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**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

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THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, April 20, 1978

Time: 8:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY - AGRICULTURE

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Warren Steen: Order. Some week and a few days ago when we last left this particular Item, we left on page 10, 7. Marketing, (b) Manitoba Marketing Board: (1) Salaries — \$124,000. The Member from Ste. Rose.

MR. A.R. (Pete) ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I asked a question of the Minister in the House. The reason I asked the question in the House is that we are having some difficulty in getting answers in Committee here, and I thought perhaps if we asked the question on the floor that we might get some answers, but I was unsuccessful. The question I asked was: In regard to the checkoff on beef, the proposed checkoff, whether it has been stated by the Minister that 85 percent of the producers at the present time are supporting the proposal that the Minister puts forth setting up a special organization that would be able to checkoff. At the time the Minister indicated that he would give us these answers in Committee and I am hopeful that he will. I would like to ask him which associations are supporting this checkoff on beef?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JIM DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Chairman, I have not checked to clarify the fact that I do not know for sure whether I said that 85 percent, that would be an estimated figure, if I did say it that was an estimate. The number of organizations that have indicated their support other than the Manitoba Cow-Calf Association, the Manitoba Beef Growers. There has certainly been indication from the Manitoba Farm Bureau, from the different organizations that there is support for the checkoff.

I do believe, however, that we are discussing the Estimates of Marketing Board of which there is no beef organization that comes under that, so I think it is the \$124,000 that is in question at this time.

MR. ADAM: Where would we be able to ask this question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet on a point of order.

MR. SAMUEL USKIW (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. The Minister alleges that we can't discuss the question of a beef checkoff under this Item. The Manitoba Marketing Board is directly responsible over all marketing agencies appointed or elected by producers. Therefore, under what pretext is the Minister suggesting to us that we cannot discuss the proposed beef checkoff under this Item?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, because it is not a marketing organization, in fact, it is a proposed promotion and organization to promote and do research for the livestock industries. It does not come under the control of the Manitoba Marketing Board.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the same point?

MR. USKIW: Yes, on the same point. Then perhaps the Minister would care to clarify for us, under what authority such an agency would function, and who would be its supervisory body?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The supposed program would be an organization that would be certainly controlled by the beef producers themselves, as has been proposed. And the time that we'll discuss this will be when the legislation is introduced to the House on the same.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the same point?

MR. USKIW: Yes, Mr. Chairman, on the same point of order. The Minister of Agriculture is suggesting to us that we cannot discuss the possibility that a commodity group can organize themselves under the present Act and function under the Natural Products Marketing Act and under the supervision of the Manitoba Marketing Board. Until that is a fact by law, taking beef out of this sphere of legislative influence, I suggest to you that the Minister is wrong, that this is indeed the only place where we can discuss marketing boards with respect to any commodity, whether they are now under the umbrella of the Marketing Act or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On a point of order. The Member for Roblin.

Thursday, April 20, 1978

MR. MCKENZIE: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, before the debate goes any farther. I would like the Minister of Agriculture to give me some background on this Jackie Skelton, this organizer for the — and I'm not sure if it was the National Farmers Union or the Manitoba Farmers Union — but certain allegations have been made on a hot-line show that she's a communist, and it was documented on this hot-line show as of yesterday, that she's a card-carrying communist and has been affiliated with that type of political organization. She's in this province stirring up all kinds of problems. Now I ask you, Mr. Minister, does she represent the National Farmers Union or the Manitoba Farmers Union? — (Interjection)— No, I'm not talking to the members opposite. Let them have their day. I'm on a point of order. I am directing my question . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Order. We had a point of order and . . . —(Interjection)— Can I stop you for a moment? We are on 7.(b) Marketing Boards. The Member for Lac du Bonnet feels that the Minister should be discussing some new legislation that he's planning to introduce, and the Minister says that it should be discussed, in his opinion, when the legislation is introduced. That is my understanding of the point of order.

MR. MCKENZIE: Well, Mr. Chairman, may I further my point on the point of order? This Jackie Skelton, Mr. Janssen and others have been here talking marketing boards for the last month. Now, I asked the Minister of Agriculture, who does she represent? And what is her philosophy, or where are we going?

