

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
8.00 o'clock, Thursday, April 20, 1972

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman when the House rose at 5:30 I was engaged in the process of enumerating the crimes perpetrated against the agricultural industry by the present government, and one I hadn't dealt with prior to the supper adjournment - I intend to devote the remaining five minutes that remains to the Department of Agriculture in dealing with this particular subject. Though I touched on it briefly when I made reference to the Manitoba Feed Grain Marketing plan, I had not had an opportunity to deal with what I think has got to be one of the worst crimes that the Minister has perpetrated against agriculture since he took office.

Recently a group of farmers in the Brandon area sought for themselves an opportunity to market feed grains. They decided to form a company through which they would seek sales of feed grains in markets of the world and had pretty well established, if not an unlimited, at least a very substantial market for feed grains in the United States. I shouldn't even have to tell this government, I shouldn't have to tell this government that there is a substantial surplus of feed grains on the prairies, and finding a market for those feed grains would seem to me to be the number one priority of this government, or of any organization that is interested in the welfare of agriculture.

A group of farmers in the Brandon area decided to take this matter into their own hands to set up a company to sell oats into the United States. They applied to the Canadian Wheat Board. The Wheat Board told them that the jurisdiction in the marketing of feed grains had been transferred to the Minister's company, the Feed Grain Marketing Board, and when they applied to them for permission to market oats in the United States, Sir, what was the answer? They turned them down flat. -- (Interjection) -- Denying the farmers the opportunity of doing for themselves, for themselves, what the government has not been able to do and what the Wheat Board, or what the Wheat Board has not been able to do and that is to market oats in quantities in Western Canada. There is one other person in this country, there is one other person in this province that has done a substantial amount of work in creating markets for oats in western Canada, and that is the owner of Central Grain, who has perhaps done more . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I regret to inform the member that the time allotted for the Department of Agriculture has expired. I would refer the members to page 16 Resolution 49 (a) Operative Development. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether members opposite want to spend the full departmental time allotment on this department, or whether there has been an arrangement to do otherwise. Perhaps the Chair might advise me so that I might guide myself as to the time that I have.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The understanding that I have is that this department is allotted the 4 hours and 30 minutes the same as any other department -- (Interjection) -- 4 hours and 30 minutes. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Department of Co-operatives is one which has not had a very colourful history over many years in this province. As a Department it's only about a year old, previously it was a branch of the Department of Agriculture, which at that time reflected a very minimum effort on the part of government to promote the development of Co-operatives in Manitoba. However since a year ago we have changed the image in that respect and have tried to bring about the kind of expansion and programming that would at least give indication and support to the Co-operative people in Manitoba, spiritually, financially, philosophically, every way you would want to put it, Mr. Chairman, the budget has been increased substantially, although it is still a small budget, still a small budget, but much larger than it was ever before.

Now I am not happy with the total amount here because there is a major job that could be undertaken in co-operative developments in Manitoba as a tool to bring forward more direct ownership of Manitoba's economy, these to be the people of Manitoba. This is something that has long been ignored in this province thanks to my friends opposite who, of course, obviously, have never been at all inclined in that direction. One of the -- (Interjection) -- you are inclined in many directions, I suppose you are, but -- (Interjection) -- The member for Lakeside says he is inclined in many directions, we know that. We are aware of all the misdirections that have taken place for a number of years, but one of the things they have failed

(MR. USKIW cont'd) to do over the years is give direction in the area of co-operative development. I suppose that I can't blame them because they were really putting up with the idea that they even had to have a co-operative services system in the province. But nevertheless so be it, Mr. Chairman, I suppose it's fair to say that everyone has the right to a different viewpoint, and I want to indicate to them that I'm satisfied that there is a difference of opinion between the previous government and this one in this regard.

The expansion of the department for this for this year is not massive but it does represent eight additional staff people; three in as administration, four in co-operative development, in which case one is the supervisor of housing - it's a new position - one in educational services, and two general co-operative supervisors added to the system. Credit union side of the department we have one additional supervisor. So it is a modest increase, but hopefully a very important one that will provide the opportunity to the department to zero in, at least, on some of the areas over which we are very much concerned. And in particular, Mr. Chairman, the areas of development in Northern Manitoba, that is still the primary focus of the department.

While we are continuing the services to the co-operative system and credit union systems throughout Manitoba, the main emphasis of the expansion of this department is really dedicated towards northern development, Indian and Metis groups, and so on. There's a big job to be done in that respect.

The Member for Swan River says we reduce them and I suppose I can't help that he is not able to read his figures accurately because, well mind you, maybe I'm unfair, Mr. Chairman, because we have not yet had the capital supply figure brought forward, and perhaps I am unfair in saying that. I will withdraw that point, but it is intended by way --(Interjection)-- of capital supply. It is intended, by way of capital supply, Mr. Chairman, to increase the amount of capital supply from \$1/2 million to \$1 million. That will be revealed in due course.

We are going to undertake a bit of research into the Credit Union system, something that has not been done for - - well I don't know if it's ever been done. We want to take a thorough study of the whole Credit Union system to determine whether or not we are indeed doing the kinds of things we should be, and whether there is room for greater innovation, and likewise, Mr. Chairman, in the co-operative field.

In the Credit Union side of the department, we have somewhere in the order of two hundred active Credit Unions and Caisse Populaires in the province, with assets totalling somewhere in the area of \$200 million, so it does represent a very substantial industry in the province. Some of the recent announcements throughout Credit Union system do indicate the kind of success that is possible by people having the opportunity to band themselves together to achieve things for themselves - - and I want to point to what has taken place in Steinbach very recently when they announced a new interest rate on deposits something in the order of eight percent, and they are paying eight percent, and they are charging eight percent on loans as well. So it does indicate, Mr. Chairman, that there's a lot of room to co-operate in Manitoba, and that is one shining example of what people can do for themselves given the opportunity and promotion on the part of government.

The Co-operative Loan and Loans Guarantee Board did make a total number of 19 loans but only in the early part of this year. They were not operative until late last year, and the loans that were processed were processed early in 1972 totalling \$497,000, so that does indicate to members opposite the reasons for the increase in the capital supply item which I mentioned, which will be a million dollars for the coming year.

Mr. Chairman, I could spend an hour outlining to members opposite what greater opportunities we might have if we had greater inputs in the system, but I think I would rather cater to the members opposite and perhaps we might get some favourable comment and comment of an advisory nature on how we can further develop the co-operative system.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member from Morris.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, this was one of the items that we had not really intended to, and we hope we still are not going to have to take too much time on, but the Minister's comments require some sort of a response, because the Minister again attempts to take credit for something that he does not deserve the credit for. For example he mentioned the development in the Steinbach Credit Union. I happen to be somewhat familiar with the Steinbach area and with the Steinbach Credit Union and I want to tell the Minister this: he

(MR. JORGENSEN (cont'd) . . . made this suggestion - and I copied his words down - he said it shows the development that had taken place in Steinbach. He said this shows what the opportunity and promotion on the part of the government can do. Now I have never heard anything more ridiculous. One of the reasons, and the Minister should know this, one of the reasons why the Steinbach Credit Union operates as effectively as it does is because it submits itself to the competition that is prevalent in that town. Steinbach is one of the communities in this country that believes in free enterprise. And the Credit Union in that town is a part of the free enterprise system.

