

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA  
Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

Time: 2:30 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Presenting Petitions . . .

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Crescentwood.

MR. CLERK, Jack Reeves: The Petition of J.M. Westaway et al, Praying for the passing of An Act to incorporate the Canadian Institute of Management in Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . . Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . .

NOTICES OF MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour and Manpower.

HON. KEN MacMASTER (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to correct two statements in the Hansard on Wednesday, 12 March 1980 on Page 799. Paragraph 4 reads that I said "They talk about placement and counselling, and the wheat program . . ." It is not the "wheat" program, it's "LEAP" - I have no association with wheat programs. In the next sentence, I must have had a pretty sticky tongue that day, the next is "and the outreach programs and the nuclear programs." It is not "nuclear", it is "New Careers". Thank you Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . . Before we proceed with Question Period, I would like to draw all honourable members' attention to the gallery on my left where we have the 2nd and 5th Group from Boy Scouts from Transcona under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Jackson. This scout group comes from the constituency of the Honourable Member for Transcona. We also have a Glenboro Pathfinder Unit, that's a branch of the Girl Guides of that town, under the direction of Mrs. Georgina Greenlay and Mrs. Fiona Ham. This group is from the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources. On behalf of all the Honourable Members we welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Community Services. The statement has been made just recently by the Provincial Corrections Commissioner to the effect that government is keeping its fingers crossed in respect to the lack of compliance with the fire code requirements in the Dauphin Minimum Security Prison. Can the Minister, in fact, confirm to the House that that particular institution does not meet Provincial Fire Regulation Standards?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services and Corrections.

HONOURABLE GEORGE MINAKER (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that there is some necessary work required with regard to fire detection and smoke detection work and it would be best raised to the Minister of Government Services

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

with regard to the scheduling of same. I know, I believe that there are portable smoke detectors at the facility at the present time, but the long-term fire protection program is presently in the planning stages.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister. Can the Minister advise when he became aware that certain upgrading was required in order to meet the Fire Regulation requirements?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that that question be directed to the Minister of Government Services, as I was not responsible for the department at the time I believe that the overall survey of our different institutions was taken by the Fire Commissioner's Office.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I will redirect my question to the Minister of Government Services that was responsible for the department prior to the present Minister of Community Services. Can the Minister advise when he became aware of the deficiency pertaining to Fire Regulation Standards involving the Dauphin Minimum Security Prison?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HONOURABLE HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I can indicate to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that among perhaps the highest priorities of this government as of October 11, 1977, subject to a tragic accident happening in Portage la Prairie, this government undertook a total review of particularly those institutions which housed people, either bedridden or otherwise. We had within a very short order a substantial knowledge of the deficiency in the matter of buildings meeting Fire Code Regulations, and we have committed ourselves to the spending of some \$5 million in each year that we have been in power in correcting them. The particular situation in Dauphin, Sir, we had extensive renovations for that facility in place and in design stage ready when the staff and the community of Dauphin requested the department to have another look after examining those procedures. It had something to do with, in their mind at least, not conforming to the otherwise aesthetic beauty and value of the building. In consultation with the supervisory staff at the Dauphin facility and the Department of Government Services, new designs are in progress and there will be some \$30,000 to \$40,000 spent during this summer construction year.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary to the Minister and his answer to the effect that staff, in fact, persuaded him and his government to set aside design work in order to minimize the fire danger in favour of better beauty of the building. Does this response then indicate, Mr. Speaker, further to the Minister, that for some period of time now, despite the knowledge from the Fire Commissioners office, received by the government across the way, that no action has been taken, while plans and designs have been developed to better improve the building, while the Chief Corrections Commissioner has indicated publicly that we are just keeping our fingers crossed. In other words just praying and hoping.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I must remind the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, that facility existed in its present state for eight long years during the period of the previous administration. But that isn't really the point. The question is that I personally have been in the facility, I personally inspected the facility. It is as the Minister responsible can indicate, a relatively low - what is the terminology - minimum security regulations prevail. There are no locked cells, no locked doors, in that sense, no bars on the window, as the report indicates, and I am personally satisfied that the kind of situation that is attributed to some of the staff and their comments is colourful, but not necessarily accurate.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services and Corrections.

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

MR. MINAKER: For further information to the House, Mr. Speaker, I can advise the house that the second floor of the jail is a dormitory and that the door to the main floor is unlocked. There is a window that is open with access to a ladder, that the correctional officers are on duty 24 hours a day so that the risk of a fire, we believe, is minimal under these conditions.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further question to the Minister. In view of the fact that there has been continued delay, and the Minister has had responsibility for two-and-a-half years of government to deal with this particular question, can the Minister advise whether or not there are recommendations now before Cabinet in order to bring about the necessary renovations in order to ensure that the building meets the appropriate Fire Regulation requirements?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe I have any particular responsibility to the Leader of the Opposition to indicate to him what is, or what is not before Cabinet. However, Mr. Speaker, I can indicate to him - and I think my Estimates will be up very shortly - that there are dollars provided for in the Estimates of the Department of Government Services.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister of Government Services whether all fire safety requirements at the Portage Home for Retardates have been met at this point in time?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I'll take that question as notice. Again, I would invite the member to pursue that point during the course of my Estimates. I can only indicate to him that there is an ongoing multi-hundred thousand dollar program of renovations under way to meet the Fire Code recommendations in that facility.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I understand the Minister then to say that the program has not been completed, but is ongoing. I would ask him whether he can confirm that rather than being a multi-hundred thousand, as he put it, that the entire cost, last reported, in the facility was of the order of \$5 to \$6 million, not some \$50,000 which was thrown around in a rather careless fashion by the First Minister several years ago.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to confirm again during the course of my Estimates that it will cost between \$50 and \$60 millions to bring to full upgraded standards that the present Fire Commissioners Code calls for.

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

MR. DOERN: I would ask the Minister of Government Services if he would then draw to the attention of the First Minister this state of affairs, because it was the First Minister who made a number of cheap shots against our administration during the last election campaign, concerning problems of fire safety. And I wonder whether the Minister would draw to the attention of his leader that his government is in violation of as many, if not more, safety requirements throughout the province, in provincial institutions.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I am rather nonplussed that this particular member, the former Minister of Public Works, would ask that kind of a question and leave himself open to this kind of an answer. The truth of the matter is - and that's where the shots came from and they were deservedly so - we are doing our best to act on the recommendations of the Fire Commissioners Office, and it is costing us

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

to the tune of \$5 million a year. They had the same recommendations and ignored them, and rather built monuments to themselves, devoted \$5 million to garages that to this day still are not needed. They built garages for themselves and monuments to themselves rather than comply with the Fire Commissioners Code. We are doing it, Sir.

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

MR. LAURENT J. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Community Services. Could the Minister give us the inmate population of Headingley, present population, and also the population as it stood in 1978?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice.

MR. DESJARDINS: I thank the Minister, and I wonder if he could also take as notice the following: What is the program staff at the institution now, and what was it in the same period of 1978?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, I will take that as notice, and I would gladly discuss all of these items in detail when we deal with our Estimates.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Finance, to whom Manitoba Hydro reports. Would the Minister be able to confirm or not confirm that a recommendation was made by Mr. John Arnason, one of the managerial personnel, or people acting on his behalf, to the Manitoba Hydro Board, some time ago, prior to the appointment of the new Executive Director, to accept the tender and proposal of a firm containing the name McLaren with respect to the Burntwood Division, Burntwood Environmental Studies, and that the Board has not accepted that proposal.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

THE HONOURABLE DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, the Member for Inkster can address that to the Chairman of the Hydro Board when it appears before the Public Utilities Committee. Mr. Speaker, that is not a normal question for the Crown Corporations to be asked for their internal procedures for the Legislature. The member knows very well that these types of questions are standard fare for the Public Utilities Committee.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I am only in keeping with the tradition that has been set by the honourable members in eight years of opposition. And I will ask the member the question, is it a fact that after the appointment of the new Executive Director who, contrary to what we were advised, was then an unemployed managerial person, that the Board was not able to accept the proposal, and was told to consider another proposal by another firm, which was not one of those whose tenders were considered by the management staff in preparing proposals?

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the member for Inkster is treading on grounds here that he is suggesting were initiated by the present government in opposition. The member knows very well that those kind of questions can be addressed to the utility at its appearance before the committee. Mr. Speaker, the questions yesterday were dealt with. The questions yesterday were whether or not the Utility had been directed by the Minister, or whether the Board had been directed by the Minister to take a certain course of action, whether the Board had done such and such. Mr. Speaker, the information I have is that the Board has given consideration to the proposals or tenders, Mr. Speaker, for this examination. The Board in due course, like any board of any utility, will deal with that proposal before it.

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, can the Minister confirm that following the appointment of the new Executive Director - who was unemployed at the time of his appointment, not an employee of Brascan, Mr. Speaker - could the Minister confirm that in some process the Board started to re-examine a new proposal, one that was submitted by a corporation or a group involving UNIES, or a group in which Gordon Spafford played a major part, and which proposal was not considered by the management group which made recommendations to Hydro?

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't think I can ease the member's paranoia, but I can advise you and the House if that were the case, it is the first time I have heard about it. I suggest that the member direct his questions and his interrogations and his snide remarks about employment or otherwise, of the member who is the CEO of the corporation. Well, Mr. Speaker, here we go. --(Interjection)-- I think that first of all, to the best of my knowledge, the burden of the comments that have been made by the Member for Inkster have no basis in fact. He is on a wild goose chase, and I suspect he is on a predetermined course of action to do whatever he can do to try and assuage his own conscience with regard to his past actions.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface on a point of order.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, you have informed us that we can ask questions, but that Ministers are at liberty to answer or not. Do they have the right to refuse to answer and then lecture somebody, is that what we find in Beauséjour?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I find it very difficult for any member in this Chamber to give instructions to any Minister on how he should answer any questions.

The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, either you misunderstood or chose to understand the statement. I am accepting that the Minister does not have to answer; I am simply asking, is it his right then to refuse to answer, and then keep the floor for five minutes lecturing one of the members that asks a question?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister and, Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the recommendations of his ideal, Mr. Justice Tritschler, will the Minister ensure that this board which he says is under the direction of the Cabinet, and he has always said so, will the Board be in keeping with the recommendations of Mr. Justice Tritschler, be advised that all of the officials who are making recommendation did not recommend UNIES, but recommended a McLaren firm in Winnipeg, and that that Board should be dealing with the recommendations on the basis of the management recommendation to them, and should be advised as to the opinions of every engineer who had an idea as to who should be recommended, apparently as recommended by Mr. Justice Tritschler, whom the Minister thinks should be followed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I think that the member's question is entirely out of order, and I suggest it is, Mr. Speaker, because he has been allowed to establish the premise that certain parties were involved. Mr. Speaker, if that is the case, those questions can be placed to the Utility when they appear before the Public Utilities Committee. Mr. Speaker, I have answered the question as far as I can. The accusations that he started to make beginning yesterday, or whenever it was, and resumed today; if they are the case, they are entirely unknown to me. And the basic question is whether the Minister directed or instructed the Utility to take a certain course of action. Mr. Speaker, I can answer that. But as far as the internal operations of the Utility are concerned, if the member is suggesting that the Minister reporting for that Utility now should be down into the network of the Utility making those kinds of decisions, I tell you he is in the wrong

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

premise, but I now know why the former government had problems with their utilities.

MR SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Community Services. Regarding the dispute between the federal Department of Indian Affairs and some 40 of the Indian bands in the province, I wonder if the Minister could advise of effects this will have on his department, or the operations of the government.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, in reply to the Honourable Member for Roblin for the House information, the responsibility of Treaty Indians on reserves is that of the federal government.

However, I would like to advise the House that our department has been in contact with the federal department advising that we would help them out in any way we can in an emergency assistance, either in food vouchers or whatever would be required, providing that we had a guarantee that there would be reimbursement for this type of service.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. JUNE WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is addressed to the Honourable Minister of Government Services. I wonder if he's in a position to answer in whole or in part my Order for Return on the contents of the former rural water services warehouse of March 10.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, that Order is being prepared and I believe it will be available to the honourable member and the House within a matter of days.