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

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. Honestly, Sir, what does an open-line show have to do with these estimates that we are talking about? What does an open-line show have to do with what we're discussing here?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. To the Member for Ste. Rose, you'll notice and you'll recall that I did stop the Member for Roblin and I tried to explain to him my understanding of the point of order, and he says, "I'm on that subject," and away he went again. All right, back to the Member for Lac du Bonnet on his same point of order.

MR. USKIW: Yes. On that point of order, Mr. Chairman, that until the Minister removes any commodity from the jurisdiction of this Act and from the jurisdiction of the Manitoba Marketing Board, then I feel that we have the right to discuss the question of marketing boards without any restriction, whether the commodity is now operative under that section or whether it is yet to be, or proposed to be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. The Member for Gladstone on the same point of order.

MR. FERGUSON: Thank you. I would expect we could possibly discuss this under the same criteria as we had last year with Crocus Foods, where the former Minister of Agriculture imposed a \$96,000 levy without anything from the public.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, I am of the opinion, as Chairman, that under Marketing Boards, that we have a fairly wide latitude —(Interjection)— Can I have your attention, please? I'm saying that I am of the opinion that when we are discussing this item of Marketing Boards that we should have a pretty broad latitude. If the Minister chooses not to answer a particular member's question, I think that's his business. And so, I think that we could now get back to Item 7.(b)(1) Marketing Boards, and if — all right, the last Minister of Agriculture did in fact collect some ninety-some thousand dollars, as indicated by my department, for the establishment of Crocus Foods, and was refunded, I believe. But certainly was, at his wishes, certainly collected by the Manitoba Marketing Board.

I would also like to mention at this time that we are certainly in the procedure of voting on the salaries for the Manitoba Marketing Board of \$124,000, and would feel that to be able to carry on the procedures of the Provincial Producer Marketing Board, that we should have the salaries voted for to carry on with the ones that are now in place, to talk to future legislation is not the time to do it. In fact, there will be opportunity for the members opposite to certainly discuss that when it is introduced to the House, and only think that it would be proper that, in fairness to the department and the people here, that we carry on with the Estimates.

MR. ADAM: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I disagree with the Minister on that point. This is the only opportunity that we will have to discuss beef, which comes under the Natural Products Marketing Act, and this is the only item in the Estimates that we can see that we can discuss this particular situation.

I would like to suggest to the Minister that the membership of the Cow-Calf Association is probably down so drastically, it is not anywhere near 4,000 as he suggests. It would be lucky if there is forty. It may be less than a hundred at the present time. In fact I understand that Mr. Friesen has made a statement, whether it is correct or not, that he doesn't even have a member in his own area that belongs to the Association, except his own membership.

I would like to ask the Minister then if he could give us a figure of how many members there are in

the Manitoba Beef Growers? Since he is a member himself perhaps he could give us that information.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I think in fairness I don't have the exact numbers of individuals that are members of those organizations, however, I do believe that in speaking to the Manitoba Marketing, the salaries we are speaking about here, that there is no moneys certainly in here for the proposed organization, that in fact it is not the place to debate it, that there will be an opportunity to debate it in the House. There are no funds in place to control the beef industry as was proposed a year ago. We do not propose a Marketing Board, which will be under the Manitoba Products Marketing Act, and certainly it is not the place to debate it. I have said many times we have individuals involved here that are doing a job of overseeing the Producers Marketing Boards, and we are discussing the salaries of those individuals. We cannot assume what will be taking place in future legislation at this time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just before the Member from Ste. Rose starts again. It is quite different talking about items that are within the department's day-to-day operation or trying to discuss anticipated legislation that was mentioned in the Throne Speech that the Minister hasn't introduced to the House. There are two differences and we can debate fully the Manitoba Marketing Board as far as the department's day-to-day operation is, but anticipated legislation there is no way the Minister can tell you. It is a fact of life. I think the Member for Ste. Rose hasn't finished.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, perhaps you could clarify for the Committee here, just where will this item appear in the statutes and under what section of the Department of Agriculture?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well maybe the Minister can answer.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, that will be in the proposed legislation and certainly it is very difficult to discuss it now. Mr. Chairman, there is no money allocated for that particular livestock organization and certainly it is not time to debate it.

MR. ADAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the Minister what changes does he plan as far as the Hog Marketing Board is concerned? I understand that there has been some public statements made, not to the House but to the press, and I would like to know just what changes are anticipated there?