I don't know how much the Minister has studied the Roxdale Principles of Co-operation, but obviously very little, because if he studied them at all he would know that one of the surest ways of killing the co-operative movement is government paternalism and intervention. The way that the co-operative movement survives, and the way that the co-operative movement thrives, is under adversity. When it becomes necessary for the co-operative movement to meet the challenges that exist in a community -- I'll make one exception to that and I'm going to commend the Minister for one thing, and that is the effort on the part of the government to teach the principles of co-operation to our northern communities. And if he's done nothing else in this field the fact that he has gone, sent his people out to the northern communities to teach them the principles of co-operation, that in itself makes his department worthwhile - because it is through the co-operative movement in those areas where there is great adversity that these people can learn to carry on their own businesses, can learn to do things for themselves. And I don't want to dwell on this subject at any great lengths other than to say that if the Minister does nothing else, and I hope he does nothing else because anything else he does in the communities that understand co-operation is going to hurt the co-operative movement more than it will help it. But in the northern areas where perhaps there is a necessity for the teaching of the principles of co-operation he is doing those people a service, and for that I congratulate him.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, just very briefly because from time to time the Honourable Member from Morris does through the sheer weight of burden of office, you know, overlooks certain aspects of estimates that require at least some brief mention, and that is simply to suggest, and to say, that by simply separating as we have done here the area of co-operative development onto a separate page in our Estimate books should not -- I know it does not lead anybody astray who is involved in the co-operative movement -- because the co-operative movement flourished, it grew to its present size under former Liberal governments, and more particularly under Progressive Conservative governments, particularly that area of co-operative endeavour within our northern communities which the Minister knows full well grew and prospered under those governments.

So, Mr. Chairman, I want to simply say that we have chosen not to take up time. We do want to get to our other honourable friends, like the Honourable Minister of Health and Social Development and a few others in the discussion of the Estimates, but I could not let the suggestion that seems to be implied by the merest separation of his development, or this aspect of government enterprise or work that somehow this government, this socialist government has now made it possible for Credit Unions to exist, for co-operatives to exist, or for the development of the co-operative society as a whole. Of course, Sir, those people most intimately involved, namely the organizations that I've just mentioned, know full well what it means to have had the privilege of living in a free society, to have developed their organizations in a manner and way unhindered and unimpeded by government action for which I, as a former Minister of the Progressive Conservative Government, can take some pride in. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Well I just want to take a moment, Mr. Speaker, to indicate to members opposite that it wasn't long, it didn't take me long to find out that there were serious problems within the co-operative branch when it was a branch in that the load that the system had to carry, the inspection and auditing services of the co-operative system in Manitoba, was such that there was very little value to the co-operatives in question of those services because of the time lag in providing those services and the information being fed back to them. It was very obvious that it was a bare bone system that was not designed to make the system work very well and it's for that reason that I'm pleased to indicate an expansion in staff man-years in the department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 49 (a) -- passed; (b) -- passed. The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. EINARSON: I would just like if the Minister could explain from 46,000 to 87,000. There is quite a jump in the salaries here. Is this an increase in staff or just an increase in increments?

MR. USKIW: Three staff man-years added to that section, Mr. Chairman. Three.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (Resolutions 49 to 51 were read and passed).

Resolution 52 in the amount of \$32,000 passed. That completes the Department of . . .

MR. USKIW: On that last one I wanted to take some moments -- and we haven't spent much time on this department, Mr. Chairman -- to deal with the question of the loans to the Indian and Metis co-operatives in the north. During the last year I did have an opportunity to visit some of the co-operatives in northern Manitoba to determine whether or not we are doing the kind of job we should be doing with respect to these communities, and I simply want to indicate that there were areas of concern and areas of surprise.

There are many communities in northern Manitoba most of which are isolated that have benefitted a great deal from the inputs made by this particular department. Because of the very nature of those communities it did require a great deal of co-operation on the part of people in the community, and indeed the government, to launch some of the projects, and I know that it might surprise many of you people here to learn that some of those fishing co-operatives averaged a return something in the order of \$5,000 per member or fisherman which is not an unhealthy income, in fact in many instances greater than incomes in what we consider to be the developed part of Manitoba. So that we are making a great deal of progress where there is the kind of community spirit to make things work.

I might also indicate that they are fairly innovative people in that they have learned very quickly to co-operate in more ways than one. One of the ways in which they are working together is in the purchase of snowmobiles, in the purchase of nets, in the purchase of clothing, which gives them an opportunity to bring about savings on the input side, on the input side of their business as well as earnings on the output side of their business through co-operation. And I think this is a lesson that people in agriculture, for example, could very well learn because it's the input side as the Member for Morris would know is seemingly the uncontrollable in that particular industry, and I just thought I'd mention this point because I'm sure the Member for Morris would enjoy learning one or two things about how to work together as a group, as opposed to the so-called, so-called I say, independently enterprising system that he so much admires.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That completes the Department of Co-operative Development and we have expended 22 minutes on that department so we have a carry-over.

I would refer honourable members to page 37 Resolution 103, the Department of Public Works, Resolution 103 (a)1) -- The Honourable Minister of Public Works.

HON. RUSSELL DOERN (Minister of Public Works) (Elmwood): Mr. Chairman, in 1971, the Estimates of the Department of Public Works were presented to the Legislature as part of the Department of Public Works and Highways. In September 1971, the functions were divided and a separate department of Public Works was again established. I was then appointed the Acting Minister of Public Works. On April 17th, my appointment as Minister took effect. This is therefore the first opportunity that I have had of presenting the Estimates of this department.

In December 1971, Mr. J. B. McNairney was appointed Deputy Minister of Public Works. Many of you know Mr. McNairney from his work as Assistant Deputy Minister of the Department of Municipal Affairs and through his involvement in the City of Winnipeg's legislation last year.

The principal function of the Department of Public Works is to provide accommodation for government departments. The department carries out this function through four internal branches.

First the Space and Planning Branch identifies long and short-term space needs of government departments and attempts to plan and utilize space in an economical manner.

Second, the Architectural and Engineering Branch provide in-House technical expertise in the architectural, engineering and interior design fields as well as external supervision when outside architectural contractors are retained.

Third, the Maintenance and Operations Branch provides in-House services, such as renovations and alterations in government buildings, and carries out a program of preventive maintenance.

(MR. DOERN cont'd)

And Fourth, the administration Branch provides the necessary administrative services to the department.

As a service department, the Department of Public Works responds to the needs of other departments -- sometimes this can prove hectic and frustrating, and I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the employees of the department for a job well done during the past year.

I will now endeavour to answer questions pertaining to the work of the department and its various branches.

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

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to deal with the last remark of the Minister of Public Works first, and I want to sympathize with him for the problem that he has facing him when he says that it is his responsibility to respond to the needs of other departments of this government. And as the department which is responsible for the provision of public funds, public buildings and comfort needs, the demands of other departments on his department I'm sure must be fantastic. We have seen a growing bureaucracy; we have seen a government growing in the area of public service, questionable at times though it may be, but a government that feels that it has the right to spend the taxpayers' dollar in a manner that they shall dictate better than the taxpayer himself. So that the needs of the department are, I'm sure, very harried and worrisome.

We find that for instance in the last short period that this department has had fantastic demands made on it for space for government offices, and I'm sure the Minister has spent many worried hours trying to drum up some additional space whether he rents, borrows, begs or steals. He has had constant demands on his office to provide more additional space for more government offices, for more political hacks to be relatively safe in the confines of government security. -- (Interjection) -- They've been turned out to pasture. Well I would assume that you have done that, because you have certainly appointed many of your own and if you didn't turn the others out then we have a tremendously burgeoning increase in growth in public service. -- (Interjection) -- Mr. Chairman, I feel sympathy with this Minister because the demands that have been placed on his department are probably greater than the amount of money that has been allocated to his department. He's had tremendous responsibilities placed on his shoulders; he's had varied success in trying to fulfill some of those demands.

