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Second Session — Thirty-Second Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

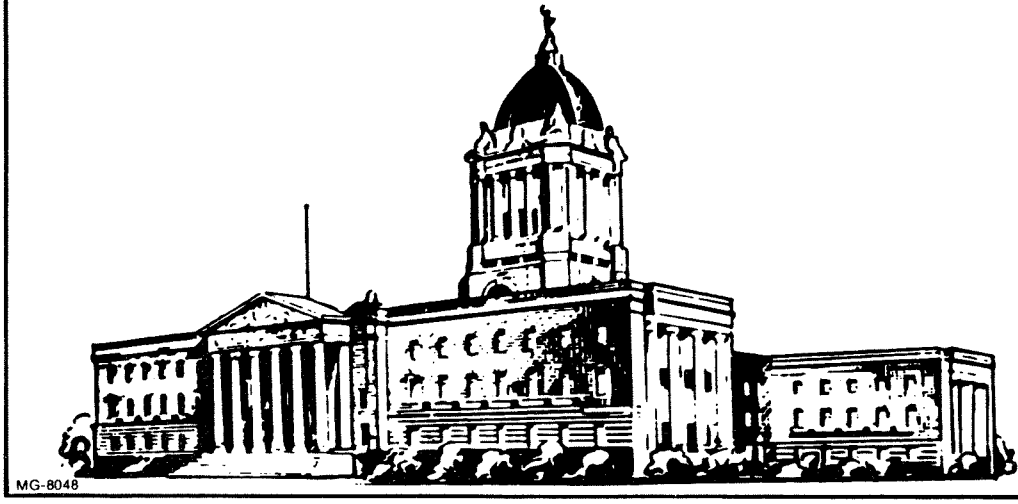
STANDING COMMITTEE

on

AGRICULTURE

31-32 Elizabeth II

Chairman
Mr. A. Anstett
Constituency of Springfield



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Second Legislature

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
Thursday, 2 June, 1983

TIME — 10:00 a.m.

LOCATION — Room 255, Legislative Building, Winnipeg

CHAIRMAN — Mr. Andy Anstett (Springfield)

ATTENDANCE — QUORUM - 6

Members of the Committee present:

Hon. Messrs. Bucklaschuk, Plohman, Uruski and Uskiw. Messrs. Anstett, Carroll, Gourlay, Harapiak, Manness, McKenzie and Orchard.

MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION:

Government Resolution passed on March 15, 1983 re Western Transportation Initiative proposed by the Government of Canada.

* * * *

MR. CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, we have a quorum. Committee come to order. Business before the committee is consideration of the draft report presented to the committee by the Minister of Highways and Transportation a week ago today. Is there any discussion on the report?

Mr. Manness.

MR. C. MANNESS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The members representing the Conservative Party on this committee undertook, one week ago, to go back to its caucus to attempt to review in further detail the report that was presented by the government to this committee. We have done so.

We have attempted to work with that original report, changing those areas that were of concern to us. We also attempted to, from our objective viewpoint, put our particular understanding and views as we captured them, at least, through the various hearings to this report. We are now prepared to distribute them and are prepared to discuss in detail or to allow time over the next two or three days for the further digestion by other members of this committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Manness, am I to understand then that this is an alternative proposed report, or is this a compilation of a proposed series of amendments to the report that Mr. Uskiw presented?

Mr. Manness.

MR. C. MANNESS: Well, Mr. Chairman, what we have attempted to do is rather than go through the original report, paragraph-by-paragraph in committee, we have attempted to short-circuit that particular process by stating our views at this particular time and putting them onto paper immediately. We thought that doing the process in that particular manner would certainly save some time.

As far as amendments, I don't think there are amendments of a significant substance. I think, though, that there are changes of tenor throughout the report that we felt captures and reflects more adequately some of the general comments that we heard in the rural meetings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have some difficulty in knowing how the committee wishes to proceed on this, because the motion before us by Mr. Uskiw was a motion to adopt the report last week, and I now have a document which I'm not sure if it's a proposed series of amendments for Mr. Manness' to my question, or a second report. I have some difficulty knowing how we should proceed. I am at your will and pleasure.

Mr. Manness.

MR. C. MANNESS: Mr. Chairman, then you'll have to, first of all, indicate to me what you consider a change from a report. If a few words in themselves cause a change in report, then certainly that's what we have here.

If the introduction of some additional paragraphs, again reflecting more satisfactorily in our view the position that was presented to us by the whole host of presenters, then we have a changed report. So there is no doubt that the report has changed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Uskiw.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I believe that it's always in order to move amendments to an existing motion or proposal. This isn't tabled in the form of amendments. Members opposite may want to correct me, but it appears as if it's an alternate report that is being proposed and I don't think that is acceptable. I think we will always be prepared, in committee, to consider amendments and to give weight to them or otherwise, but I don't think we can be in a position of having two reports on which to vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Orchard.