MR. DOWNEY: I would certainly invite the Member for Ste. Rose to certainly tell me some of the statements that have been made to the press.

MR. ADAM: I am just looking at some of the items that appeared in the press.

MR. DOWNEY: I would like him to look at them and read them.

MR. ADAM: I understand that there is going to be a change in the bidding system of the hogs and so on. Could the Minister clarify that for us?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I believe that is a Hog Marketing Producer Board decision, if he reads it correctly.

MR. ADAM: Could the Minister give us any information on that? The Minister has been involved because the headlines said so here, page 62.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I would invite the Member for Ste. Rose to read how the Minister is involved if he is certainly indicating that he is. I would like to state at this time that it is not the intention of the present-day Minister of Agriculture to direct a Marketing Board which is certainly appointed to look after the duties that it set down to do, an elected board. The Producer Board, and also the Manitoba Board, s not to certainly dictate and have the heavy hand of government on it that the last Minister of Agriculture used it for.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, on a point of privilege.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, state your point of privilege.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, on a point of privilege, the Minister has just indicated that the Minister of Agriculture somehow had control of an elected body, and I would like to point out to him that there is no way, other than through the regulations that allow any group to assemble in the orderly marketing system, is there ministerial control.

I would like to ask the Minister to point out to me where, since we have had an elected board, Hog Producers Marketing Board, where there was any undue interference on the part of the Minister after the Board was elected.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I think I could clarify the statement that I did say it was the Manitoba Marketing Board, the government arm of the marketing board, that the Minister was certainly influential in the past.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To the same point?

MR. USKIW: Yes, I would then ask the Minister to clarify for me what purpose is going to be served in the sense of the continuation of that agency. Since this Minister no longer wants to have any responsibility in that connection what is going to be the purpose of carrying on with the Manitoba Marketing Board? What is the role? And is that Board responsible to the Minister, or to whom is that Board going to be responsible?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture answer.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the Manitoba Marketing Board is the overseer Board of all the producer Boards, and certainly has hearings from those individual boards and groups of people, and is to make a decision on the basis of the hearings that it has, and certainly is to recommend to the Minister what they feel is the best for the producer Boards, and the control over them. I do not say, and I do not believe that it was the Minister to direct the Boards to operate to the end that the Minister's wishes are to be . . .

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, on a point of privilege. I want the Minister to tell me one instance — because he has alleged that there has been ministerial interference in the normal operations of the Marketing Board in Manitoba — I want him to cite me an example, or I want him to withdraw that.

MR. McKENZIE: That is not a point of privilege.

MR. USKIW: It certainly is a point of privilege. Let's have the facts on the table. It's a bunch of nonsense.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, at this particular time, I do not have any particularly documented evidence, but I do have verbal indications from members in the past, from individual people, producers, that, in fact, there was interference by the past Minister of Agriculture in the operation of the Manitoba Marketing Board, and influenced what their direction was.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I ask the Minister again. He has made an allegation that there was ministerial intervention with respect to a producer-elected marketing agency. I want him to tell this committee what the nature of that interference was, or he should withdraw that statement.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I did not indicate that it was a producer-elected board that the past Minister interfered with. I did say that there was intervention by the Minister on the Manitoba Marketing Board — not the producer-elected board — the heavy hand over-top of influencing that Manitoba Marketing Board — not the producer elected board, the Manitoba Marketing Board which was under the direction of the the past Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Agriculture is suggesting to us here today that he is not going to have any jurisdiction over the Manitoba Marketing Board, and if that is so, then this item should not appear on this paper, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I, at this time as Chairman, feel that the Member for Lac du Bonnet doesn't have a point of privilege, because I feel that the Minister has answered the question. Let's go back to the item.

The Member for Roblin, on the item in the book.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Chairman, I'd like the Minister to advise the committee and the agricultural industry of this province, very quickly, has the former Deputy Minister offered his name as a candidate for the NDP Party in this forthcoming Federal election?

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, you should ask the Member for Roblin to quit making an ass of himself. He's already done it amply this evening.

MR. McKENZIE: May I ask the second question, was he defeated in that nomination?

Mr. Chairman, I'll get off the point of order and deal with the matter that is before us — Marketing Boards.