I know that the policy that was established by the previous Minister of Transportation, who was also the Acting Minister of Public Works, when he practically refused to deal with American-owned automobile companies, and the fact that this government for one year purchased very few vehicles but greatly increased the service on those that were in their domain, placed a burden on the Minister. So I feel that in some respects he was justified in announcing his automobile purchase for the year. To some people it may seem to be a rather heavy burden for one particular financial year, but in the light of the previous Minister and his decision, whether it be wise or unwise is a matter for public debate maybe, but the Minister has had to fulfil the demands that have been placed on him. He has had to provide the service that is necessary to keep this giant bureaucratic government going, and the amount of oil and lubrication and patchwork that is necessary to keep this government going is increasing everyday. So the problem that this Minister faces is indeed a difficult question.

I sympathize with him and at the same time I can probably criticize him in some aspects or another as we deal with the particular items in the Estimates. We may have some suggestions to make as to where some of the political fat can be withdrawn and we get down to the basics of economics, which this government doesn't seem to understand.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. ENNS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Following on the remarks of my colleague the Member for Birtle-Russell, I would like to, I think, on behalf of all of us, certainly on the Opposition benches, I think I can speak for all the Opposition that we do express to this particular a degree of appreciation because he is the Minister that we have to call upon from time to time to worry about some of the housekeeping chores that we are worried about in our caucus rooms, the problems of telephone communications, or lack of telephones, or more telephones, and the likes of this, and certainly we've found the Minister to be by and large very co-operative in this regard.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think what the Honourable Member from Birtle-Russell was saying

(MR. ENNS cont'd) . . . can be illustrated in a few very specific instances in the Estimates. The Member from Birtle-Russell will be pointing these out but he should be put on notice, or on notice that we would ask, we would ask the Minister to be particularly ready to answer these kind of questions. For instance, the rise in such an innocuous item as security services. We would like to believe, Sir, that this government as such is not any, or does not find it to be all that much more security conscious than any other governments in the past but for some reason it seems to be the case. And we have for instance under security services a nominal rise in salaries from 81,000 to 98,000, that could be perhaps explained by one or two additional staff and an increment in wages, but the other expenditures, the other expenditures under this same listing rise from 67,000 to 147,000. A doubling and plus rise in what is conveniently labelled other expenditures. I think, Mr. Speaker, or Chairman, that this is what the Member for Birtle-Russell was arriving at, or getting at, or I'm trying to underline when he suggested the kinds of pressures that this government has been, or this department has been under by this government in terms of the uncontrolled growth, uncontrolled demand for services from the Department of Public Works.

Now Mr. Speaker, I really didn't want to criticize this particular Minister too much because after all anybody who had the foresight, the imagination - you know I suppose it comes from sitting in this Chamber, and we all acknowledge the art and the beauty of this Chamber, that somehow transposed that to the press room and gave the imagination to the interior design and decorative changes that were made in the press room really shouldn't be criticized. It is indeed a work of art and I acknowledge it, particularly coming from the agricultural community, the particular pastoral colour that decorates the fresco of the press room is I think very fitting. It somehow reflects what we sometimes think from time to time about what emanates from that room - and that's just a private joke from us here which we can all appreciate, and we can say that to them over there.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to give you five minutes. There has been a suggestion that we in the Opposition have not always come forward with the kind of constructive, you know, criticism that we should do, and in this particular department I say that there is an opportunity to make a real constructive suggestion, a suggestion that might catch the Minister by surprise because I think he himself recognizes that as Minister of Public Works it's not the most glamorous department. I'm sure that he recognizes, although he has that deep social feeling of responsibility of reforming Manitoba, that it may not be possible for him to accomplish it in this particular department, but then you know there is always possibilities the way Cabinet Ministers have been moved around as of late that he may get to one of those other departments in due course. But there is an area, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman, that he can make I would suggest a most lasting contribution as the Minister of Public Works and I'd like to suggest it to him now. And it's not an original suggestion. Indeed, indeed if he goes back into his files and he goes back at least far enough to find when another Minister of Public Works, perhaps the best that we ever had in this province, who indeed explored the situation. The time at that time was not right, the time was not right. I suggest to this Minister that it probably is now. And I'm suggesting to him that he undertake seriously the suggestion that we find a way of recognizing the value of this little bit of green that we have here in the heart and the core of the city, of finding a way of disposing of the automobile that clutters up the Legislative Grounds, of finding a way - - because it's now technically possible because of the wisdom and foresight of people like Duff Roblin that dug the big ditch around Winnipeg so we don't need to worry about sewer systems backing up anymore - - that we can investigate the distinct possibility that as we come off Broadway Avenue we go into a massive underground parkade - indeed the parkade can stretch right underneath there Her Majesty Good Queen Victoria as she sits in all her regal bliss - but it is possible to do that.

And I say it's possible to do it for several reasons. Ten years ago -- you know we have been accustomed to paying you know in an inflationary way reasonable prices for parking. There are very few places that you don't pay 50 cents or a dollar for parking your car. I think in most instances an undertaking of this kind can be considered if the government chooses to let private industry into it I would suggest they could probably find a private parking agency to operate it as a concession for the government. I would suggest rather of course that this would be against the government's social philosophy and they would operate it themselves, but I suggest in all seriousness to the Minister that it is a particular endeavour that he may wish to investigate. He may wish to use the particular time that's allotted to him as Minister of Public Works to do something for which future Manitobans will remember him for. And I

(MR. ENNS cont'd) . . . suggest to you that recognition that we have a very precious little piece of greenery coming from Memorial Park and into these grounds that is to some extent, to a great extent, being abused and certainly not the full advantage taken of by the overpowering and ever-increasing number presence of the automobile, and that he should consider seriously an underground parkade to not only solve the problems you know that we face every day as MLA's, you know, the commissionaires who kind of check our licence numbers and make sure we're parking in the right place. Can you imagine the honest John Doe citizen who wants to see his member of the Legislature, who wants to do business with the government, he feels you know unless he's got clearance from five different security chiefs he'd better not get anywhere near this building, better not get anywhere near this building.

So in the interests -- you know this is the kind of people legislation that I propose to the present government, people legislation that they should welcome.

A MEMBER: The Russell Doern Memorial Parkade.

MR. ENNS: This could be the Russell Doern Memorial Parkade that I am suggesting and, Sir, I can see that the Honourable Minister would go down forever in the good graces and the good favour of many people. I, Sir, even as a retired MLA who sometimes may wish to sit in these loges in the future, would thank him if I could park my car somewhere reasonably close within these buildings.

Mr. Chairman, these are, you know, unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, you know, with the heckling that I have from my own backbench here, this is a very serious suggestion. I suggest to him that if he examines the files of the Department of Public Works that there has in fact been some work done in this respect. As I said earlier the combination of factors, firstly we now appreciate more in the 1970's the aesthetic things, greenery and the kind of setting that we would like to have for us here in our Legislative Buildings. Secondly the economic factor that we now, you know, it was a great decision to put in parking meters in the City of Winnipeg. Would people actually not raise in rebellion when they had to put a nickle or dime into a parking meter simply to park their cars? Well those days are gone. We're now paying 50 cents and a buck to park our cars on most occasions on any private lot, or in any private establishment. So I suggest to the Minister that this could be seriously undertaken, need not be a drain on the taxpayer's money, that we could in fact make it a self-sustaining to some extent certainly at least that we would all charge ourselves and others going rates for parking. It may need some capital support on the part of the government -- probably pretty substantial support -- but I suggest to that Honourable Minister of Public Works who I know is not content, not really content with the department that he has under his administration here. It really doesn't give him the opportunity for him to somehow mold it and I'm trying to help him in the most constructive and helpful way that I can that here is indeed a way that he may want to do it. Thank you.