MRS. WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a supplementary then, I wonder if the Minister would care to comment on the fact that the Honourable Member for Roblin, in a report to his constituents, has named the Minister as answering part of the question by stating that Mr. Masniuk's nephew was the highest of 16 bidders and there was no evidence of wrongdoing. And if, in fact, this is part of the Honourable Member for Roblin's report to his constituents, would the Minister state that it is an untrue report?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I can state unequivocally that if it comes from the lips of the Honourable Member for Roblin, it is undoubtedly true. The Member for Roblin is not known to bandy around with falsehoods.

Mr. Speaker, to the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, the information contained is quite correct. But that, as she is well aware, is only one very small part of the information that she requested. She asked for a total inventory of the operations at that time it ceased operating. She asked for description, price lots, the total information of all tenders, and we sent out tenders to some 80 interested companies, receiving back some 16 replies, I believe. And she should learn, Sir, that when an Order for Return is made with such detail, that it takes the department a considerable amount of time to properly furnish all that information.

MRS. WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I absolutely agree, and I am impressed by the fact that I can expect the answer to this Order within a week. I'm wondering however, Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Minister of Government Services can explain the fact that he is named by his name, or at least by a Minister named Harry Enns, and explain, as explaining to me, partial replies to the Order which have not been given to this House, and how it would be that the Honourable Member for Roblin would be in possession of this information before the House is.

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I should refer to Hansard. But I can recall that in accepting the Order for Return, I indicated right at that time - I had that much confidence in the procedures being carried out in the department - that the highest bidder in this instance would undoubtedly receive the award. And I suppose in that sense it's quite true. I made the statement in this House at the time she raised the question, that Mr. Masniuk was the highest bidder and was awarded the particular goods in question.

MRS. WESTBURY: A point of order, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before I ask my question today, I took the time to send a copy of the Hansard page to the Minister of Government Services so that in fact he would not fall into the trap that he has just entered. I would like to quote from Hansard, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please. Has the member a point of order? You're on a point of order? Okay, proceed with your point of order.

MRS. WESTBURY: My point of order, Mr. Speaker, is that the Minister has misled the House, and if I may, I would like to quote from Hansard.

At the end of my reading of the Order you called, Sir, on the Minister of Government Services, who stated: "Mr. Speaker, I have no difficulty in accepting this Order for Return. I should indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, as the member is fully aware, the disposal of Crown assets is always done by tender and whether or not the question of the familial relationship of a particular firm is involved, is not a subject matter that the department is concerned with. However, we will attempt to answer the questions asked."

Mr. Speaker, that was the entire answer.

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

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I am under the impression that the Member for Fort Rouge had a question to ask and was waiting for your ruling on the point of order, and if so I would grant her precedence over me. No, she's accepted that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Finance if he could clarify for the House and elaborate on the statements which he made to the Winnipeg Free Press today, it would appear, or yesterday, dealing with the problem he has in relation to payment of Civil Service salaries, both in Winnipeg and outside of Winnipeg, and how he foresees the payment, depending on when his Bill No. 22 passes final reading and it receives Assent.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: The usual way, Mr. Speaker, by cheque.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the straightforward answer given without any of his usual speeches and abuse. May I then ask him, Mr. Speaker, whether there is no problem involved regardless of when the Bill passes and Assent is given in regard to payment in the usual way by cheque on the normal payment date which I understand is Thursday. How is he going to handle that?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the problem which has arisen - which I'm sure the member is probably aware of but wishes to have some airing of or discussion of - is the problem that payday falls on Good Friday. And in order to pay before Friday, before the weekend, the normal date of pay is Thursday of this coming week, of this week, the day after tomorrow.

That's fine, Mr. Speaker, for the sum 8,000 out of 13,000 who are within the distance of this building where they can receive their cheques on the Thursday. There are some 5,000 civil servants, public employees, payroll recipients who receive them either by mail or through office distribution from a location that is outside of Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker, the intent is to mail those cheques to those people, and this is a result of a discussion with the Leader of the Opposition this morning, at the

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

Public Accounts Committee meeting in a short aside where he gave me his undertaking that as far as the opposition was concerned, Bill 22 would not be held up beyond Thursday of this week. I accept that undertaking from the Leader of the Opposition. As a result the cheques are in the mail this afternoon to those people. And, Mr. Speaker, that is the entire background.

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Then in view of the fact that the Minister had to call on and receive the co-operation of the opposition to deal with a problem which was created by the fact that whoever plans the business of government are only allowed three days to debate Interim Supply, can the Minister assure us that in the future he will see to it - having one more session to go, I believe - that there will be ample opportunity given to debate his bills in sufficient time without having a deadline imposed by the failure of the government to plan its work so as to complete its work in time. It was he who knew how to handle it.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the introduction of the Interim Supply Bill was the usual timing that is normal for any year, the Bill was introduced, the member says three days, I think this is the fifth day, the discussion, Mr. Speaker, we went into committee last Wednesday on this topic, the member who just delivered himself of the position of also calling the next election, he still doesn't seem to remember that he is on the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker, was the first to avail himself of the opportunity to speak in the Committee of Supply for 30 minutes-plus, on last Wednesday, did so again yesterday for 30 minutes-plus again, Mr. Speaker, has spoken longer and taken up more time than any member in this House and he has the gall and audacity to stand up now and pretend that it is some problem that doesn't emanate right from his own seat.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for transportation, in view of the fact that both the CPR and CNR mainline railway lines pass through my constituency of Transcona, can the Minister indicate whether there are any bypass routes for railways hauling volatile or hazardous goods around Transcona and around Winnipeg?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Transportation.

HON. DON ORCHARD (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the operations of the two rail lines and how they can reroute shipments of hazardous chemicals through their respective yards within the city limits of Winnipeg, however, I will undertake to query the two railroads in question and provide that information to the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister if he is going to contact the CPR and CNR if indeed they would explore the possibility of constructing a bypass route around Winnipeg, because no bypass route at present exists, and I would urge the government to take this up with railway lines because at present there is only one way in which hazardous goods can be taken through Manitoba, namely through Winnipeg and my constituency of Transcona, and I would ask the Minister if he would take this up with the railway lines and with the Minister of Transportation federally.

MR. ORCHARD: Well, Mr. Speaker, that certainly can be an undertaking that I will endeavour to do with the railroads but as we are all aware the CNR is quite disposed with double tracking their mainline and I am not certain as to whether they have sufficient funds left over to build the bypass the Member for Transcona is so desirous of. However, I will endeavour to undertake those discussions with those two railroads, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, in view of the tragedy in Mississauga and the spill at McGregor, I would ask if the Minister in fact raised this matter with the federal Minister of Transportation when he met with him last week, and furthermore, I wonder if he suggested to him that if the CPR railway yards were moved out of



Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

Winnipeg that would free up rail and ties that could be used by the federal Liberal Government to double track the railway line west to the West Coast and therefore two very sincere federal Liberal commitments could be met.

MR. ORCHARD: Well, Mr. Speaker, in the very limited amount of time that I spent with the federal Transportation Minister last week, I did not specifically undertake to discuss the relocation of the CPR yards in Winnipeg, since I felt that our very capable and energetic federal minister in this city has certainly bent the Ministry of Transportation in Ottawa as to the very necessary and beneficial results of moving that CPR mainline and it did not become part and parcel of some of the pressing issues that I did raise with the federal minister at the time of that meeting last week

I did however, Mr. Speaker, undertake to mention to him a number of other items and certainly double tracking at the CNR was one of those.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education. In light of the recent announcement in Ontario that it has been found to be necessary to close a school due to asbestos contamination, can the Minister take this opportunity to update us as to the current status of his department's efforts to deal with the asbestos hazards that Manitoba school children and school staff may face?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that question and I can report to the member that the survey of Manitoban schools has been completed, as far as asbestos is concerned, where we have made a positive identification of a harmful substance, that substance has been removed or neutralized.

MR. COWAN: Perhaps then, Mr. Speaker, the Minister can indicate how many positive identifications have been made and if all the schools have, in fact, been tested, and what action specifically has been taken to neutralize this very potent carcinogen?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, I would be quite prepared to go into all the details of that particular program in my Estimates, because I think it is a very important subject, and I have a rather lengthy report that I will be quite prepared to provide at that time.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My supplementary is to the Minister of Labour on the same subject. On October 23, 1979 I wrote to the Minister of Education informing him that I had been advised of possible asbestos contamination at the Leaf Rapids Town Centre. He informed me that he would pass that correspondence on to the Minister. My question to the Minister is then, and I have asked this question during the estimates procedure and not received an answer - my question to the Minister is if he can now indicate what the results of his investigation have been in regard to this complaint that there may well be asbestos contamination at the Leaf Rapids Town Centre.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: I'll get that answer provided, Mr. Speaker. In fairness to the Member for Churchill, I recall the question but I do not have the answer at the moment.

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

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct this question to the Minister of Agriculture and ask him whether he has directed his department to conduct studies into the social and economic effects of the changing of the Crow Rate might be on farmers and rural communities in the province of Manitoba.

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Yes, Mr. Speaker. Last year we had a study done by the University of Manitoba which I am waiting to receive, we thought it would be available by Fall but they still haven't provided us with it. When that report is available then I will report to the Member for St. George on that particular issue.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would appreciate the Minister advising myself and the House who is conducting the study that he says the University of Manitoba is doing and who is paying for the study? Is the department involved in this?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the department is paying for it and I believe it is in the neighbourhood of \$30,000 and Ed Tyrchniewicz is the economist who is doing the main work on the study.

MR. URUSKI: Yes. Can the Minister confirm that if the Crow rate payments are --(Interjection)-- Mr. Speaker, would the members like to ask the question of me? I'm the member that's asking the question, Sir.

Could the Minister indicate that if compensatory rates are paid, that it is likely that approximately 40 percent of rural elevators will be closed in rural Manitoba?

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member is making an assumption that something may happen if, in fact, the compensatory rates were paid to the railroads. Mr. Speaker, I just would like to say that the majority of farm organizations and agricultural people emanating from the Hall Commission Report, and many other commissions that were held to do with rail transportation and paying of compensatory rates, all agreed that the railroads should receive compensation for the work they're doing.

As far as the additional comment that he makes about the removal of elevators from rural Manitoba, I wouldn't be prepared to comment at this particular time because it is purely an assumption on his behalf.

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

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. GERALD W.J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, could I just confirm the announcement we made last week that the House will not sit tomorrow. That it has been agreed that on Thursday the House will meet at 10:00 to 12:30 and 2:30 to 5:30 and not in the evening and that the House will as usual sit on Easter Monday.

Mr. Speaker, would you call Bill No. 22.

#### ADJOURNED DEBATE ON SECOND READING

#### BILL NO. 22 - THE INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT, 1980

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 22, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Johns. The honourable member has eight minutes.

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, last night I woke and I wasn't sure what woke me but I was pretty sure that I knew what kept me awake. I was thinking about these eight minutes you just granted to me and thinking how I would want to use them.

Mr. Speaker, I do believe that governments on the Western Hemisphere are taking very casually problems that are occurring right across the board and which I think have very important implications. I think that governments want to give the impression that everything is okay; I'm all right, Jack; and I take that from

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

statements that have been made during the election campaign, the federal election campaign, by all parties, especially the Conservatives and Liberals and by governments such as this government, which seems to take quite casually the fact that it is reversing a trend, is bringing in reactionary taxation, is involving people more and more in the problems of managing their livelihood and which is, I believe, showing not enough concern for the future of our Manitoba residents.

And I say that in the full knowledge that the problems cannot be dealt with quickly nor settled by a province alone. But, Mr. Speaker, I have read and given speeches written by economists; I have listened to speeches written by economists; I don't pretend to be an economist but I am worried about certain factors that are evidencing themselves.

Now I go right back, Mr. Speaker, to what is taking place in Iran where hostages have been held for well over 100 days . . .

A MEMBER: 150 days today.

MR. CHERNIACK: And you know the Minister of Consumer Affairs is smiling and saying, "Is that our fault?" I am trying to give indications to the Minister of what should be of concern to him and I took care, today, not to speak a word yet of what should be done by the provincial government. But our Minister's interested, let him listen.