May I very skillfully ask the Minister, has he met with Rudy Usick in the last seven days? Has Rudy Usick been circulating a petition around this province dealing with marketing boards and matters that are of great concern to all the producers of this province? And has Rudy Usick, and I can't judge

if others of that political philosophy have, left the number one question on that circular, that they are circulating around to the producers, "Are you in favour of one Marketing Board for all the producers of this province?" I suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the Minister that I have had the occasion to meet with Rudy Usick on the last weekend, and when he was confronted with that question, "Are you in favour with one marketing board to represent all the producers of this province?" Rudy Usick said, "Yes, I am."

Then we asked him very skillfully, why are you circulating this meaningless petition, going around getting producers' signatures on this form, when that question is not on the petition? And that should be, in my opinion, Mr. Minister, the number one question, because all this menial stuff that they have on that petition doesn't mean nothing if, in fact, that number one question is there. So when you talk to some of these producers, and this is how they've been misled by this former Minister, and this great philosopher from Ste. Rose, and the former Deputy Minister over the years, that they got this great judgment that they represent all the people. I tell you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister, they represent maybe 2 percent of the producers — the cattle producers.

Well, let them have their wildest imaginations. Now I want to ask you some more questions on this very gut issue, Mr. Minister, because we're being badly misled in this Legislature and in this province by this Jackie Skelton. Now I ask you again — is she a cattle producer or is she a political organizer? My information tells me, what I heard on the hot line, she's a communist and she's a political organizer for the farmer's union, and that's fair ball. I understand that she doesn't come from Manitoba at all, she comes from another jurisdiction, but she's here and she used hours and hours of my days in my caucus and all my caucus colleagues, to try and tell me that she represents the cattle producers of this province. I submit to you, Mr. Minister, she does not.

Now, let's deal with the other matter on this Referendum. And we've debated yesterday for hours, and the day before, and all weekend with this crowd. I submit to you, Mr. Minister, that I am an MLA for Roblin constituency, and I'm sent here to deal with matters that come across this table or that Chamber in there, and I don't have to go back to the people in my constituency on a referendum any time. They sent me here for four years to represent them. I have the right to vote, and if they don't like me they can throw me out. Now these people that come to our caucus room and say that we don't have that right. I just ask you, Mr. Minister, "Do we as MLAs have the right to stand up and vote and represent the people of our constituency, and not on every issue that comes up go back to the people for a referendum?" I submit to you, and I want your answers, Mr. Minister, I'm very very serious, because I'm tied in the horns of a dilemma, I don't know whether to believe Jackie Skelton or you.

Do I have to go back and have a referendum in Roblin? They've sent me here three or four times, and I'm telling my people that I don't have to go back and have a referendum, because I represent them for the next four years, and if they don't like me they can throw me out of office. — (Interjections)—

Now the other thing, Mr. Minister, and I would like, with leave

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

MR. MCKENZIE: I would like with leave to go on beyond my twenty minutes if I could, Mr. Chairman, because this is a very important matter. We have the MLA from Rudy's constituency here and I would like to hear him speak about his philosophy and his wisdom in that great jurisdiction of Minnedosa.

Mr. Chairman, it really annoys me where this great thrust from Ste. Rose and this former Minister that, you know, try to brainwash us with Crocus Foods and all these dreams of that Left Wing crowd, and are holding up this Committee here for hours and hours and hours over a matter of Marketing Board. I submit to you, Mr. Minister, you should call the question and say, "Join us boys." And cattle went up four bucks yesterday. What more do we need? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I certainly appreciate the comments and we will try and answer the questions from the honourable member.

The first question, I believe, did I meet with the individual mentioned, and I did meet with him last Saturday evening. The question was not really put, I think, Mr. Chairman, whether we agreed that we wanted a marketing board but one livestock organization or a beef cattle organization not with marketing powers, but certainly an organization to represent the beef cattle in Manitoba. It was a consensus that certainly the people in Manitoba needed one organization. But, in fact, there was certainly concern that they would like to have a referendum. In fact, the need for a referendum was expressed by those individuals and certainly my answer to the fact that, do we need another vote or do the individuals involved in the livestock or the beef industry, what would we in fact vote on? And certainly it is not our desire as a government to bring in a marketing board for beef cattle, but in fact to have one livestock organization in the province which would represent the beef cattle producers. It certainly would be their own organization, funded by themselves, and controlled by themselves. And that is the question I believe. Certainly if the members opposite will carry on to pass the Manitoba Marketing Board salaries to govern the boards that are already in place, they will have an opportunity in the very near future, I can assure them to debate the proposed legislation for a Beef Cattle Organization in the province.