. . . . continued on next page.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: Mr. Chairman, listening to the Honourable Member for Lakeside I believe that this Minister will probably become one of the best Ministers of Public Works we've ever had. I hope that becomes a reality that the underground parking park will be developed. I don't know if it will or not.

But, Mr. Chairman, I do wish to congratulate the Minister for being appointed as a full time Minister. I want to wish him success. I also want to extend my congratulations to the staff. I know that we should be very proud of the groundskeeper that looks after the landscaping around the buildings. I think that it is probably one of the nicest pieces of lawn that you'll find anywhere in the city.

The points that I wish to raise at the Minister at the present time are just a few. I know that he didn't show the enthusiasm that he should have for the department -- he only took a couple of minutes to introduce it -- so I think that we will have to prod and ask him questions on this side. --(Interjection)-- I see that. He doesn't want to waste any time of the House but I think it is of importance that we do find some information and the thing that I would like to know, has all the space at the auditorium building, has all the space been utilized? Is there any empty space in that building? I think that the Minister should also tell us what was the cost of rehabilitating and renovating that building. I know it was estimated at some half a million dollars to a million dollars and I think it's important enough that he should be able to have and secure those figures for us.

The other point, Mr. Chairman - I know that he's responsible for space and . . . planning branch, I wonder if he would be able to tell us what is the requirement for the Province of Manitoba, the requirement in the way of new buildings and square feet of space for the next year, or the next say two to three to four years. I do understand that the government has undertaken some -- the government will be constructing, I understand, one or two buildings. I would be very much interested to know if the Minister would undertake to tell us the cost and the size of the building and perhaps what is the requirement and what the buildings will be utilized for. So I'm sure that the Minister must have this information that I'm sure is of interest to all the members in this House.

The other point, Mr. Chairman, that I'd like to know - I know there's a considerable increase in telephone and communications and is it increase strictly in telephone services for various government departments, or is it an increase for a very technical type of communications within the system? I wonder if there has been any research done in the last, say, few years into the communication system that the government has at the present time and if there hasn't perhaps the Minister would find it worthwhile to do somewhat a preliminary research and perhaps find out that he can maybe cut his telephone and communication expense and still have a much improved system.

Mr. Chairman, there's also a considerable increase in the operation of the Central Provincial Garage, and I would like to know what is the increase in the staff and the operation of the garage, and is it increase in the staff in that there is just that many more vehicles to service and that's why the cost has increased considerably. It's almost double, and I'm sure that the Minister should be able to tell us what is the reason for it.

The other point, Mr. Chairman, I wish to bring to the attention of the Minister, and I had on occasion, or at one time written him a few months ago, and that's in respect to parking space. I know that during the session the parking space for the members has been policed quite well by our commissionaires and I feel that this is a good thing because there were many times that many members have come here on many occasions and almost in a whole week have never been able to find their own parking space because it was filled every day, and I see there is some improvement during this session. But it has been pretty difficult to find any parking space during the committee meetings during the last winter and I know that quite a few members got parking tickets, and I'm sure that most members are good citizens and paid their fines -- I know I have paid mine -- but surely the Minister can perhaps set aside at least an area for ten cars somewhere on the side when the committee meetings are held because there are times, it doesn't matter how many rounds you make around the building, there's no way that you'll find one empty space to park and you have to either go to the Bay, or somewhere else, to find a parking space. So I am appealing to the Minister to give this some consideration. I know that the Minister is a very personable and accessible, and very approachable person, and I'm sure that he will give consideration to this request.

(MR. PATRICK cont'd)

These are a few of the points that I wanted to bring to his attention at the present time but I'm really interested to know the requirement in the way of office space, the construction, when the construction will take place, and what kind of, or amount of money will be spent in the way of new buildings for office space.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to make a few comments on this Minister's portfolio, Public Works, commend him for the achievement he's made in his political career. Whether he is worthy of that time will tell.

But I notice in the Securities where there is a substantial increase from 81 to 98, 700, 000 dealing with the total program. I don't know whether the increase is warranted. For example we had dealing with the formulation of our agricultural report just prior to the House opening, there wasn't too much publicity on this but I recall that day we were sitting dealing with the matter and a young fellow walked in to our committee room and gave a message to the Minister of Agriculture, and the Minister stopped the meeting and said we have to move to another room. We were rather surprised because the speaker was just about completed with his comments that he had to make, and suddenly the Minister of Agriculture stated that there was a bomb threat and we would have to leave the building, and so we were rather concerned wondering what was taking place. Now we were given to understand, Mr. Chairman, that someone had phoned in to the Minister of Finance's office and stated that there was a bomb in the building and it would be going off within half an hour. Now I found this very difficult to understand because with a First Minister such as we know him, a very friendly sort of chap; a man who has always been very appealing to the people of this province, I couldn't understand why anyone would phone in and create such a stir. But I tried to find out now why this chap would pull such a prank. Those of us who mean well in this province -- and I thought I could include the First Minister and his group -- but he said I've had enough of this Schreyer Government, that's the reason why he's establishing this bomb. And so I was just wondering, Mr. Chairman, when we come to that item whether the Minister would like to convey to us the reason for his increase in security.

The other thing I just want to also say -- my colleague the Member from Lakeside did make mention of the parking facilities, and while I don't begrudge a \$2.00 fine or what have you it does rather create a problem and I think the Minister is fully aware of this that --(Interjection)-- Yes, sure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: When the Honourable Member for Rock Lake was making reference about 60 seconds ago to the incident of the bomb threat, is he aware that the members of the Cabinet did not evacuate but rather stood at the barricades? --(Interjections)--

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. EINARSON: I don't know, Mr. Chairman, but when the First Minister makes this comment I'll never forget the look on the Minister of Agriculture's face and the expression he gave. I wasn't particularly concerned at all, of course it takes me back a few years to the Second World War and we were used to that sort of thing. But I think the Minister of Agriculture was out of there as fast as anyone --(Interjections)-- and I don't know whether he just retired to his office or what but by the expression he revealed to us I thought he was as concerned about getting out as fast as anybody.

MR. USKIW: . . . submit to a question? Would the honourable member not appreciate the fact that having responsibility to give direction to one's own staff that I had to absent myself?

MR. EINARSON: Fine, Mr. Chairman. I don't want to prolong the debate here but I just wanted to make mention of the fact that -- and reiterate my comments from my colleague from Lakeside that we do have a problem here and when we come in when the House is not in session and dealing with matters that pertain to our constituency and to the province the consideration will be given. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. JEAN ALLARD (Rupertsland): Well, Mr. --(Interjection)-- Well, I've got one already. Mr. Chairman, I want to start by congratulating the Minister on the fact that he seems to have developed a firmer hold on the department, and I wanted also to congratulate him for the impressive piece of statuary that has been erected between this building and the

(MR. ALLARD cont'd) river. I know that he is to be congratulated and that some of the members, all of the members probably who sit around him are to be congratulated, not only those who sit but those who sat around and behind him. And I want to thank him publicly for the opportunity to share tangibly in this most impressive work.

I have another concern and really it deals with my stomach and it's tendency to heart burn and the fact that really we'd much appreciate having a fridge and some decent statues in the lounge. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 9:00 o'clock, the last hour of every day is Private Members' Hour. Committee rise and report. Call in the Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, you Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Logan,

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS (Logan): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Osborne, that the report of the Committee be received.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion and after a voice vote declared the motion carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Thursday night on Private Members' Hour. The first order of business is Public Bills for Private Members.

On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney. The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

PUBLIC BILLS FOR PRIVATE MEMBERS

MR. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I was asked to look at this bill. There is nothing objectionable in it. I would suggest we proceed through second reading to Law Amendments.

