

We've got to win on this one. We can't continue. It is a bloody disgrace in 1976 to walk on to an Indian reserve or a remote community in Manitoba and see the garbage these people have got to live under. I'll tell you right now we've started the trend to swing to better living and better standard of living in the North and it can't stop, we've got to keep on going. We've got to co-operate with defence. Our civil servants have got to be told in no uncertain terms: Quit blaming the other one. I sat in a meeting one day and one of our provincial civil servants was making the point that the federal civil servants were treating them like children. Within the same sentence in the same breath, he referred to a local council and he referred to them as if they were the children. My God, hypocrisy I can't put up with! We have got to take charge of them. We can muster the support, we can muster the strength and I can tell you right now that the end of the Seventies and into the Eighties, there is no reason why we cannot change the whole direction of the North, that this unilateral development along the 49th parallel will continue. We've got to change it. We've got to supply more amenities up North; we've got to make it a better life and we can do, through our development in the North, we can rectify so many of the mistakes that were made when they developed Winnipeg and along the southern border here.

I feel that if we not only co-operate with the Federal Government but we also utilize other strengths that are available to us; the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, which

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was certainly the outcome and development of the federal policy with regards to putting the authority for the Indian reserves to the chief in council; the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood under Mr. A.F. Spence has done a lot of good work; the Manitoba Metis Federation under Mr. Edward Head has certainly done a lot in the past; we can co-operate with the Feds, join together the MID, the MMF, the MACC, any organizations in the North - by utilizing and working with them I'm sure we can change and make the next 100 years in this country a lot better than our past 100. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Brandon West that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable House Leader.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable the Attorney-General, that the House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned until 2:30 p.m. Monday afternoon.