I feel that what is happening in Iran is an immorality that's taking place across the world which we cannot shrug off. I think that what is taking place in Afghanistan, which is not unlike what happened in Vietnam - and now we're talking about two different powers on two different sides involving themselves in the internal affairs of countries - is something we cannot shrug off.

Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about watching last night the Minister from Saudi Arabia visiting Canada and according to the interpretation of the media saying that either he threatened or he lectured Canadians about the accepting the world price for oil and telling us that we have to accept the world price as being "the" price.

And I think of Alberta which is saying much the same thing and now we're getting closer to the cost of living and the Minister for Consumer Affairs has to be very much concerned about the cost of living and has to be concerned about the passing on to the consumer of many of the costs that are imposed on us from outside, and I'm afraid to some extent from inside. That's why I suggest to the Minister, and all members, that it is an important factor that we must consider.

I would suggest that the fluctuation that took place recently in the price of gold, in the price of silver, the mad dash that took place by people of ordinary means, not the Hunts of the world. but people of ordinary means, people who are pictured in our newspapers in Manitoba buying gold, buying silver, becoming involved in this mad rush to make money on the basis of what is happening internationally of which they understand nothing.

And when I suggest that we look at the drop in the stock market in Canada, of all the stocks that one recognizes as being if not blue chip, substantial companies and the fluctuation that takes place, I say it's a matter that should be of concern to all of us.

I did not live - I lived through but I was not really aware of what happened in 1929 - and I was led to believe that with Unemployment Insurance and old age pensions and all the various welfare and security measures that have been brought in as a result of depression years, that we will not face that kind of shock again. But I am not really sure, Mr. Speaker, that we have a right to rely on what is taking place. And I criticized the government yesterday for leaning back as true Conservative doctrinaires saying, "The marketplace will determine things".

The marketplace has forced interest rates up dramatically and in a dangerous way. There are foreclosures taking place; there are bankruptcies taking place; there is the Canadian quarrel with Alberta on oil pricing; there is the Canadian quarrel with many Quebecers on unity in Canada, and I would urge that we take it in hand and start dealing with it rather than say, it's not our burden, let the Feds deal with it.

And I come back to my criticism of the Finance Minister saying: We will assist the government; we don't know what to do. Well, we have made suggestions from this side during this short debate.

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

The Minister of Finance chose to misinterpret some of the suggestions made by the Member for Lac du Bonnet. And may I make a correction; I said yesterday that MPIC has some \$30 million-plus in investments. I was wrong. It had on the last financial statement \$88 million in investments and \$22 million in current cash-flow. There is money around that could be used.

I would suggest we apply ourselves and we should apply ourselves to consumer credit transactions and we should concern ourselves about limiting the use of consumer credit and in that way limiting the expansionary aspects of life in Manitoba, in the ordinary homes where they do not have the money to spend and are urged by the people in the consumer business to spend more money, in the expectation of paying in the future. If we went back to a COD basis we would be much better off, and governments can and should do something about it. The moneys that could be reduced from the consumer credit side could be used to keep interest rates at a decent level, especially amongst people who are involved with their own residences, owners of their own homes who are in a terrible trap, created right now by having to renew their mortgages on the high interest rates. And I would urge members of this House, and especially the government, not to take a lackadaisical view, which I believe and perceive it has been taking but a positive position to take and to deal with the problems of the economy of this province.

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

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the Minister of Finance is not in the house - maybe he will be returning - because last night he made a number of outlandish statements that are becoming typical of the Deputy Premier of this province; statements that in my view, Mr. Speaker, are not becoming to a Minister of the Crown in this province. He made a number of, as far as I am concerned, very rude remarks and I guess you might say, "All is fair in love, war and politics", but I think at some point if he does not turn off members in this House, he will certainly turn off the electorate in this province, if he hasn't done so already. Because the kind of remarks made by the Minister of Finance, as far as I am concerned, lowers the level of debate in this House below a level that the people of Manitoba are deserving of.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to take the time to go into all the statements and rebut all the points made by the Minister of Finance, but he did make a statement with regard to the Canadian General Electric. Canadian General Electric, which he said was prepared to build a plant, lo and behold of all places in the city which I have the honour to represent, the city of Brandon, and that I was not interested in it, I probably didn't even know about it and that we made no effort whatsoever to try to get such jobs for the Province of Manitoba.

Well that, to anyone who knows the efforts of the previous government and who knows of my particular interest and concern in developing the economy of Manitoba's second largest city, knows that is pure unadulterated hogwash, pure unadulterated garbage, and that's what we get from the Minister of Finance of this province; making outlandish statements; totally unreasonable, unrealistic statements without foundation.

Yes indeed, the Canadian General Electric Company did bid on a contract to do work for Manitoba Hydro. I do not have the document, so I am just going from memory, but if my memory serves me correctly, Mr. Speaker, indeed CGE did bid for a particular very, very large contract with regard to the Nelson River Development, and indeed it did indicate to the government of the day that among other things it was prepared to build a manufacturing facility in the Province of Manitoba and perhaps in the City of Brandon. In fact, they did specify that they would be interested in the City of Brandon.

And for anyone to think that I, or the government with which I was associated, would not be interested in seeing more jobs, more manufacturing jobs in electrical apparatus; anyone who would think that is out of their mind, because Mr. Speaker, we were indeed very very interested and, indeed, I had several meetings with the principals involved. I had many meetings with CGE and, indeed, so did my staff. We were very anxious, very willing, very much interested in working with CGE to do whatever we could to make sure that they would build a plant in Brandon, Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, there is such a thing known as the tendering system. There is

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

such a thing known as a bid system, whereby certain standards, certain procedures, certain ethical principles must be followed. And if we didn't follow them, I am sure honourable members opposite would be the first to have criticized us at the time for not following time-honoured, fair, square, bidding procedures of a public agency, namely Manitoba Hydro and, Mr. Speaker, I recall very clearly that CGE was not the lowest bidder. I realize that you do not always accept the lowest bidder because you also have to look at the quality of the product that is being offered or the service that is being offered; you have to look at the ability of the companies involved to deliver the services; you have to check out so many things to ensure that the offer, that the bid that is being offered is adequate, that it will perform, that you will get the service or product, whatever, that you require.

But Mr. Speaker, I do recall being told by Manitoba Hydro officials that the lowest bidder in this case, and I hope I have the name right, Brown Boveri Canada Ltd., a large manufacturer of electrical apparatus, indeed was the lowest bidder, indeed had a quality product, but they weren't, Mr. Speaker, the lowest bidder by just a couple of dollars, a couple of hundred, or a couple of thousand dollars, they were the lowest bidder by many, many millions of dollars. As a matter of fact, again I am going strictly by memory, but I believe that the differential between the lowest bid that was accepted because the Board of Manitoba Hydro said that that's the one that should be accepted because it was the lowest, and CGE was in excess of \$10 million.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know what the Honourable Member for Minnedosa is saying from his seat; I think he is talking about another matter. I don't really think that he knows what he is talking about. He should go back to the friendly neighbourhood bank and do his thing there. But as far as this contract is concerned, there was no question that Manitoba Hydro and the government of Manitoba of the day would have been very, very remiss if it had not given it to the lowest bidder; as I said the lowest bidder by in excess - I am sure I am not exaggerating when I say in excess - of \$10 million.

Mr. Speaker, when the honourable member talks about 900 jobs that are now in existence and operation, I really say that proves nothing at all, because you do not know and you cannot know just what would have been involved in terms of employment by CGE in Manitoba. --(Interjection)-- Well, I spent many a meeting and many an hour with some key people of CGE, and so did my staff, because I was very, very anxious for them to be in Brandon.

The Honourable Member for Lakeside, the Minister of Public Works, knows me very well to know that I would not leave any stone unturned if I possibly could get that company in Brandon, no way. But there is such a thing as the Manitoba Hydro Utility Board bidding system and they said, No way. --(Interjection)-- I didn't hear him. At any rate, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to stand up and put that on the record and to make it very clear that we were not remiss, that we're very very aware of attracting manufacturing industry to Manitoba, and that if we were to do otherwise, we would have let the people of Manitoba down, we would have not been serving the taxpayers of Manitoba, and I think generally we would not have served the interests of Manitoba Hydro, as we did in this case.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I do recall that through our efforts that we did get Federal Pioneer Electric to build an addition in Brandon. They had an unfortunate fire and we were persuasive, and we were very pleased that they decided to build, not to just rebuild but to expand their operation in the City of Brandon, and indeed it is still there today.

And there is another company in the electrical apparatus field in Brandon that is a very small company. It struggled. I remember having meetings with the board, with the president of Inventronics Limited, who the Member for Brandon West, the Minister without Portfolio also knows, because it is certainly a local company with local finance, that I have taken some great deal of time and some pleasure in helping to build up in any way I could, over the years. So we have been very concerned about building up electrical apparatus manufacturing in Brandon, as well as the rest of the province.

Mr. Speaker, I was particularly amused at the Honourable the Minister of Finance getting up and chastising the former NDP government, saying that we were bad managers, we didn't know what we were doing, we were fools, we really didn't know which end was up, in so many words. And then I remind myself of the question at

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

hand; I remind myself and I remind you of the bill before us, of the issue before us. We are told, and we read in the paper that it's urgent, that we get on with the job of passing this legislation because cheques have to be issued. We're at the last hour; we're at the ninety-ninth hour or the eleventh hour, and if you people don't hurry up and stop talking and sit down and pass this, we're going to have all kinds of difficulties.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we're being asked to approve 30 percent, nearly one-third of the budget of this government for this year, probably one of the largest amounts that's ever been asked for by any government on Interim Supply. But, Mr. Speaker, why is the government, this great efficient government, these wonderful managers, why do they have to wait till the eleventh hour to bring it in? Why didn't they bring it in weeks ago? Didn't they know a month ago that they had to have Interim Supply? Sure they did because we always have Interim Supply or we always seem to have it. I think we've had Interim Supply in this Legislature every one of the ten or eleven years that I've been here and I am sure we've had it for years and years before that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I simply say it's a case . . . Here is a clear classic example of Tory incompetence. They're just incompetent. They're the bad managers. They're the people who are mismanaging and causing the civil servants and other persons who are dependent upon Manitoba government checks to be sitting on the edges of their seats wondering whether they're going to get paid or not. It's not the Opposition's fault. We would not be doing our job if we didn't stand up and ask some questions, if we didn't stand up and make some points. We would not be doing the job on behalf of the people that we represent. We would not be doing the job of trying to keep you people honest on behalf of the taxpayers of Manitoba. And the Minister of Consumer Affairs is the one that has to be watched in particular. I say, Mr. Speaker, that we have a classic case of incompetence right in front of us here today.

The Minister of Finance and others on that side lament the doom-and-gloom statements that are made by the members of the opposition when it comes to looking at the economic situation and the economic future of this province. And I don't know where the honourable members of the Treasury benches are. Maybe they've got their heads in the sand. Maybe they're isolated by their Tory advisors, I don't know what. But I can say, Mr. Speaker, categorically, it is not the NDP Opposition that has created the doom and gloom in this province. It is not the NDP that has caused this veil of pessimism to spread over the depth and breadth of this great province of ours, this pessimism with regard not only to the economy but pessimism with regard to the very future existence of many of our communities and many of our small towns which are on the verge of disappearing, the social fabric of which has been eroded and withered away year by year as we see the total population of this province decline. The psychological outlet, this pessimistic mood that prevails this province is based on something very very real and concrete and that is the stark fact that this economy is in a Tory economic quagmire, that this economy is stagnating, and the business community of this province knows that Manitoba is stagnating under the Conservative administration of this province. --(Intejction)-- The God that failed is a good expression.

All you have to do, you can look at reams of statistics, you examine the statistics objectively and seriously and you will have to come to only one conclusion and that conclusion is that of the ten provincial economies of this country of ours, probably the Province of Manitoba is, on, balance in the worst shape of any of those economies. Even little Prince Edward Island and even Newfoundland, which has such a very checkered economic performance over the years, have been out-performing this province in the past two years.

Mr. Speaker, I say therefore, that the mood of pessimism is out there on the street and it's on the lips of the businessmen. The businessmen of this province are probably the most dissatisfied people there are in our midst. Without question, the businessmen are probably the most let down people in this province of ours because it was the businessman who swallowed hook, line and sinker, the Premier's line, the Premier of this province's line that you elect a Conservative government and great things will happen in the private sector.