MR. SPEAKER put the question and after a voice vote declared the motion carried.

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre. The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE presented Bill No. 9, an Act to Amend the Land Surveyors' Act, for second reading.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, the explanation is as simple as the bill itself. It's to correct two small anachronisms. The first one is that the land surveyors' request that the date of the annual meeting be left at the discretion of the land surveyors rather than as set forth in the Act at the present time. The Act stipulates that the annual general meeting will be held in January. Of course in days past the month of January was a dead month as far as the land surveyors were concerned but with northern development going on at the pace it is this is no longer true. So that the time available for the land surveys to have their annual general meetings is usually coincidental to the freeze-up and break-up so they have petitioned us through myself to change this aspect of the Act.

Another point implicit in the change is that the Act at the present time stipulates the annual general meeting shall be held in Winnipeg. They have petitioned for a change in that the meeting can be held anywhere in Manitoba. It's a move which I personally endorse, that we should perhaps move some of our conventions to other areas in Manitoba. Perhaps we can even move some of them up to my deskmate's constituency up in Flin Flon

The other part of the amendment, Mr. Speaker, is to bring into current day language the admission requirements for land surveyors. I don't know how many have had the occasion to read the Act as it sets forth at the present time but it makes interesting reading because it is -- it's kind of a reflection of the past. It's almost -- it says that "Except as hereinafter provided no person shall be admitted as a student with a Manitoba land surveyor unless he has passed an examination to the satisfaction of the Board in penmanship, and orthography, English grammar, Canadian and general geography, Canadian history, arithmetic, nature and use of logarithms." --(Interjections)-- It's regrettable that my colleagues can't even let me be serious about something like this. --(Interjection)-- Well I guess some people in the House have never studied. But the use of logarithms and algebra, plane geometry, plane trigonometry, mensuration of super. . . I can't even pronounce that one -- superficies or something -- superficies -- maybe my friend from St. Vital remembers what that one was. --

(MR. BOYCE cont'd) -- (Interjection) -- So really what it is is just bringing this particular section up to modern day terms and that they're asking for the equivalent in 1972 language that they have University Entrance, Grade 12; and the latter part of the amendment that is asked for is to strike a schedule which refers to this particular type of qualification.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I just have basically one question here that the member might want to consider. Since the degrees or the certificates or whatever it is -- articles they refer to here -- are issued by the Red River Community College and since University Entrance is not required for the Community College, the question I'm wondering about is why you require University Entrance for the surveyor's certificate, and is it not adequate as long as they have the background adequately in the mathematics, trigonometry, that is strictly required for this whether the whole University Entrance is required, if in fact they're going to go to Red River Community College rather than university.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker take that as a question or answer

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I'm just a little concerned that if the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre answers he is in effect closing the debate at this particular stage. I believe the question that the Honourable Member for Riel raises is a valid one and one that we would I think like to consider at Committee. We in the Official Opposition have no hesitation to see the bill move forward expeditiously to the Committee stage, where indeed we can consult with members of the surveyors themselves or the people themselves and discuss matters of detail where they probably should be discussed at the Committee stage. So, Mr. Speaker, speaking on behalf of Her Majesty's loyal opposition we are prepared to see this Bill No. 9 move forward to committee at this stage.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre will be closing debate.

MR. BOYCE: That being the case then, Mr. Speaker, I will be closing debate and I thank members opposite, and I would suggest this could be handled in Law Amendments Committee.

MR. SPEAKER put the question and after a voice vote declared the motion carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Having concluded public and private bills we go on to resolutions during the Private Members' hour.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' RESOLUTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for Virden.
The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MCGREGOR: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Birtle, that WHEREAS the official practice of repairing in Winnipeg government vehicles used and located in areas distant from Winnipeg is frequently uneconomic; and WHEREAS it is desirable to decentralize government operations and spending; THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government consider the advisability of permitting the repair of government vehicles in local shops wherever consideration of time and cost make local repair preferable to repair in Winnipeg.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MCGREGOR: Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this particular resolution, this is nothing new. It's been with -- certainly with me as long as I've been a member. In recent months it probably has adjusted in some areas, and in talking to Mr. Carmichael just before the supper hour he was explaining what the intent is -- and it seems as though there hasn't been a good enough selling job done because earlier this afternoon in bringing myself right up-to-date as to what's going on at recognized garages that are recognized dealerships they seem to have -- and they're giving the full discounts at any place in Winnipeg a report such as a \$47.00 bill may be in the Virden garage and they decided to tow it elsewhere. Or a Mines and Natural Resources' truck that had in the area of a \$50.00 bill and the dealer expressed the opinion that it really wasn't worth his time of doing this because there was so many phone calls, so much red tape and there was the full co-operation of the driver of that Mines and Natural Resources' truck, he understood it was more economical. It just seems to be a question if the new policy -- and Mr. Carmichael does seem to be -- I appreciate is an honest fellow, a fair meaning fellow, and maybe there has to be a better selling job generally to the garages. And this is not only in

(MR. McGREGOR cont'd) . . . my constituency -- I talked to others and I did talk to the odd one that was very much in recent months appreciative of this change. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't want to sound too rural but only because if rural is treated properly and fair the beneficiary will be all of Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Swan River.

MR. JAMES H. BILTON (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Honourable Member from Virden in bringing this resolution forward. I have mentioned it in past years, and as you know I am several hundred miles north of my honourable colleague and Swan River I must say has developed into an area where all departments of the government are represented, requiring as it does quite a large fleet of trucks and cars. And it's always seemed to me to be rather foolish with a community such as ours with several large garages and a considerable number of men that are making a living in those garages to see government business such as this being transferred to Winnipeg for major repairs. It's true minor repairs are being done at the local garages, and the Department of Public Works whilst they have a big fleet there -- or Highways I should say -- they are purchasing parts for trucks from the local distributors, but otherwise the Hydro and the Telephones, the Health and the Welfare and Mines and Resources, this sort of thing goes on. And I am happy to say that when new automobiles or trucks are being purchased the local garages have the opportunity to tender and this is good, and I would ask the government to give some serious consideration to keeping this repair work in communities such as ours that means so much and in the long run could mean a great saving to the government. One thinks of a man or two men coming down to the City of Winnipeg with a truck, their wages and so on and so forth, waiting around for possible major repairs on that truck if it is to be re-assigned or another one going out in its place. This sort of thing goes on and I must say it creates a great deal of bad feeling in the mechanical community of Swan River, and it could do much if the government in its wisdom would see to it that this sort of work was done on a local level. And I would ask the members to support this resolution and certainly ask the government to take action toward meeting this long overdue consideration in communities so far removed from the City of Winnipeg.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. JOSEPH P. BOROWSKI (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I rise to say a few words and to introduce an amendment. I really don't know why the resolution is before us because it doesn't say anything what's not in effect now. I really wonder why it was even brought in. I checked the manual, the Manitoba Driver's Handbook which outlines the procedures to be followed and prepared and I'd just like to read one section of it. -- (Interjection) -- Page 4 and I quote: "Before purchasing motor vehicle parts or authorizing repairs, adjustments or towing to be carried out by a non government agency where the total cost will exceed \$20.00, the driver of the vehicle must obtain approval from the central or nearest provincial garage."

Now I don't know how long this thing has been in, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps it should be upgraded, and if it should be I would like to have heard the Opposition come in with a figure, maybe we should raise it to \$30.00 or \$40.00. Certainly it was the policy when I was Minister to try and run an operation where it would always cost us the least and there's no question, sometimes the bill may be \$200 and it's cheaper to do it locally. For example, if you have a truck in Lynn Lake and we have several of them -- well obviously it's not going to pay to put it on a train, ship it to Winnipeg or to The Pas where our nearest garage is, so we have always taken that into consideration and continue to do so.