MR. D. ORCHARD: If the government has time to peruse the document that was distributed today, they'll find that probably starting on Page 4, there's some change, but basically until Page 6, the report is essentially the same as what was tabled or given to us for last week, Thursday's meeting. Then we have taken and we have added to the report some changes which we believe indicate the kind of farmer and farm-group opinion that we heard that should be reflected in any report that we're going to accept as the condensation of remarks that were addressed to the committee during its series of hearings.

I recognize the problem. We chose to do it this way because we would hope, as the government had hoped

with their original report, that this report with some of the changes that we've suggested in here might meet with the approval of the committee and be accepted. Maybe you might want to make a few minor changes as well, but if you wish to not accept this as an amended report, then we could go through the original report step-by-step, line-by-line and say, this is where we wish it changed and propose amendments, etc., but that loses the effectiveness of developing the overall thrust that any report has to have and that's why we chose to do it this way, so the government members of the committee can see an entire report, because considering a word in a given place may be rejected out of hand when its true value appears more evident with explanation of a paragraph on Page 6, as an example.

So if I could make a suggestion, Mr. Chairman, would it be possible for the committee to meet at a later date, consider this report as amended, and then we can come back with the original report, the report that we've tabled today, and then go through and try to come up with what we believe is an accurate reflection, based on our report?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I think that's fair if we look upon this document as a proposed amendment to our document; I think we can do that. We will take this document back, peruse it and determine whether we are uncomfortable with the changes that are being proposed or otherwise, and come back and we'll have a discussion as we move along section by section at another meeting. So I propose, Mr. Chairman, that we now adjourn and reconvene. Is Tuesday fine? What's on Tuesday?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Standing Committee on Public Utilities to consider further the Report of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board is meeting on Tuesday and I happen to be Chairman of that Committee.

Mr. Orchard.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, before we try to set another date, one of our major concerns about timing last Thursday to get the meeting today was the federal scheduling. Mr. Chairman, I think that's no longer a problem. Have we got an expanded window that we could move this committee not next week but the week following? Have we got that kind of time frame?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, I think so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: My information, I don't know if anyone else can speak to this, is that there is now consideration being given in Ottawa to second reading by the end of June, but committee stage and final passage not till after the summer recess. So it may well be that this bill does not go into committee in Ottawa until after the summer recess.

Gentleman, if I may, as your Chairman, make a suggestion, Mr. Orchard's comment with regard to treating this document - and I appreciate why members of the opposition have presented it as one cohesive document - so that all the amendments fit together and treating it on a paragraph or line-by-line basis and then moving each of the changes as an amendment seems to be the proper way to go because we can't have two draft reports, or a minority report, or whatever and keep on the table at the same time.

Perhaps, before I accept Mr. Uskiw's motion to adjourn, it might be in order for the committee to go through the two documents to ascertain and highlight exactly where the changes are so that they can be discussed at this point to clarify that, if that's the will of members, or perhaps members want to do that on an individual basis.

Mr. Uskiw.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think that would be rushing it. We would be doing it in the seat of our pants so to speak. It's consuming a lot of time. I think what I would like to do is take it back and have the staff go through it and make their recommendations to us, as to how the changes affect our proposal - in other words - a more analytical approach and then we would be in a position to know definitely whether we can agree or disagree.

I don't think we are in that position just by picking it up now for the first time and trying to determine whether we agree with the concept or not. So I think my original motion is probably the best one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Orchard.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I would concur with the Minister because certainly the Members of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition that are members of this committee, would not want to impose upon government members to rush them into any quick decision.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To members of the committee, I wasn't for a minute suggesting a quick decision; it's just that we have had two very short meetings of the committee. If we adjourn immediately, and since there does appear to be some areas of consensus, we may be able to agree on those areas of the report on which both sides and the committee agree at this point and at least get part of the report approved.

I am concerned about expediting the business of the committee so the committee doesn't have as much material to worry about at subsequent meetings. Otherwise, the committee has met twice in the last week to no event.

Mr. Manness.

MR. C. MANNESS: Mr. Chairman, I think that one of our Caucus decisions should probably be brought to light right at this point and I know I may be running the risk of leading into a general discussion.

We made the determination, and it will be evident to anybody that reads the report, that any references to changes that have come about over the last two or three weeks by changed Pepin Proposals, really do not have a place in this report.

We made that determination because we felt that the terms of reference that had us go out to the communities did not address those specific concerns. Anybody that peruses this report will see that we've removed some references to the latest Pepin Proposals because it's pretty hard these days to hit a moving target. As you know, there's almost a new proposal

every day and I only want to mention that because we are given you the rationale for removing some of those areas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Plohman.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I'd just like to say that I concur with Mr. Uskiw's statement and motion. I think that what the Member for Pembina has said is that because the government members have been very reasonable that they, too, would like to be reasonable and give us a little bit of time to go over this report and it's good to see that co-operation in the committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before I put the question on Mr. Uskiw's proposed motion to adjourn, can we establish the time of our next meeting or do you wish it to be at the call of the Chair?

Is it agreed that the next meeting will be at the call of the Chair? (Agreed)

Committee rise.