As a matter of fact, the line goes: We will cut government spending, we will cut government taxes, we will move aside and make way for the private sector where

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

the private industry will have all the freedom in the world to expand and prosper in the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we are now in the third year of the office of the Conservative pro-business administration and I say, and I ask, where is that business expansion; where are all those new industries; where is this great glorious Tory economic heaven that was promised by the Premier in the election of 1977? Mr. Speaker, we are not in a Tory economic heaven, we are in a Tory economic hell, and the businessmen of this province know that. That's why we have the pessimism and the gloom in the business community, not because of my speeches or the speeches of my leader or the speeches of others on this side. Because the real concrete facts of lagging retail sales, of lagging investment spending . . . You know, I don't know, the Minister of Economic Development a couple of weeks ago was playing around with figures; I'm sure he didn't know what he was talking about because the way I listened to him, he was entirely confusing. But no matter which way you slice the cake, cut the cake, the fact is, Mr. Speaker - and this is the rub - that in Manitoba, forgetting about public investment - you can look at that as well if you want - but on their own terms if you look at private investment, that Manitoba's increase in private investment in this past year was the lowest of any province in this country of ours. As a matter of fact, this rate of increase - 1979 is projected, it is estimated by Statistics Canada to be 5.1 percent, only two-fifths of the Canadian average increase of 12.8 percent.

The point, Mr. Speaker, is that if you look at this in real terms, that is, if you squeeze out the inflation and you see what is happening to private investment spending in Manitoba in 1979, you see that the amount of spending, the increase in spending is less than half the rate of inflation that occurred last year. So if the rate of investment spending increase in the private sector is only half the rate of inflation, I say, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't take any genius to figure out that the amount of dollars spent on investment in plant and equipment in Manitoba in 1979 was lower than the amount of investment spending that went on in 1978. --(Interjection)--

I'll say it again because the Minister of Economic Development . . . This takes in all private investment spending. This is a survey that is conducted by Statistics Canada of the entire private sector and the total private sector combined shows that we are stagnating. We are stagnating. --(Interjection)-- Okay, a breakout in manufacturing. I can do that. I will, because the Honourable Minister of Economic Development likes to boast and brag about what is happening to manufacturing.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, let's get it clear that the level of manufacturing investment in Manitoba is so minute, is so insignificantly small that even if it doubled or tripled or quadrupled, it still wouldn't amount to very much. It wouldn't have any effect at all because the level of spending is so low. Investment in manufacturing in Manitoba in last year is estimated to be \$168 per capita. \$168 per capita; that's investment in the manufacturing sector.

Mr. Speaker, that is only 36.7 percent of Canadian spending per capita, just over a third. In other words, we are way way down on the totem pole when it comes to spending on manufacturing. So even though the investment in manufacturing will increase by 33 1/2 percent in 1979 over 1978, I say, Mr. Speaker, that is a very very small number of investment dollars that you are talking about, very small. I wish it were bigger, but it isn't bigger, it's small, so double, triple it, quadruple it, multiply it by 10 times. Maybe then you will have some impact. But to say this tiny amount of investment spending has gone up by 33 percent is to say very little.

Mr. Speaker, if you want to compare, because we are always lamenting about the Socialist governments, if you want to look at the government to the west of us, Mr. Speaker, you will find that investment spending, which is also relatively of a small nature in Saskatchewan, but if you want to look at changes, in Saskatchewan they didn't increase by 33 1/2 percent that we're supposed to be increasing by, they increased by 64 percent. 64.3 percent is the increase for new capital spending in manufacturing in Saskatchewan. That's investment in the manufacturing sector. Those are the figures. You can get your own people to check those. That's for new capital.

If you want to look at capital and repair, you get another set of figures. You get lower percentages both for Manitoba and for Saskatchewan. If you look at

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

capital and repair in manufacturing, the increase is 24.9 percent in Manitoba and 42.4 percent in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, it is these facts, it is these statistics that causes a mood of pessimism. It is also the news that a plant is closing down or that an industry is moving out of the province. The classic example is the meat packing industry, Swift Canadian, where we had hundreds and hundreds of people thrown out of work in a very important industry, and all kinds of clippings, you know, you can read them. Here's a clipping, Friday, November 30, 1979 from the Winnipeg Free Press. I also have it from the Winnipeg - I'm sorry, this is from the Winnipeg Tribune. I have it from both papers. The story says, "Engineers leaving the province, say officials. Manitoba's consulting engineers are suffering badly because of economic conditions and many senior engineers are leaving the province, according to industry officials. The number of consulting engineers and support staff in Manitoba has dropped by roughly 25 percent in the past two years, and unless things improve quickly, a lot more will leave this winter, said Douglas Grimes, a past president of the Association of Professional Engineers of Manitoba. There have been layoffs of engineers and support staff, with the consulting branch of the field hit especially hard said Walter Salzberg, the newly-elected president of the 2,700-member association." Well, I could read all of this. It goes on and on and on and they talk about . . . At any rate, he says there are about 200 consulting engineers in the Province of Manitoba at the present time. So I don't have to make any speech to tell these people that we have got pretty slim pickings in the provincial economy of Manitoba under the Conservative administration.

Then there are figures that show from time to time in the newspapers, put out by the Winnipeg Construction Association. I'm not going to read all these figures, but it would lead one to be very pessimistic about this.

The only thing that I would read, Mr. Speaker, it says, and this is the last two paragraphs of this article, the Winnipeg Free Press, Tuesday, February 6, 1979: "Government policies and reluctance of private investors are among the causes of unemployment, he said." --(Interjection)-- Yes, a year ago, one year ago. This is said by Leo Desilets, president of the Building Trades Council. I don't believe I know that gentleman, but this is what he said, so there is two things, you see. It's government spending, which is a no-no in the terms of the Tory economic philosophy. Government spending is bad and should be avoided, should be minimized at all costs. So, okay, and that's the philosophy - I suppose you're entitled to your position - but that is the position. You have bragged and boasted about how you've squeezed down government spending, you've kept it less than the rate of inflation and so on, and in real terms therefore you have cut back on government spending.

So they say government policies are the cause of unemployment, that's what he says, Mr. Desilets, and I agree with him. And he also says that private investors are reluctant. Well, Mr. Speaker, I say therefore that this government is damned on two counts because the private investment that was supposed to take place under a benevolent pro-business Tory administration has not taken place. It has simply not appeared on the scene whatsoever.

And let me conclude the article with this quote by Mr. Desilets: "With the election of the Progressive-Conservative government in Manitoba, a lot of people thought there would be an in-flow of private money. But politics is only one factor. Others include the raw resources, energy, service land and mortgage rates, etc.", and that's right, that is true.

But when the Premier of this province was on this side as the Leader of the Opposition, all of the economic problems we ever had when we were in government were to be blamed on those dirty rotten socialists that should be driven out of the land, that don't deserve to exist, in so many words. Our rat-infested nest of communists, socialists, he even threw Liberals in there I think - and other fellow travellers that don't deserve to even have ever been born, that are in abhorration on the political scene. It was everything that went wrong. This was all our fault. It was the government's fault.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, on the terms that the Premier of this province has laid down, he and his colleagues have to take full and total accountability of the failings of this business economy of ours under their administration. We cannot change the rules of the game. The rules of the game are the same, and if we're going to be responsible for whatever economic woes and ills that we had in the



Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

period of 1969 to 1977, I say that this government has to take total and complete responsibility for the very sad state of affairs that we're experiencing now.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that this government is running scared. It has suffered a setback in its morale. In the federal election of May of 1979, a very very serious blow was struck at the morale of the Conservatives in this Legislature. And, Mr. Speaker, a second very major blow was struck just a few weeks ago in the rerun of the federal election of February, 1980, when the Conservatives within the province of Manitoba - and we're not talking about the total federal scene, we know what happened but within the province of Manitoba - where they lost even more seats. So that they have lost, I guess it is, five or six seats in a period of a year. They have dropped from being the dominant party in the federal scene among the members of Parliament elected, to being second after the New Democratic Party. So, Mr. Speaker, this government is running scared and there is no evidence of any policy thrust, any meaningful policy thrust, coming from the other side.

Now I know they like to make announcements and the Minister of Economic Development, the other day got up and read some DREE statements. Of course, those statements, you can make them every month and you can make them every month ever since DREE was formed. I could have done that as well.

One always wonders, you know, with the DREE grants . . . And I, incidentally, am advocating if Ottawa wants to hand out the money we might as well take it. I'm always glad to take every dollar we can get for the province of Manitoba. We'll take every dollar we can get. But I think the Minister of Economic Development will have to agree that it is sometimes questionable whether the DREE money really does very much in the long long run. I'm talking about the industrial incentive grants because the fact is that in many instances I believe - and I think one might even be able to do a study on this and show quite conclusively - that many of these industries would have established anyway and that therefore the DREE grant becomes something of a form of a welfare game. It becomes equivalent to that. --(Interjection)-- I beg your pardon? I can't hear you.

Mr. Speaker, I say when I was Minister, we tried to get every DREE dollar we could, and why not? So I'm not knocking the efforts to get every dollar from Ottawa that you can, providing there aren't unnecessary strings attached and unacceptable conditions attached. But I say it's very questionable whether those companies that are announcing that they've got DREE money and they're going to create so many jobs, whether those sort of expansions or developments wouldn't have occurred anyway.

Mr. Speaker, the overall problem . . . And, incidentally, it remains to be seen how successful the enterprise development centres will be. It's going to be very interesting to see just what is going to happen with these particular centres, whether we're going to be spending a lot of money to help the small enterprises' the cause of which is very admirable, but perhaps would have developed along anyway. I mean, who can tell whether the little company that comes into the enterprise development centre wouldn't have established in some other small private facility, in some building that the person happened to get fairly cheaply, or what have you? Who can tell, therefore, that those who move into these enterprise development centres are really net additions on the industrial scene? --(Interjection)-- Well, that is a problem, sure; it is a problem.

We tried, on a very limited scale with very little money, using the old hangar in Dauphin, the same thing. But I said the same thing then to the staff and I say it now publicly, who can tell whether what you're doing is really --(Interjection)-- Well, where was it then? If it wasn't in an old hangar, it was in an older building in Dauphin. But I know that there were some old buildings on the Airport field where there was a lot of. . . But the amiable, happy-go-lucky Minister of Economic Development may enlighten us. That's what I like about the Minister of Economic Development, he's so easy-going, he's so quick to smile and so quick to be happy and make us all feel so wonderful because he's such an amiable guy, smiling. The smiling happy-go-lucky Minister of Economic Development.

Mr. Speaker, the philosophy of this government, the least government is the best government, I think really boxes this government into a corner. Because really one of the major solutions to a slow economic situation is to stimulate the economy through judicious, selective government initiative, positive action by

government. But that is a policy that how many times the Premier of this province has rejected as being bad, as being tantamount to socialism. It really isn't, you know, it really isn't. But the Premier of this province likes to think so and he waxes eloquently and takes us down into the depths of the gutter in some of his remarks when he describes this type of economic policy and economic approach.

But the Tories have boxed themselves in because they said public initiative is not what they want; that public initiative, initiative by government or government agencies is to be avoided at all costs. Therefore I say, Mr. Speaker, that they are boxed in by their own philosophy and by their own dogma. I say quite categorically and very simply, Mr. Speaker, that without question, Tory dogma overshadows reason every time. Dogma overshadows reason without question. And, Mr. Speaker, the incompetence of this government . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please. The honourable member has five minutes.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The incompetence of this government is becoming evident day after day. As I said before, the fact that we're discussing this at the eleventh hour; it's brought in at the eleventh hour; we're supposed to pass and say Amen to let you pay your bills; I think that alone is a sign of very inadequate management.