But the resolution as it's worded here, Mr. Chairman, I really don't know what it's going to accomplish and what the purpose of the opposition is. Perhaps they would look at it and propose their own amendment because certainly we have been going far beyond what's in that book which is permissible under the present legislation. This really is a guideline.

There's other changes that were made that I think the Member for Swan River mentioned and that is of local purchasing of vehicles and other things. And we've also made a further change which is not in this book and that is to purchase from the Co-op. Now again I don't know who was responsible, it's possible it's been there for the last 20 or 30 years -- but one of the things we found on taking over the government that there was a policy, no one seemed to know when it was initiated, that no purchases were to be made from Co-ops. As a matter of fact the credit cards which all -- and I'm sorry, not all -- most civil servants have and all Ministers have, did not include Co-op. Now this is the only Canadian owned company that we have in Canada and for some reason they were not allowed to sell to the government, and the

(MR. BOROWSKI cont'd) employees were not allowed to purchase whether it's gas, oil or repairs or even to the vehicle repairs. And they do give a discount. We have changed that policy and now all departments are allowed to do business with co-ops if they feel they can get a better break.

Now getting back to the resolution, I'm going to propose an amendment and if the opposition feels that it's not sufficient then I'd like them to propose one raising the figure that's in this manual. And there is a couple of things that I think could be changed, but I think they should specify rather than just making the type of resolution which as far as I'm concerned you know, if I was the Minister I really wouldn't know what you're trying to say by that resolution.

So, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for St. George that the resolution be amended as follows: 1) By inserting the word "towards" after the word "whereas", and the words "the previous administration of" in the first line of the first paragraph thereof and after the word "of"; 2) By striking out the word "is" in the second line of the first paragraph thereon and substituting therefor the words "which was and"; No. 3) By striking out the words "consider the advisability of" following the word "government" in the first line of the third paragraph thereof and substituting therefor the words "continue its policy of now".

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Does the honourable member have a second copy with him? I wonder if he would read his amendment in context of the resolution. I'm having difficulty placing his "whereases" or "it wases" into context.

MR. BOROWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I didn't read -- I suppose I should have put the two together and read the whole thing out. I wasn't aware this was necessary. It doesn't make -- it doesn't sound very intelligent reading it separately but I assure you once put together they do say something.

MR. SPEAKER: Well the difficulty the Chair has to the Honourable Member for Thompson is that unless I know what the amendment says, there's no way I can adjudicate whether it's admissible, and since I cannot decipher what he is saying with his "it was" or "it is" I cannot put it into context. Or would he read the amendment as it is, as it would be if he . . .

MR. BOROWSKI: Mr. Speaker, let me . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. BOROWSKI: Let me try. "Whereas it was the inserted words or the key words "whereas it was the official practice of repairing in Winnipeg government vehicles used and located in areas distant from Winnipeg is frequent uneconomic" -- "is frequently uneconomic" -- now I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I'll have to write the two together.

Mr. Speaker, I'll take another crack at it. "Whereas it was the official practice of the previous administration of repairing in Winnipeg government vehicles used and located in areas distant from Winnipeg which was frequently uneconomic; and Whereas it is desirable to decentralize government operations and spending" -- and the rest, Mr. Speaker, remains as it is. -- (Interjection) -- Oh yeah, I'm sorry. -- (Interjection) -- Yeah. "Therefore be it resolved that the government continue its policy as of now -- (Interjection) -- Therefore be it resolved that the government consider the advisability of continuing as of now whenever consideration of time and cost make local repair preferable to repair in Winnipeg."

MR. SPEAKER: Well I hope I understand the amendment now in that sense it is admissible.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion.

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

MR. GRAHAM: Thank, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, after much confusion, I think perpetrated by the Member for Thompson, at the present time and I suggest to you, Sir, that it is a practice that he has continued all the time that he was the Minister of Public Works and, Mr. Speaker, considering the importance that the Minister of Public Works places on this resolution because he was in the House just a few minutes before it was introduced; considering the importance that the First Minister places on this resolution, considering the fact that he was in the House when it was introduced, I feel very sorry, Sir, that the government has considered it in their wisdom to turn this matter over to the Member for Thompson for his handling in the House.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution and the amendment if anyone can understand it that has been introduced here, Sir, is typical of the policy of this government, that is, to do nothing, to pat themselves on the back and say that it was the previous administration that was at fault.

(MR. GRAHAM cont'd) and we are the only white knights that are left in the Province of Manitoba.

Sir, I consider, and I would suggest to you that the Member for Virден is a white knight and the proposal that he has put forward here is genuine and it is in the interest of the public and the people of Manitoba. The problem that he has faced and every other rural member in Manitoba has faced is very similar and recurs with increasing frequency since this government has taken office.

Mr. Speaker, it was brought to my attention only last winter that a public health nurse driving a government vehicle had trouble starting her car in the morning and the car required a battery that was valued at \$13.25 but she was unable to purchase that battery at the local service station, in fact she had to phone Winnipeg, and Winnipeg returned the phone call and told her to call the local garage to send a tow truck out to start the vehicle. So the tow truck travelled the 5 1/2 miles round trip to start the vehicle, and she was warned by the operator of the tow truck that the battery was dead and in fact she would have to keep the car running during the eight hours that she was required to put in in her service as a public health nurse -- and believe me she is a good public health nurse and she put in eight hours and probably more, but she only gets paid for eight. But that's beside the point. She was typical of many of the civil servants in this province. She was giving service above and beyond the normal call of duty.

But many of the civil servants have to follow orders, Sir, orders that are dictated by Ministers and handed down through the chain of command. Somebody, Sir, had to give that order that she not be allowed to purchase a battery for \$13.25 but that she must keep that car running all day after the local garage had towed the vehicle to start it. And the central purchasing agency was to send a battery out so that that car would in fact be able to start in the coldest of weather. However, the service, both communication-wise within the department and the service that rural Manitoba so often gets as far as transportation is concerned was such that the next morning there still was no battery and again the tow truck had to come out and start the car. And the same procedure was gone through again, Sir, that the car had to be left running all day or else it would no longer start. And this happened a third day, Sir, and on the fourth day the battery did arrive and the service truck had to come out and install the battery, after paying the charges for having the battery delivered. And I would suggest, Sir, that four days, four service calls 5 1/2 miles round trip by a tow truck to start a vehicle, plus one or two telephone calls, plus the inconvenience of having a car running eight hours a day when many times it could have been shut off, was not in the public interest, that it could have indeed been cheaper had they purchased a \$13.25 battery at the local service station, and both the public, the civil service and the Minister in charge of public affairs, or Public Works in this province, could all have benefitted. The affairs of government would have been looked after in a more practical manner; the taxpayer would not have had to pay the additional costs; and the service to the public would have improved.

And I'd suggest to you, Sir, that the purpose of government should be to serve the public and should not be for the public to serve the purpose of government.

And when we get into the rat race of bureaucracy, red tape, directives from Ministers, and furthermore, Sir, a proposal such as has been put forward by the Member for Thompson that we continue this, I would suggest that this is sheer unadulterated nonsense. That if this government is not willing to provide better service for the people; if they're not willing to accept change that is proposed in the interest of the public, then I would suggest to you, Sir, that this government is unworthy of the confidence of the public. And when we bring forward positive suggestions that are in the interests of the public, I would suggest to you, Sir, that the government should pay due heed to the suggestions put forward by the members of this side.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. BOROWSKI: I wonder if the member does not feel as an elected member of this Legislature it is his duty to report it to the government or to the Minister, the abuse of the office by the bureaucrats who made that stupid decision telling this nurse to do that. Did he not feel that he should have brought it to the attention of the government instead of bringing it in here and trying to make a political game out of it?