But, Mr. Speaker, using their own criteria, of deficits being bad, I say where have the deficits . . . Where is this big surplus that the government was supposed to bring in? Surplus on the budget of Manitoba? The deficits have not disappeared, Mr. Speaker, in spite of the starvation of social services in this province; in spite of socking it to the people who live in the nursing homes in this province; in spite of socking it to the people who depend on Pharmacare assistance; in spite of the students who have to pay greater community college fees; in spite of the increase in university tuition fees; in spite of cutbacks in assistance to people through legal aid; in spite of a reduction of assistance to the Winnipeg Transit System; in spite of all these cutbacks; in spite of all this effort to shift the costs of services from the shoulders of this government onto the municipal taxpayers or onto users; in spite of this effort to push it over to the university students or the nursing home residents, on the principle that the user should pay more, we still have deficits, Mr. Speaker.

And as a result, Mr. Speaker, Manitobans, who were supposed to be going bankrupt in 1977 under an NDP government because of the per capita debt we had at that time, Manitobans have more per capita debt today than ever before in their history; more per capita debt than ever before, and on your own criterion, because that's supposed to be so bad. If we were bankrupt in 1977, Mr. Speaker, what are we now? What are we today? We were bankrupt. Those are the words of the First Minister of this province when he was the Leader of the Opposition. We were bankrupt under the NDP because we had such a high per capita debt. The per capita debt is up by what - \$700 to \$800 - \$850.00. Where are we today? What are we today? I say, Mr. Speaker, using their own criteria they have done a very bad job of government in the past two years.

Mr. Speaker, we could look at all kinds of specifics where they've wasted money. And one area, as far as I'm concerned, that is a total waste of money is the utilization of private auditors to do the work that the Provincial Auditor was doing very very well. And the taxpayers of Manitoba are paying hundreds of thousands of dollars a year more for nothing. You're wasting the taxpayers' money just because you want to give your friends some contracts, including Tory bank men, and your friend Harry Martin mentioned that in the process, that one particular Tory bank man was well rewarded by getting, I think it was the Manitoba Hydro, auditing contract. That's Harry Martin. I haven't got the clipping with me but I can get it and read it to you.

Mr. Speaker, there's been money wasted, as far as I'm concerned, in the Burns Report on Autopac. What a total sheer waste of money that was a sheer and total waste of money. The Tritschler Report, as far as I'm concerned, was nothing but a political document right from the start. Nothing but a political . . . and everybody knows it, the people of Manitoba know it. The only sad part of it is, that hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars have been spent in the process. So I say, we're wasting money. We wasted money by borrowing from Alberta

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

the other year by paying an excessive rate of interest. There was money wasted there.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The honourable member's time has expired.

MR. EVANS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister will be closing debate.  
The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, the Bill before us deals with the issue of whether or not there should be funds granted to Her Majesty for carrying out the business of government during the period that the Estimates are before the House.

I have listened very carefully to the debate and I have not heard any substantive issues raised relative to the principle of whether or not the government should be provided with the funds to pay their bills for the next period of time until the appropriation bill is passed. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I recommend this bill to the House.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I move, with leave, seconded by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider and report on the following bill for third reading, No. 22, An Act for Granting to Her Majesty Certain Sums of Money for the Public Service of the Province for the Fiscal Year Ended the 31st Day of March, 1981 and to Authorize Commitments to Expend Additional Money in Subsequent Years.

MOTION presented and carried.

#### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

#### BILL NO. 22 - THE INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT, 1980

MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris McGregor (Virden): The matter before the Committee is Bill 22, An Act for Granting to Her Majesty Certain Sums of Money for the Public Service of the Province for the Fiscal Year Ending the 31st Day of March, 1981, and to Authorize Commitments to Expend Additional Money in Subsequent Years.

Section 1--pass; Section 2--pass - the Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: I can't help but stop and comment on the way the government has handled this bill. The Minister introduced the bill and commented in closing debate on second reading that nothing has been said about whether or not the government should have the means with which it can carry on business until the Appropriations Bill is passed, and that is traditional that there be such a bill because the government, no matter how inadequate it is, still has to function, no matter how much it stumbles as it does so. Certainly we in opposition would not expect to hinder the government by preventing it from doing what it has been charged to do.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot, however, overlook the comments made by the Minister of Finance today, who made some crack during the Question Period about the extent to which I have participated in the debate. Thank God I never had to ask him for permission, nor would I want to, nor would I need to. Certainly I feel that there have been comments made and the opposition has taken the advantage of the right it has to debate matters that it considers important during this bill, as it has on certain other occasions in the Legislative Session, and it ill behooves anybody, I believe, to criticize these matters being debated. It most ill behooves the government which, when it was in opposition, made a big deal on Interim Supply of

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

extending debate over a considerable period of time threatening, indeed threatening, to withhold approval beyond the date required to pay the salaries of the civil servants and other payments, in order to extract from the government an undertaking to hold, as I recall it, an inquiry commission on some issue completely unrelated to the purpose of this bill.

Of course, the Minister of Natural Resources was not present, but he may be interested in history and he may take the trouble to ask the Minister of Consumer Affairs how he engineered that effort on the part of the Conservative opposition to block the progress of government. You, Mr. Chairman, were here and you may even have been a participant in that debate because it seems to me the entire opposition took it upon itself to debate what it wanted to debate and I think it was almost every day. On that occasion, and I speak only from memory so I may well be proven to be wrong, I think we introduced Interim Supply - this was about 1974, I believe on either March 10 or March 12 - expecting that it would be handled in the routine way because when I was in opposition previously, I remember the whole thing was handled in half an hour or so. We went through all the stages without debate.

But it was the Conservative opposition that taught me that this is the correct opportunity to speak on any issue that it wants to speak on, but in that cause they actually used their right in order to obstruct government, in order to blackmail government into acceding to their demands on another matter altogether. I haven't forgotten that and I'm sure the Minister of Consumer Affairs, who I believe engineered the whole thing, hasn't forgotten it.

Therefore, I do criticize the House Leader, whose responsibility it is to bring matters before the House, to have brought in Interim Supply on Friday. I believe it was Thursday that the Leader of the Opposition asked when Interim Supply was coming. It came in on Friday, Mr. Chairman, and I think it was a gamble that they took, and which I guess they had a right to take because they do have a responsible opposition with whom they are dealing. By bringing it in on Friday and having received, by leave, with the unanimous consent of the House, having received permission by leave to bring in this matter by way of motion to Supply Committee and then move right into Ways and Means and, Mr. Speaker, I mentioned yesterday that the Minister was unable to answer the question I posed in Ways and Means and started looking for staff --(Interjection)-- Pardon? I gather, Mr. Chairman, I am helpful to the Minister now, for speaking as I am, to give him time to get his staff together. Mr. Chairman, I am really shocked, as is he, by the fact that they are not here. I share some of the responsibility because I thought that I had trained that staff to be sitting upstairs in the Gallery to be working and ready to deal with the issues that they know is currently and importantly before them.

Mr. Chairman, I have been interrupted and I thank the Member for Logan for pointing out to me that Interim Supply, that this question came before us on Wednesday, and he is right. As I recall now, it came in on Wednesday; on Thursday, the Minister of Natural Resources introduced the bill and we adjourned debate and spoke on it Friday. So it was nevertheless handled expeditiously and we are not... There he comes. Let me tell the Minister of Natural Resources, the Deputy is here and all is now solved because he will have all the answers to all my questions, I am sure, because as I say, Mr. Chairman, I had something to do with bringing him up to this level of assistance to us.

So I point out and I tell the Honourable the House Leader that there was not enough time allowed unless the government was going to gamble. Apparently the government was prepared to gamble and they succeeded because we are not going to block them deliberately. We are not going to block them at all, so we can proceed, Mr. Chairman.

But I want to indicate that I will not accept the Minister of Finance saying, well, we are endangering the paycheques of the Civil Service because the Member for St. Johns, or anyone else, spoke too much to his liking. It's not for him to decide that and it would be provident and right for the government to either clear in advance the number of days that would be permitted for Interim Supply so that we know that we have an agreement on it. There's nothing wrong with that, Mr. Chairman. There should be a good deal more discussion between the House Leader and the Opposition Leader, planning the work of the Legislature so that there are

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

no possibilities of blackmail as existed a number of years ago when the Conservatives were in opposition, nor a possibility of threats which exist if the opposition may be blamed for debating an issue so long that the government is put in an embarrassing position when it comes to payment of wages and other necessary items.

One other thing, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to mention that earlier but I didn't have time. The Minister of Finance yesterday - I think it was yesterday - accused the Member for Churchill of a fraudulent act, or doing something fraudulent. Mr. Chairman, I let it slip by. I think we are letting these things happen a little too much. Fraud is a criminal offence and for a member in this House to accuse somebody else of committing a criminal offence is a serious thing. But we let it slip by and the Speaker let it slip by and I think that we are becoming pretty sloppy in the way we are checking each other up on the language we use. I don't say anybody is any more pure than anybody else, but it's not very nice and I think we ought to start checking each other up more often and I would welcome being checked up if I used improper, unparliamentary language. I would welcome that in the interest of the general decorum. But, Mr. Chairman, by the same token, I intend to do that too.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2--pass - the Member for St. Vital.

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I understand we are still on Clause No. 2. I did have a few questions that I wanted to ask at this stage of the Minister, Mr. Chairman. I am rather surprised to see that the Minister in whose name this bill stands is not present in the House to answer questions that might arise during its course.

I wonder if the Minister can confirm that a portion of the \$568 million under this particular clause will go to the Department of Finance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. RANSOM: Perhaps the member could be a little more specific in his question when he says, "go to the Department of Finance."

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, knowing that debate in the House is supposed to be strictly on the clause before the House, I did want to make sure that I was in order because my questions had to do with some expenditures by the Department of Finance. I wanted to confirm with this Minister that some of the moneys that we are approving under this section will in fact go to the Department of Finance and so that I would be entirely in order in asking the questions.

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Chairman, some of this money will be going to every department.

MR. WALDING: Would it in that case be asking too much that the Minister of Finance be in his seat in the Chamber and in a position to answer some of the questions that I might have? They are to do with Hydro and some expenditures on reports that the present Minister who is sitting in the front bench might not have the answer to.

I have been reminded again by my colleagues, Mr. Chairman, that it is the Minister of Finance who has the responsibility for piloting this particular bill, and since I don't see him in the Chamber, it would make it rather difficult for him to answer those questions that I might have and would perhaps be unfair to his colleagues to ask them to answer questions that they might not have intimate knowledge of.

And to go back a little bit if I may, Mr. Chairman, still with one eye on the clock, the First Minister made an announcement in the House a few days ago having to do with an agreement that was being signed between the three Prairie Provinces calling for a final report on the feasibility of a Western Electric Power Grid. At the same time and in support of that . . . I can't find the reference immediately that I was looking for, Mr. Chairman, but . . . Mr. Chairman, I'm getting more heckling from this side than I am from the other side and it's more disconcerting to be heckled by my own colleagues than from members opposite.

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

But in any case, Mr. Chairman, you will recall that this was the report that the Minister tabled at the time of making that announcement to the House. I considered it a little odd that the First Minister would be making such an announcement when it was the Minister of Finance, who is also the Minister reporting for Hydro, and the Minister of Energy plus a few other things, and that it is his friend, Mr. Gordon Spafford, who actually produced this report that was put forward to us. I do notice that the price of the report was \$300,000 and it has been indicated to me that this amount was paid at standard engineering consulting rates plus expenses, and I wonder if it was just a coincidence that the required number of hours plus the required amount of expenses should come to exactly \$300,000.00. And one of the questions that I had of the Minister of Finance, the Minister reporting for Hydro, was how was the contract awarded for this particular study? Was there a tendering process involved? Was the decision made jointly by the four western provinces or their Ministers of Energy or whatever the appropriate title is in the other jurisdictions? So perhaps I can start with that question and ask the Minister if he can inform me as to how the letting of the tenders for this particular engineering study was arrived at?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Acting Minister of Finance.

MR. RANSOM: First of all, Mr. Chairman, I think the question that the honourable member raised with respect to the announcement being made by the First Minister in the House here on Wednesday, and the Minister of Energy not being here to make it, was purely a question of the Minister responsible for Energy being in Edmonton signing the agreement that day and the three First Ministers of Manitoba and Saskatchewan and Alberta, I believe, all made announcements in their respective Legislatures while their Ministers of Energy were signing the agreement.