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Chairman, in answer to the Member for Thompson I would suggest,

(MR. GRAHAM cont'd)Sir, that if the Minister is unwilling to listen it doesn't matter how many times you bring forward suggestions, or how many times you bring to the attention what is going on in this province.

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

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in this debate that started by the -- as for the resolution of the Honourable Member from Virden, and the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell called him a white knight. I think the white knight must have been tarnished by some of the people on the other side by the thinking and the comments that have come out from the Honourable Member from Birtle-Russell when he goes on to give a story of government bureaucracy and slowness, and repetition of expenditures and stupidity on people's parts, but I think Mr. Speaker, if he had the brains and common sense that individuals would have he would have either called the Provincial Garage himself, or he would have told the girl, listen, contact Mr. Carmichael as the Honourable Member from Virden did, to phone up on what the government is really doing in this respect about the repairs of government vehicles in the rural areas. He could have given her the answer and I don't think this would have happened, and I'm not sure that it did, that it did happen, because I think most people in the public service who use government vehicles would be aware of the factor in the driver's handbook that states that purchases of over \$20.00 would have to be okayed by the Provincial Garage and purchases under that could be handled on their credit card, or whatever have you.

But I have information and I would like to put this forward. There are several provincial garages located out of Winnipeg and they are in Brandon, Dauphin, Swan River, The Pas and Boissevain, and in these areas most of the time I think that these garages handle vehicles that are government, either heavy equipment vehicles, graders and that, where repairs as done in these type or garages, and what normally happens is that the cars that the engineers and people that work for the department, they are usually serviced away from the garage.

Now I think, I think if the honourable members wanted to bring forth and say a resolution or amendments, like the Honourable Member from Thompson had said, that maybe the amount of repairs without direct authorization from the Provincial Garage be increased, well I think they're probably right. But I also think that in many cases that if there are repairs to be done in local areas, let's say a car breaks down and that if the garage in the local area let us say, be it Swan River or The Pas, that the car would be -- once the estimate would be submitted for the list of parts and repairs that are necessary, I'm sure work like this is carried on in local garages in the area and the car is not transported into Winnipeg.

But there's another avenue which the Department of Public Works carries on, it's the purchases of the

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Point of order? The Honourable Member for Swan River.

MR. BILTON: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member was saying that

MR. SPEAKER: Would the honourable member state his point of order.

MR. BILTON: My point of order is that I don't -- I believe is misinforming the House when he says that there is a garage in Swan River that repairs government automobiles. -- (Interjection) -- Yes you did!

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

MR. URUSKI: The Honourable Member from Swan River said I was misinforming the House when I said there was a provincial garage in Swan River, and if they don't repair cars that's all the more stronger for my argument to say that the cars that do break down there, they would then be repaired by garages in the local area since they would not normally be transferred into Winnipeg -- (Interjection) -- on the fifth day.

Now as I was saying before that the methods and the mode of operation that is used by the Department of Public Works in local purchases of tires, antifreeze and gasoline, this is tendered out in the local areas and normally a local bulk dealer, or local agent gets the tender for supplying the gasoline, or whatever the oil for the local garages and highways maintenance shops, and this is done totally locally. It could be done -- tendered bulk right to Shell or BA or to any other company in Winnipeg and then it could be farmed out, but no the government does this to keep the local operators and local bulkk dealers operating in the local areas to provide the service that they are.

Now, you know, what really bothers me is the members opposite chastise this government for not letting out more repairs go to the local areas. You know, I'm always wondering why

(MR. URUSKI cont'd) did they not include the co-op service station, and the co-op gasoline and oil purchases, on the credit cards for the people who drive public service vehicles, and also why would they not have been included in local tendering for local gasoline purchases. This really bothers me because I'm just wondering what really was the mode to exclude a total Canadian-owned company from dealing or doing business with the government. I just don't know what they're thinking was at the time. Since this government came in the Member from Thompson, who was the Minister at the time, had indicated that these, this corporation, or this co-operative was given the opportunity to do business with the government.

Now the Honourable Member from Swan River mentioned and he was happy to say that the government does purchase parts locally from local part dealers in the rural areas and I'm wondering what more would they like to see in the form of parts and repairs to be done to local vehicles.

The Honourable Member from Morris mentioned before that he congratulated this government in its move on what it has done in the co-operative movement in the northern areas, and that the co-ops should be encouraged through adversity, and I'll tell you they sure encouraged them through adversity in the policies that they carried previously -- they just left them right out in the cold.

And Mr. Speaker, I won't go much further in my remarks but support the amendment by the Honourable Member from Thompson.

. . . . continued on next page

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure just what the incomprehensible amendment that the Member for Thompson introduced into this resolution, and I am equally as puzzled by the incomprehensible remarks made by the Member for St. George.

As I understand the amendment made by the Member for Thompson, the former Minister of Highways, it seems to suggest, Sir, that the resolution should be amended first of all to congratulate the government on their practice in the past and secondly to ensure that that practice does not change. Well, Sir, had we wanted that kind of a resolution we would have moved it in the first place. The fact is, Sir, the reason this resolution was introduced is because of the noble motives attributed to the government by the Member for St. George are not being carried out and that's really the subject matter of the complaint launched by my colleague the Member for Virden.

Now the government often proclaims a desire to want to assist rural communities and that sort of desire manifests itself more in words than it does in deeds, and here is one example, here is an opportunity for the government, and I am not, and let me make it clear that I am not saying that the practice began with the present government because I think that practice was in effect before the Minister came, took over the responsibility. It is one of those things, Sir, that develops, it's one of those things that develops because there seems to be a tendency in this world, and in this country, that the centralization of everything in government tends to create greater efficiencies, and there isn't a greater fallacy. All of the tendencies towards centralization have done nothing more than create increased costs, and this is just another example. I know of one example that was outlined to me, and I'll relate it to the Minister, of a car that broke down near Killarney, within six miles of Killarney. And instead of taking that car to a Killarney garage and getting it repaired, the tow truck came out from Winnipeg, hauled it all the way into the garage in Winnipeg. When it was taken apart it was discovered that it required one small part. The repair depot in Winnipeg did not have that part and so in searching for the particular part that was necessary to repair this vehicle they found that there was only one garage in the Province of Manitoba that had such a part and guess where it was, in Killarney. And so they had to send a taxi out to Killarney to get the part, bring it into Winnipeg and repair the vehicle. Now, Sir, imagine the cost that was involved there. Had that car been hauled into a garage in Killarney it could have been repaired there perhaps within the hour, and it would have been on its way. Well, whose fault is that? It's a stupid government directive, and I'm not saying it was a directive that was issued or initiated by this Minister, I'm saying that it's one of those things that's happened. And I'm not here to blame anybody I'm simply pointing out . . .