The details of the consulting contract and I am sure that the Minister of Finance will be able to respond more fully, I expect that he'll be here this evening. The same reason happens to be, of course, Mr. Chairman, why I was in the position of introducing the bill of course, while the Minister of Finance was away signing that agreement in Edmonton. The question of the awarding of the consulting contract, I think that the Honourable Member for St. Vital is probably aware that consulting contracts of that nature are not usually tendered as such, but that proposals may be called for or a given organization that has the capabilities of doing the work; they are specialists in the type of work that's required, will simply be approached and a contract will be negotiated. And it is my understanding and I wish to make that clear, it is my understanding that those were the circumstances in this case. As to why the bill arrived at a round figure, Mr. Chairman, I would have to make some inquiries into just why the figure was a round \$300,000.00.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.--pass. The Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I accept the Minister's explanation that the reason that he is sitting there is that the Minister of Finance was still out of the province when it was time to introduce the particular bill. But I will point out to him that the Minister is now back in the province and we would have expected to see him sitting on the front bench and in a position to answer some of these questions, some of which may well be of a more detailed nature and that the Minister of Finance can answer better.

The Minister did mention that when it comes to the awarding of engineering consulting contracts, that these are frequently not done by tender as such and that it is more frequently in the nature of consulting companies making a proposal to the hiring authority and that a company having the capability and the expertise to do the study is then chosen usually in consultation. And I will say just as an aside, would it not be a fact that our own Hydro utility, Manitoba Hydro, would in fact be experts in this field and in a position to carry out such a study. I want to get back to that a little bit later.

And the Minister may recall some questions that were asked of the Minister reporting for Hydro this afternoon on another engineering study. And we do await with interest to see how that particular situation will resolve itself. Members may not be aware from the questioning of the Member for Inkster this afternoon,

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

but that particular tender call closed on November 5th, which is five months ago and that those companies who were asked to submit proposals were then asked to keep their proposals open for 90 days, which I understand is most unusual.

However, at the expiry of some ninety days, they were further contacted and again asked to extend the time in which the tenders were open for a further 30 days which takes us to some time in March, at which time the Hydro Board had still not selected a consulting consortium, because I understand it's not just a single company, they are groups of companies, and that a further extension was requested of the tenderers until about the second week in April. I believe the date is the 14th, but I am not absolutely certain of it, again which will bring us to some five months after the closing date.

The Minister should be aware and perhaps other members on that side who are in the engineering profession, that there are a considerable number of rumours rampant in the city about this particular contract. I would suggest the Minister has some duty to clarify this situation, not only as far as Hydro is concerned and the engineering profession itself, but for suspicious members of the Legislature and others who are raising questions as to the viability of Hydro's tendering process.

Mr. Chairman, I notice that the Minister of Finance and the Minister reporting for Hydro is now back in his seat and that we are almost at the time for Private Members' Hour. I would repeat the question that I raised earlier and perhaps we can resume it at 8:00 o'clock this evening. The first question that I had raised with the Minister was as to the selection of Unies Limited as the consulting engineers in this particular instance and while we're on that topic, perhaps the Minister could also explain why Manitoba picked up one-third of the total cost with the balance being spread through the other three provinces.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is now 4:30. I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour and will return to the Chair at 8:00 p.m.

#### PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We are now under Private Members' Hour. On Tuesday, the first order of business is Private Bills. We have Bill No. 24, An Act to amend The Manitoba Club Act, 1931. (As corrected).

#### SECOND READING - PRIVATE BILLS

#### BILL NO. 24 - AN ACT TO AMEND THE MANITOBA CLUB ACT, 1931

MR. WARREN STEEN presented Bill No. 24, An Act to amend The Manitoba Club Act, 1931, (As corrected) for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Crescentwood.

MR. STEEN: Mr. Speaker, in moving this bill on behalf of this particular club that has been in existence for better than 100 years, there are three aspects to the bill that I wish to speak about at this particular time. Section 2 which is the first aspect of the bill is Section 2 of The Manitoba Club Act, 1931, being Chapter 110, of the Statutes of Manitoba, 1931 is amended; we are amending it by striking out the words and figures: "the real property not to exceed in value the sum of \$500,000.00", which is in the 12th and 13th lines of the original bill.

The purpose for striking out the words that I have just quoted which is really the sum of the value is that the club's building today is valued at \$2.85 million. In 1931 the value of that building was at that time considered to be in the neighbourhood of \$500,000 or less. One of the problems that arises by leaving that bill unupdated is that the club, for insurance purposes for example, can't insure the building for its true value, and therefore it's insured for a figure in 1931 dollars rather than 1980 dollars. So it is the desire of the Board of Directors and the club members in that particular club to see that figure stricken and not replaced with another figure because of inflation and other things that

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

may change the current value of \$2.85 million. So what we're trying to do and wanting to do with this amendment is to take out that half million dollar figure.

In the second proposal of the amendment, which is dealing with Section 7 of the original Act, what we're doing here is we're amending it by striking out the words, and I quote again: "And until new members are elected, the committee shall continue as at present to consist of seven such members as of follows." And then it goes on to name seven members that were listed in the 1931 Act. As of today, Mr. Speaker, none of those seven persons that were listed in the 1931 Act are alive or members of the club. So, what we are doing here is we're eliminating the names from the original bill and leaving it so that it will read that the members that are elected each and every year to the board of directors will govern the activities of the club and not put individual names into the Act.

Section 10, which is the third . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. May I just point out to the honourable member that in Second Reading he should not be referring to specific sections of the bill as such, but rather his comments should be more general in nature.

The Honourable Member for Crescentwood.

MR. STEEN: The third change then, Mr. Speaker, in the amendment is that in the original bill, it says that the total sum that the club could undertake for renovations or could ever spend on behalf of the members is \$250,000.00. We're striking out in the bill, "Not to exceed a total sum of \$250,000" and again leaving that open-ended, and the reason for that is that if the club wanted to go into major renovations - and there is some thought that they might go into health and exercise facilities, in conjunction with the facilities they do now offer - that \$250,000 would not go very far in renovating a building that's worth almost \$3 million. So, it is the wish and the desire of the board of directors of the club to eliminate the ceiling of \$250,000 that could be spent at any one time by the club on behalf of the club.

So, Mr. Speaker, those are the three changes that the amendment refers to and if there are any questions from members opposite, I would be glad to try and answer them; if not, I would recommend that the bill be given Second Reading.

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

MR. DESJARDINS: I'd just like to ask a question of the member. How many lady members are there in this club at the last count?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. The question can only be one of clarification of the subject matter that has been brought forward. The honourable member may raise that as a question during debate, but the questions that can be asked at this time are only for clarification of . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: But, Mr. Speaker, I . . .

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

MR. DESJARDINS: I assure you it's for clarification, because the member said that they wanted to make some renovation. I wanted to know if they were going to set a . . . Other toilets. It's one that we haven't got in this facility, just for clarification, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Crescentwood.

MR. STEEN: Mr. Speaker, I said that the club is contemplating renovations. They haven't any concrete plans for renovations as of yet, primarily because they can't do very much with \$250,000.00. But as far as women members are concerned, there are none that are members of this club; it is a men's club. There are women that are permitted into the club and they do have a specific dining area for women alone and, of course, many of the other areas of the club are for mixed company, but there are no women members; it's a men's club.



Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the honourable member a question or two. Firstly, what is there adverse to the present Act by leaving in the persons mentioned by name, all of whom were, no doubt, fine, estimable people who historically were the founders? What damage is there to the continuation of their name for historical purposes in that section? Is it deemed legally necessary to eliminate these fine people from the historical Act?

MR. STEEN: Well, as the Act now sits, it was passed in 1931, Mr. Speaker, the seven persons that were then named, as I mentioned, are deceased now and what they would like in place of that is substituting the words "elected in accordance with this Act, and by the by-laws made thereafter or thereunder," and what they would want to do is to leave it sort of open-ended because they have an election of officers each and every year like most clubs, and that the officers that are duly elected by the membership of the club would be the ones that would be serving the club in that particular year and they wouldn't want to have myself or any other member coming back here and changing the exact names each and every year. But as far, for historical reasons or something, I'm sure that the original seven people that were listed in the 1931 bill could be left in someplace within the club. But I might mention to the Honourable Member for St. Johns that this club was established back in 1874, so the bill that was passed in 1931 may have been updating a bill from some previous time prior to that, and may have been a third or fourth amendment for all I know. So, I have my doubts that the club would want to leave the names of the seven persons that were so listed in 1931 in and just have it open-ended for the board of directors.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable member. I would like to ask him further whether he could undertake to have somebody on behalf of the Manitoba Club, appear at committee in order to answer the question I just previously asked him and, also, to answer whether or not there is the assurance that this club will be prevented from going into the real estate business by the fact that the ceilings are restricted and are now being removed and, thirdly, whether that person will be prepared to deal the human rights' law aspect of the operations of the Manitoba Club.

MR. STEEN: At the time of committee, Mr. Speaker, either the legal solicitor the Manitoba Club, or the president of the club, or both, will be present to answer any questions.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

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

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: We then move into public bills, adjourned debate on Second Reading, Bill No. 25, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Stand, Mr. Speaker.

#### RESOLUTION NO. 15 - USE OF SEAT BELTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the MLA for Burrows that;  
WHEREAS it has been established that the wearing of seat belts will reduce the degree of automobile accidents, and  
WHEREAS a number of health and safety organizations have called for the legislation of compulsory seat belts, and  
WHEREAS a number of provinces require their usage,

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Province of Manitoba enact legislation requiring the compulsory use of seat belts.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this question, I think, has been a subject of discussion for at least 10 years, that I am familiar with and perhaps some members might recall debates going back earlier than that. One would assume that among the strongest supporters of this legislation would Ministers of Highways and I recall, in the early days of our administration, talk by one of our Highways' Minister, Joe Borowski by name, and he had considered bringing in legislation concerning this matter but, in the end, it did not perceive.

The Minister of Government Services, when he was the Minister of Transportation and Highways, he effected an interest in this issue - and there were several times, of course, he's one of the best effectors around and he assumed the posture which indicated that he would bring in legislation - and I waited to see, but after several public statements, he couldn't get it through the First Minister. So, although there was a hint and a suggestion, Mr. Speaker, nothing came of it.

Now I have to turn to the newest, most rambunctious son of a Premier, one who reflects the Premier in his right-wing aspirations and philosophy, and appeal to him. I don't know his position and I look forward to hearing his particular stand on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, it's rather peculiar that the federal government in the United States and Canada requires the compulsory installation of seat belts in new automobiles and, although we have made progress in that regard, there is still not, in our province, legislation requiring their wearing or usage.

I would like to quote from an excellent press release that was issued in October of 1979 by the Manitoba Medical Association concerning their call for compulsory seat belts, a seat belt law in Manitoba. And they urge, Mr. Speaker, the provincial government to introduce compulsory seat belt legislation for all motor vehicle occupants over six years of age. And here, I think, is a matter which we can easily discuss and debate. Assuming members would be in favour of this legislation, one can argue for people over five years of age; over six years of age, one can argue in favour of front seat occupants or all occupants of a vehicle.

I simply point out in passing that the MMA called for compulsory legislation for all occupants, front and back seat, over six years of age. This was then submitted to, at that time Highways Minister, Harry Enns, and they pointed out that the public has invested all this money in seat belts and yet, in effect, because they have not spent money on education programs stressing their usage that money has been wasted because, of course, the belts are not generally in widespread use.

I point out also that the Canadian Medical Association passed a resolution last June endorsing the MMA position. A few facts and figures here: Since 1965 approximately 200 people per year have been killed in motor vehicle accidents in Manitoba. From 1972 to 1976, an average of some 10,000 people per year have been injured in road mishaps. And according to this brief, in a person's lifetime, a citizen has a 50 percent chance of being injured in a motor vehicle accident. Note, Mr. Speaker, not being involved in a motor vehicle accident but in being injured in one.

In 1977, the Manitoba Government or the people of Manitoba in medical and hospital care spent \$1.2 million for automobile injuries and the cost of Autopac settlements, which will be of interest to Ministers of Autopac and former Ministers, and so on, the settlements for personal injuries resulting from motor vehicle accidents was \$10.7 million. Here are two of the most persuasive arguments: a study in Manitoba covering 1969 to 1974 showed that unbelted drivers involved in serious accidents had a fatality rate six times higher than did belted drivers. Without a seat belt the overall risk of injury from motor vehicle accidents is increased four times; and the risk of injury is 65 percent greater; and the risk of death rises by an average of 50 percent. That from the medical profession in Manitoba.

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

I think it could also be argued quite easily that if there was compulsory seat belt legislation in the province there could probably be a reduction of Autopac premiums in a given year. The Saskatchewan government attributes a 5 percent reduction in their automobile premiums due to the introduction of compulsory seat belts. In settlement costs, I note that the Supreme Court of British Columbia in a judgment reduced an award from \$40,000 to \$30,000, took \$10,000 out, because the person involved in the accident was not wearing a seatbelt and therefore it was ruled that they contributed, I guess, to their own injury or to the extent of their injury. I assume that that is a landmark legal decision but I leave that up to the lawyers in the Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, it is a significant point that, at this point in our history in Canada, 80 percent of Canadians are now living with compulsory seat belt legislation; 80 percent of the population of Canada is required to wear seat belts and this is because of the four provinces that now have such legislation. January 1, 1976, Ontario started; June, 1976, six months later, Quebec followed; July 1, 1977, Saskatchewan; and then finally on September 1 of 1977, B.C. So we know that Ontario and Quebec and B.C. are the three largest provinces and add to that Saskatchewan, 80 percent of the population now has this legislation.

I assume that the best approach in adopting such legislation would be to have a gradual introduction and implementation, that one would need sufficient lead time, that one would have to introduce a major publicity and public information program. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, it just comes to me as I think of that, a large picture of the present Minister of Highways with his mustache pointing, as Lord Kitchener once did, saying "Fasten your seat belts." --(Interjection)-- No, that's in water, that's not on land. There would have to be, and he could have used that same picture from his highway maps and blanket the province with his face although, Mr. Speaker, I tremble in thinking of that prospect, it could discourage tourism. So we would have to weigh that from both points of view.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Government, I think, took a very intelligent approach and they introduced not just this legislation but a package of what they called safety initiatives and in so doing, I think broke ground and also made the whole thing more palatable and more understandable to the people of that province.

Now, when it comes to enforcement, there again, I think there is a requirement for a gradual easing in and that there is no need for some heavy handed crackdown to start the programming.

I would like to recommend to members the Saskatchewan program because I think it is possibly the best. In the Saskatchewan model their law applies only to the front seat occupants who are over the age of five years or who weight 50 pounds or more. I guess they require people up to the age of 16, the driver is responsible for those from five to 16 years of age, in terms of responsible for them being buckled up. I think in some provinces the driver is required to say to his passengers that it is the law that you should use your seat belt, etc.

There are exemptions, Mr. Speaker, and I think this will be of particular interest to members opposite. I believe that all provinces have similar legislation and some of the wording is identical and this applies to all aspects of this question. Exemptions in Saskatchewan, as a typical example, have been provided for persons with medical certificates signed by a physician, for certain delivery personnel who are in and out of vans, etc., and for --(Interjection)-- Now, the member is confusing me and affecting my speech. And for persons travelling in reverse. That's kind of an interesting omission.

They also have exemptions, Mr. Speaker, for --(Interjection)-- Well, you know, I have to point out to the Member for Rock Lake that the Conservatives are the people who often look in the rearview mirror, aren't they; they are always looking behind them, always looking into the past. Mr. Speaker, police officers when transporting a prisoner, that's an exemption, where there is no mechanism in that instance provided for the protection of the driver - that will be of interest to the Attorney-General, Mr. Law and Order - for cab drivers, while accompanied by a fare; and for driving instructors and examiners who, while accompanying a student driver, may be required to take control of the vehicle. So those are some exemptions.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most interesting things is to see the change in public opinion. Those figures, I think, are very startling because I'm sure if you took a poll today, you would find out that four or five people out of 10 would be in

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

favour and so some people would say, well, you know, it's not enough people, I'm a politician and if we bring this in I'll get killed at the polls and therefore I can't support it, or I talked to somebody and he said he didn't like it and the other said he liked it, so it's eventually split. That's usually the way that it starts. But after, I think, a short period of time, public opinion begins to accept this measure and begins to increase sharply. I point out that in the case of Saskatchewan, again, it started out with less than 50 percent, 54 percent, and then moved up to 60 percent. In April 1977, 54 percent - I guess the Minister of Highways has these figures - it went up to 60 percent in November, to 64 percent the following April, and in a year and a half it was up to 75 percent.

I think some of my friends on the other side who are farmers or who represent rural ridings, they will feel some reluctance to support this measure. I give them the Saskatchewan experience where in April of 1977, 44 percent of farmers favored it but by November, 55 percent of farmers favored it; by April of 1978, 67 percent, two out of three . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member has five minutes.

MR. DOERN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And 68.9 percent by August. So the farmers had the distinction of being the least enthusiastic but I also point out that approximately 69 percent were in favor; 28 percent against; and 2 or 3 percent undecided.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of accident reductions. There was a question; I didn't hear it. --(Interjection)-- I am always suspicious, Mr. Speaker, of my friend from Rock Lake. I can't consider him a farmer. I just don't visualize him out there. He is wearing his fine clothing. I don't know if he has white cotton, 100 percent cotton overalls and an air conditioned cab and all that sort of stuff, hi-fi in his tractor, but I find it hard to imagine that.

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

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Is the Member for Elmwood is trying to tell me that I am not a farmer by private trade?

MR. DOERN: I apologize. I named the wrong member. I meant the Minister of Government Services. I was referring to him. I'm not going to make any guesses about the Member for Rock Lake. I see him as a God-fearing farmer. That's how I see him. In fact, I have never told him this, but I do see him sort of as the John Wayne of the Legislature, a big tall --(Interjections)-- He rides high in the saddle. And he would be advised to wear a seatbelt in case he forgot how to ride a horse and might fall off. You can see, Mr. Speaker, that I am from the urban part of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I point out that in Saskatchewan, in a 12-month period, there was a 9 percent reduction in vehicle occupant injuries and a 19.5 percent vehicle occupant death reduction, at the same time that there was a 10 percent increase.

Mr. Speaker, I am running out of time so I will attempt to wrap up by saying that seat belts will not solve all problems. The fact that a person wears a seat belt will not ensure that he saves his life, that they are most effective in roll-overs and in head-in and front-angled collisions. I remind members that there are many mandatory safety measures in our society: safety glasses, safety shoes, hard hats, life preservers, airplane seat belts, which is the commonest. The time has come for the introduction of compulsory seatbelt legislation in our province. This would be another step in the evolution of health and safety measures that will benefit all of our citizens, including the taxpayer, and I expect particular support from the Minister of Health; from the Minister responsible for Autopac; from the Minister of Highways; from most members of the Progressive Conservative Party; from most members of the New Democratic Party; from at least one Liberal, and from one Independent New Democrat. The debate should be beneficial and of educational value . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member's time is up.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Transportation.

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

MR. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, may I ask again, do I have leave?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I heard a distinct "no."  
The Honourable Minister of Transportation.

MR. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Elmwood has introduced a resolution which is near and dear to the hearts of many of us. At the outset of debate on this resolution I want to make it eminently clear, Mr. Speaker, that I have no built-in biases, pro or con, against the use of seatbelts. My personal experience with seatbelts has been from a user standpoint since 1967, and particularly in the time of 1968 to 1973 when I travelled extensively I was a regular user of seatbelts. And from 1973 on, I became an irregular of seatbelts as I drove less on our highways. So, Mr. Speaker, I have no built-in biases as to whether people should or should not use seatbelts, and personally use them upon occasion myself.

Now, I want to deal specifically with the Member for Elmwood's resolution and I have to take issue with the first clause in the resolution, Mr. Speaker, because I don't believe the first clause is a correct assumption that the wearing of seat belts will reduce the degree of automobile accidents. I don't believe that statement, Mr. Speaker, is correct, possibly that it would reduce the degree of injury may have been a better way to open the resolution. I do believe that that degree of automobile accidents is not a correct statement, Mr. Speaker.

We do have a number of organizations who are supportive of compulsory seat belt legislation in the province, as proposed in this resolution. They are organized groups in the health care field and some of them are in the safety field and they have presented their views to various administrations from time to time. We also have, Mr. Speaker, a group of people who are not so well organized, who are probably as violently opposed to the compulsory use of seat belts as are the organizations who are promoting such legislation.

There are a number of jurisdictions, as the Member for Elmwood pointed out, that have seat belt legislation. Some four provinces do: Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia. And they brought that legislation in from a time period of January 1st, 1976 until September 1st, 1977.

Now many of the discussions on seat belts, Mr. Speaker, have involved the use of various statistics which are presented to justify and in fact give credibility to compulsory seat belt legislation. And, Mr. Speaker, I think it's only fair to point out that these statistics, although they are presented in all good faith, do not necessarily tell the complete story as to the effectiveness of seat belt legislation where it has been enacted. The statistics that are available over the past several years, which are commonly referred to in the justification of seat belt legislation, are affected by a number of ongoing circumstances which impact upon those very statistics.

And to name four or five of those particular circumstances. And the only reason why I mention them, Mr. Speaker, is, I think it is of interest to provide caution to the House as to the interpretation of statistical information, there have been a number of circumstances and the first one would be the reduction of the speed limits in North America and in Canada. The second instance which has had an impact on vehicle passenger safety has been a general trend over the past several years, Mr. Speaker, towards the manufacture of safer vehicles. I think, by and large, as a general statement, the cars manufactured on the road today are of a safer vintage than cars of several years back. There is no doubt about it, Mr. Speaker, in the third area, our highways are designed with a much higher degree of safety today. Any improvements and upgrading that are undertaken in any jurisdiction always upgrade highways to a safer standard and thereby increase driver safety on use of highways.

All jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker, in Canada and the US over the past several years have undertaken extensive safety programs. They have targetted these safety programs to our youth, who are a most important addition to the driving public, and I think that they have shown a relatively good degree of effectiveness.

And the fifth and probably also a very important area which has impacted upon the statistics of accidents and fatalities has been the better enforcement of laws

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

pertaining to the drinking driver. And over the past several years, we have had much stricter enforcement in that regard, Mr. Speaker, with very positive effects as to fatalities, etc., on our highways.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with some of the statistics that are commonly used in the justification of compulsory seat belts. Now, the first one I mentioned, and it is probably the most important one and it is certainly the most clearly identifiable one as to what has statistically happened with the introduction of one factor in our highway system, that being the reduction of the speed limit.

Now in 1973, the United States had varying speed limits and in 1974 reduced the speed limit to 55 miles per hour. In that year of 1974, we saw a 17 percent drop in fatalities on the US highways, from over 54,000 in 1973 to just over 45,000 in 1974; a full 17 percent reduction. And statistical analysis of the reasons for that reduction in fatalities, that large reduction in fatalities in one year, attributed a full two-thirds of the reduction in fatalities to the reduction of the speed limit. In other words, approximately 12 percent of the reduction in fatalities can be attributed to the lowered speed limit.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that kind of statistic does follow through in the Manitoba experience and I will attempt to develop some situations in the period from 1976 to 1977. In the four jurisdictions which have seat belt legislation and in Manitoba, fatalities on the highways reduced by varying percentages from 6 percent in Ontario down to .4 percent in Saskatchewan in the year 1976 to 1977. In that same period of time, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's fatalities reduced by a sum of 14 percent, much higher than any of the jurisdictions, four jurisdictions, which had undertaken compulsory seat belt legislation. Manitoba had not, but the significant event in Manitoba to accomplish that 14 percent reduction in fatalities was the reduction of the speed limit.

Now, in developing Saskatchewan's statistics, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to point out, since the Member for Elmwood has used Saskatchewan's experience, Saskatchewan in the year 1975 to 1976 had a reduction in fatalities on their highways of some 8 percent. In the next year in which they introduced compulsory seat belt legislation, they had a reduction of .4 percent and in the following full year in which they had compulsory seat belt legislation, their fatality rate went up by 12 percent, it went back up again. But it's significant to point out, Mr. Speaker, that the 8 percent reduction in fatalities on Saskatchewan highways was accomplished in the year that they lowered their speed limit. The .4 percent reduction in fatalities was accomplished in the year that they introduced compulsory seat belt legislation.