MR. BOROWSKI: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order, the member suggested that this happen as a result of a stupid government directive, and I tell him there is no such directive, and I suggest he would withdraw the word stupid . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please, order please. The honourable member is not making a point of order, he is debating. The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSEN: Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister - or at least - I keep calling him the Minister, without taking into consideration the fact that he relinquished his responsibilities some time ago, and he's no longer the Minister. But I say that -- (Interjection) -- I say that . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. JORGENSEN: Well I wonder why then this happens. Why does it happen if there wasn't a directive somewhere, if there wasn't somebody taking the responsibility for such things happening and the Minister - - there I go again - - the former Minister took great pains some time ago to chastise the former Ministers of Highways on this side of the House because they did not know everything that was going on within their departments, and he said, and he said, they had the responsibility, and I agree with him, they do have the responsibility. You don't slough it off on a minor official; you don't slough it off on your departmental officials. If there's something wrong within the department, the Minister takes the responsibility. There's no way that government can operate unless the Minister assumes that responsibility, and that's the whole concept of responsible government.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. JORGENSEN: And I suggest to the Minister that if it happened during the time that he was the Minister - - and I'm not sure that it did. If it happened during the time that he was the Minister then he must accept that responsibility. That's all I say. Well, from the information I get I can only assume that it happened during the term of office occupied by

(MR. JORGENSON cont'd) . . . the former Minister of Highways, now the Member for Thompson. But that's beside the point, it could happen again today under another Minister and it could happen, and it probably happened in a prior government. All we have done, all the Member for Virden has done is drawn to the attention of the government, and that's the very thing that the Member for Thompson is saying, if you see something wrong, he says, why don't you draw it to my attention. This is exactly what we're doing now. We're drawing it to his attention and we're drawing it to the attention of the government some inequities that are occurring, some problems that we see, as we see them, and hoping that they'll take the kind of action that is necessary to correct those problems. Nothing more. Now, the Member for Thompson suggested that every time we see something like that happen we immediately should report it to the Minister. Sir, I don't intend to act as an 007 spy for the government. No way. But when we do see things that are wrong we have the responsibility to raise them in this House. The Member for Virden has done that. He's done it in a proper way. It's been brought to the attention of the government. We are illustrating examples of things that are happening that we feel should not happen, and the government have the responsibility to take whatever action they think is necessary in order to correct that situation.

I suggest to the government that it is wrong to centralize the departments in such a way that the opportunity for local garage men, local businessmen, are denied by those people in repairing government vehicles, in looking after the kind of work that is available from government and government contracts. All I'm suggesting, and all we are suggesting by this resolution that there is something that we believe should be looked into, and we trust that the government will assume that responsibility which is theirs, will look into the matter, and perhaps we can expect something to be done to correct this situation because I believe it is wrong, and I'm sure that members on the opposite side believe it is wrong. There's no way that the efficiency of government can be increased by greater centralization. We suggest there should be decentralization and an opportunity given to those people in the local areas to have an opportunity to bid on the business that is available in servicing of government vehicles. That's all we suggest and we hope the government will take this suggestion seriously in the context that it is given.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I am one who has been blessed to have had the opportunity to sit with the Honourable Member for Morris in this House and elsewhere. I refer to the House of Commons. And I know very well that he has the facility for taking the most mundane of earthly problems and dramatizing them into such dramatic events such as would rival the birth of a Crown Prince.

Here we have a resolution before us that alleges that the Government of Manitoba is somehow at fault in that it is not patronizing local garages in the various different towns of Manitoba. My colleague the Member for Thompson, the Minister of Public Works, who also advises me, that if anything there has been a decentralization in recent years compared to the years earlier in the 1960's with respect to the repair of motor vehicles owned by the Crown, that if anything there are more government vehicles being repaired both in government and in private garages in different parts of the province.

Now the Member for Morris gets up here and says that it is his solemn duty and responsibility to raise the problem here in this House. I quite agree. That is the function of every member of this Assembly. But I should have thought, Mr. Speaker, that that relates more to matters of broad public policy, to matters of wide-reaching concern, matters that plague the whole-bodied politic, but that this is somehow inappropriate with respect to whether or not a car got towed from Napinka to Boissevain. One would have thought that a member of the Assembly would use his common sense and write a letter to the appropriate Minister. Surely that's not asking too much.

And the same applies with respect to allegations of welfare abuse. If anybody knows of specific instances of welfare abuse, be a man, write a letter, give specifications. -- (Interjections) --

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order. Order.

MR. SCHREYER: I suggest to my honourable friends opposite that they, that instead of maundering about day after day, week after week, insinuating that there is welfare abuse, if they have specific evidence that there is, be a man, write a letter, give us the data on it. But in this -- (Interjection) -- That's fine. We look forward to hearing from you with specific

(MR. SCHREYER cont'd) . . . details. -- (Interjection) -- Mr. Speaker, the member -- and I respect the Honourable Member for Virden. I've known him as one who's sat in the House now for something close to ten years and I wasn't surprised when he had the candor and the honesty to say in introducing his resolution that this problem, and he deemed it to be still a problem, but it was one of long standing. I suggest to him that I agree that it has been a problem of long standing but if anything there has been a diminution of the problem in that we certainly see no earthly reason why a vehicle should be towed in 60, 100 miles from near some community whether it be in southern or western Manitoba, or northwestern Manitoba.

The Member for Morris gives an alleged instance of a Department of Highways vehicle being towed in even though it was -- it had a breakdown about six miles from Killarney and it was towed in to Winnipeg and repaired here although the part was not available except by telephoning or wiring Killarney and getting the part delivered from Killarney. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like the Honourable Member for Morris to give us the approximate date of that circumstance; I would like him to give all the particulars that are known to him so that we can run a check and see if in fact there was such a lack of common sense exercised, so little common sense exercised by some servant of the Crown. Frankly I doubt it, Mr. Speaker, though it may be so. I rather suspect, Mr. Speaker, that the Opposition, the Honourable Member for Morris in particular, he is not one to pass up any opportunity for taking a small incident and dramatizing it. Therefore I rather suspect that while there may be certain elements of truth to the example, the case history cited by the Honourable Member for Morris, I rather suspect, Sir, that he has embellished and garnished it with a good deal of imagination.

After all he is the same member who has introduced us to the wonders of the Little Red Hen; he is the one who has told us all about Alice in Wonderland; he is the one who two weeks ago told us about the bridegroom who sits on the edge of the bed making promises, promises. Those are his stories. The Member for Morris is one who never says in an ordinary way what can be said in an outrageous way, and whether the subject under discussion be hog prices and the relationship between the newly established hog marketing board and hog prices, whether that be the subject, or whether it be chicks, or little red hens on the side of beds, or whether it be Alice in Wonderland.

But I'm afraid that the honourable members opposite will have to do better than that because it is my definite impression, it is my definite impression that this government has been mindful of the need to try to as much as possible decentralize the activity of the Government of Manitoba among the various different regions of this province and I think one need only look to see the allocation of Department of Highways spending to see that there is a pretty good distribution among the different regions of our province. I'd be very surprised if there is any -- the slightest bit more of centralization of public vehicle repair work here in the Central Provincial Garage than was the case five years ago, or ten years ago.

So, Mr. Speaker -- (Interjection) -- Yes, I said it of course, Mr. Speaker, but the Member for Sturgeon Creek was heard to say that this government was guilty of centralization because we had introduced the concept of Unicity and Autopac and so on. I don't know what that has to do with regional decentralization, Mr. Speaker, except I do want to say this: that the concept of Unicity was introduced primarily because we could not see the sense of the maintenance of two levels of municipal government within the bosom of single urban community which is what we always believed Winnipeg, Greater Winnipeg was, and is.

With respect to Autopac, much has been said in this Chamber about Autopac. I would only say, Mr. Speaker, that public auto insurance, that the day of public auto insurance is just beginning. It is just beginning in this country and on this continent. My honourable friends may be as skeptical as they like. And with respect I say, if it's any comfort to the Member for Virden, that if it is really something which he would very much like to see happen that there be an even greater effort made to decentralize the repair of government vehicles according to common sense and the different local community garages in the different parts of the province, this is precisely what we are trying to do and we'll try even better.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The hour being 10:00 o'clock, the hour of adjournment has arrived. The House is accordingly adjourned until 10:00 o'clock Friday morning.