So I only say, Mr. Speaker, that seat belt legislation is only a small portion of the contribution to reduction in fatalities and accidents, and, in fact, it has been proven in other jurisdictions that a greater safety measure has been and is the reduction in speed limits.

The Province of Quebec, which introduced compulsory seat belt legislation in the year 1976 underwent a drop in fatal accidents. And here I'll use the statistics of fatal accidents per 100,000 vehicle kilometers driven, which is one of the most accurate methods of comparing fatalities between jurisdictions. Quebec's fatal accidents per 100 million vehicle kilometers dropped in 1976 to 1977 from 3 to 2.8. That coincided, Mr. Speaker, not with the introduction of compulsory seat belt legislation but with their introduction of lowered speed limits.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has had a certain amount of experience with compulsory seat belt legislation, and I only mention the statistical comparisons to caution all members that you can not pull out and isolate from statistics dealing with seat belt legislation and experience in other jurisdictions and isolate the contribution that the legislation has made by itself, because there have been other overriding factors, the five major ones of which have been mentioned, which by more precise analysis have contributed more to the safety of people than has the seat belt legislation.

But the Member for Elmwood made reference to the Saskatchewan experience where some 54 percent of the people surveyed were in favor of seat belt legislation prior to its introduction. And after it had been introduced and publicized, etc., etc., the acceptance of that legislation had increased to some 75 percent of the people surveyed. What the Member for Elmwood failed to tell the House in that statistic is that, at the same time that the acceptance of the legislation had

Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

gone up, the utilization of seat belts had not, and remains at approximately 35 percent of the drivers in the province. So we have a very unique situation, Mr. Speaker, where we have 75 percent of the people surveyed in favor of the legislation but less than half of those people actually abiding by the legislation.

And in all jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker, where compulsory seat belt legislation is in, Ontario has the best utilization rate, of some 52 percent of the driving people by survey do use seat belts, Quebec has less than 40 percent; and British Columbia has less than 37 percent.

So that boils down to the fact, Mr. Speaker, that by bringing in the legislation, you don't accomplish unless you go out and have the police force checking specifically for seat belts and imposing fines. You don't have, necessarily, the utilization of seat belts that you would like to see.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of other areas that I would like to deal with in terms of seat belt legislation. First of all, as I pointed out, there is a variance as to utilization once the legislation is in place, and by appearances in other jurisdictions which have seat belt legislation, there is a very variable compliance with the legislation. But, Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to point out that seat belts do not protect the passengers or the drivers in vehicles from injuries classified generally as the whiplash type of injury. And, Mr. Speaker, statistics indicate that approximately 40 percent of the injuries involved in vehicle accidents are whiplash type injuries which seat belts will not provide any protection to the passenger or to the driver. So it has very little impact on that kind of an accident.

We have, by some accounts - and I won't stand by this statistic because I haven't had it confirmed to my satisfaction - but approximately 50 percent of the fatal accidents in some jurisdictions involve alcohol-related offences. Once again, if the driver is going to flaunt the law which is very very stringent and has very strict penalties, in the case of the drinking driver, ranging from heavy fines to suspension, to - legislation we introduced last year - a short stay at Headingley for two-time offenders; if the driver is willing to flaunt that particular criminal code legislation, bearing in mind the extreme penalties involved, it is for certain that he will not use the seat belt and abide by compulsory seat belt legislation.

So, Mr. Speaker, I can't entirely agree with some of the proponents of the seat belt legislation. Now, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of accidents which the driver and the passengers are not protected by seat belt legislation. And here is where an important distinction is made. The Member for Elmwood mentioned that we legislate other safety measures and I admit we do, Mr. Speaker, but with the other safety measures that we legislate there are no potential downsides to that compulsory safety legislation, such as hard hats, safety glasses.

But, Mr. Speaker, there can be downsides to compulsory seat belt legislation. For instance, impacts from the side at intersections. If the person, either passenger or driver, is strapped firmly in his seat, he can undergo substantially more injury from that type of an impact if he is belted in rather than if he is free to be thrown to the side of the car. We have got, Mr. Speaker, a number of accidents involving fire and water, which may result in the person being entrapped in the vehicle. We also have certain accidents, although these are in the minority, Mr. Speaker, where either the passenger or the driver has been saved by being thrown clear of the vehicle. Now, I will admit that there are accidents where the passenger or the driver being thrown clear has been killed, but there are accidents where their lives have been spared by being thrown clear of the vehicle.

So, Mr. Speaker, what basically we have is an emotional debate on statistics and on the value of seat belt legislation. And when we have the emotional-type debate, I believe that we should rely on the common sense of our drivers to make their own choice, Mr. Speaker, as to whether they want to strap themselves in and use the seat belt.

And, Mr. Speaker, that is why I cannot, as Minister of Highways and Transportation, support this resolution for compulsory seat belt legislation. I believe that we should encourage and we are encouraging our drivers to use seat belts for their own safety, but I believe that we should leave it up to the individual to determine whether or not he should use it himself.

Mr. Speaker, in the instances of the downsides of seat belts that I have mentioned where there are certain accidents where the seat belt would cause serious

injury or possibly death to the passenger or driver, I don't want to be the person who brings in that kind of legislation which may force a person to jeopardize his life. Mr. Speaker, I say that, and I think there has been an adequate precedent set on the federal scene. We have on the federal scene, Mr. Speaker, of recent years, seen the abolition of capital punishment and, Mr. Speaker, it was abolished for one of the very emotional reasons that no one wanted to take the chance of putting an innocent man to death and for that reason, capital punishment, or a major portion of capital punishment was abolished because of that concern.

There are other reasons, as the Member for Inkster says, but that certainly was a very persuasive reason. Mr. Speaker, that is why I find myself at odds in supporting a legislation of compulsory seat belts which in certain kinds of accidents may well put the wearer of that seat belt, by my compulsion, by my legislation, to very serious injury or to death.

For that very reason, Mr. Speaker, I believe that in an area where we don't have a 100 percent safety record, such as we have in the situation of seatbelts, that we would be irresponsible to introduce compulsory legislation where we are not 100 percent sure that the passenger or the driver is safe in all circumstances. In such a case, Mr. Speaker, I firmly and fully believe that we should leave it up to the individual to choose whether he or she should use seat belts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly was intrigued by some of the comments that the Minister of Highways of this province has made with respect to why his government, at least I think it was clear, has no intention of bringing forward seat belt legislation. --(Interjection)-- Well, Mr. Speaker, I hear all kinds of denials here, but certainly if a Minister of the Crown gets up and gives us his opinion with respect to the legislation, I would anticipate that it is his government's view that there will be no legislation brought forward in this province, whether it be this Session or at least as long as he is Minister of Highways, that we will have seat belt legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the argument put forward by the Minister of Highways towards some of the statements made by the Member for Elmwood with respect to statistics, that you can bandy about statistics which way you want to to prove your point, well, Mr. Speaker, I have to say to the Minister, he is right. Anybody can pull the statistics anyway he likes; even the Minister of Highways can pull the statistics to attempt to show his position. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, whether or not we, as legislators in the Province of Manitoba, have the interests of safety of our citizens at heart. I mean, I have to say I was part of a government previously that could not get through this House legislation --(Interjection)-- I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Public Works wants to speak, he is trying to second-guess me, let me finish, then he can second-guess me.

We brought in legislation dealing with helmets for motorcycles, Mr. Speaker. We brought it in twice in the eight years and unfortunately we could not get it through this House then. I am saying that, look, if we couldn't get that measure through and if ever there was a clear indication with respect to the safety features of wearing a helmet while driving a motorcycle, I have my doubts whether this measure will pass in the Legislature now.

Mr. Speaker, I find no difficulty at all with bringing in both measures. And I have had the argument from the Member for Inkster a number of years ago when he was opposed to the helmet legislation for motorcycles and I think the now Minister of Government Services, talking about freedom, that we cannot restrict the freedom of individuals. Well, you know, I think the first time around I probably was swayed by that kind of an argument, but the more that I looked at the actual accidents and the deaths on our highways and being involved personally with some very dear friends of mine just outside of Winnipeg here, approximately 14 months ago where six people lost their lives, Mr. Speaker, right on the outskirts of the City of Winnipeg, I would venture to say that three of those lives could have been saved had they worn seat belts, because the very thing that the Minister of Highways spoke about, about not being tied in if you were hit from the side, Mr. Speaker, children were thrown around in this van as if you would put an egg in a large box and you shook it, and then you would see what the end result was to that



Tuesday, 1 April, 1980

egg. That's exactly what happened to those bodies in that van, Mr. Speaker, when they didn't wear seat belts. --(Interjection)-- Mr. Speaker, the Member for Inkster says the laws won't charge it. Certainly if the legislators of this province can present an attitude of saying that this certainly can prevent some of the loss of lives, and there is merit in this measure, that if we present a lead in this area in presenting an attitude that, look, this can't do anything but help you and certainly we should be able to present to our citizens the leadership that is required to say that death can be prevented by the wearing of seat belts.

That is really what is designed. Surely the statistics . . . I don't doubt the statistics that the Minister has for Ontario that only 50 percent or more of the motorists are now regularly wearing seat belts, certainly that there will be people who will still not wear seat belts. But, Mr. Speaker, if there is one life saved in the Province of Manitoba as a result of people saying, look, the law says that maybe I should buckle up and I am going to do it, and an accident results and sure, it will not ultimately prevent injuries. I don't think anybody in his right mind will say, well, all injuries in automobile accidents will stop if I wear a seat belt. That is not the case, Mr. Speaker. But I think no matter how we look at it, the evidence is very clear that death and very serious injuries are lessened by the wearing of seat belts. Nothing else. It will not stop every death on our highways. It will not prevent all injuries, but I think what we are saying, what the Minister of Highways wants to say, that, look, we are great here in Manitoba but the four provinces or 80 percent of the people of this country, or the representatives of 80 percent of the people of this country have rocks in their heads. I mean, they're wrong, but we're right here in Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, I don't think we can put our heads in the sand and say that we will not respond to what is, I believe, right.

The Minister spoke about safety courses and I believe the five things that he spoke about were the reducing of speed limits having an impact on accidents; there is no doubt about it. Mr. Speaker, if we really are sincere in going all the way, then we should remove on all our highways, the 100 kilometre speed and move the entire province to 90 kilometres, Mr. Speaker, if he is indicating that this will have a greater measure.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister also used as one of the main measures that have reduced death on our highways was the manufacture of safer vehicles. Well, Mr. Speaker, while there is no doubt that most of our vehicles have had safety measures included in the manufacture of same, but certainly there have been great injustices done by the engineering, by the automobile manufacturers who have in fact, although they have put in safe measures in the manufacturing of the cars, they have manufactured vehicles which have resulted in the death of many lives.

For example, we have had the case of Ford Motor Company and its illustrious car, the Ford Pinto, where many people have . . . While the car could have safety features in it, the manufacturer manufactured a vehicle which, when collided with another one, rear-ended by another vehicle, ruptured the gasoline tank and caused the vehicle to burn.

We have also had the cause recently of the Volkswagen Rabbit Diesel where there has been a design mechanism in the acceleration of the vehicle that went out of control, where a motorist driving the vehicle all of a sudden found himself driving a Rabbit that he couldn't control, that the only way that he could stop that vehicle was to throw it out of gear because, as we know, a diesel car will not stop running by the turning off of the key. You have to turn the fuel off to stop a diesel vehicle running.

We have the case of the tire manufacturers having to recall thousands of tires, of the Firestone Company, who have manufactured very poor tires for vehicles.

So while there can be arguments made that the manufacturing of safer vehicles has added . . . You know, why do we put seat belts into a vehicle, Mr. Speaker? I mean, why do we carry seat belts in our cars at all? Is that just for show? Is it just to lay down and then drag through the dust underneath the seat? Is that the reason that we put seat belts in the vehicle? Or do we have the seatbelts for a purpose?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hour being 5:30, the honourable member will have 10 minutes when this item next comes up again.

I am leaving the Chair and the House will resume at 8:00 p.m. in Committee.