So I would certainly indicate at this time that if we could carry on and I would like to call for the vote on the Manitoba Marketing Board salaries and put it on the table at this time. I think it has been

debated long enough.

MR. USKIW: On a point of order. Is the Minister really telling us that there is a limit to debate on his Estimates? Mr. Chairman, the Minister just finished saying that we have debated enough and he wants to put the question. I ask whether this Minister wants to limit debate on his Estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You'll notice — to the Member for Lac du Bonnet — just a minute, I'm answering the Member for Lac du Bonnet. What I try to do as Chairman is keep a tally of people who indicate by a show of hands that they would like to enter the debate. What I also try to do is when one member starts a short question and answer period with the Minister is to continue with that particular member. I am not going to call for the vote on the issue because the Member for Emerson has been waiting very patiently to talk, and the Member for Lac du Bonnet was the next person on the list.

MR. MCKENZIE: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm still on the same point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, on the point of order.

MR. MCKENZIE: On the same point of order I just ask the members of this Committee, is Sam Uskiw, or the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose, or — I apologize for naming him — the Member for Lac du Bonnet, are they ever going to change their minds? Never. They'll stay here and keep us all summer debating philosophy. My gosh, we've had that jurisdiction representing in this province for eight years, and they know what the answer — they got the answer loud and clear.

The other thing, and the one that really hurts me, I never thought that the Deputy Minister, the former Deputy Minister, would offer his name as a — I never thought he was political, he's now offered his name as a candidate, he was defeated, now what more does the Member for Lac du Bonnet and the Member for Ste. Rose want? They've lost the election. Their Deputy Minister has offered his name as a candidate. He's been defeated. And I submit to you, Mr. Chairman, the vote be called.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, let's get back to the item. The Member for Emerson.

MR. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Is it not true that both the president of the cow-calf operation jointly with the president of the beef growers issued a statement in the Co-operator a week ago last Friday indicating their support for a proposed check, volunteer check-off system, and now, to set the record straight, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Ste. Rose accused the president of the cow-calf operation of Manitoba the other day of having 3 head of cattle, and I want to set the record straight, as I did in the House the other day, he has over 300 head.

Now, in view of that kind of a statement, and, in view of the fact that the former Minister of Agriculture totally reversed his position with the broiler operators before the election till after the election, I'm just wondering what kind of validity there is in the criticism that he presents. — (Interjection)— It's a complete reversal, Mr. Minister, and I would agree with you that actually I think the debate is sort of, you know, it could go on for months and be very meaningless because I don't think they're qualified to really criticize some of this because they do a complete reversal and talk about things that they do not have any facts on — like from 3 to 300 difference in head of stock; from yes, we're going to sign the National Marketing Board, no, we're not after the election, this type of thing . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the Member for Emerson, in regard to the press release, it could be quite true. I think I did read that press release and so I suppose that it is true. I know that they've certainly indicated their support as have many individuals, and certainly in the indication that I've had from the former administration's inquiries held across the province that the Manitoba beef producers were desirous of a self run organization representing the beef industry so — (Interjection)— The Member for Ste. Rose says they have always been, so it is now the intent of the Progressive Conservative Government to certainly carry on and listen to the producers in the province for what has not happened in the past eight years. We're listening to them, working with them, instead of certainly having the heavy hand of government dictating to them what would certainly satisfy the whims of their socialist ideas. So I think that it is time that we did proceed and debate the Marketing Board salaries.

In answer to the Member for Lac du Bonnet who said I did call for or would like to see the end of the debate, no, I certainly welcome all the debate on the Estimates that are in this coming year. I certainly look forward to providing programs with this money for people in the agricultural industry. I think it is time that they participated as farm producers and farm organizations to the point where they aren't only, as I said just a few minutes ago, dictated to, but certainly participate in this one, and the most important industry in the Province of Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet's turn.

Thursday, April 20, 1978

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Member for Roblin amuses me to no end because on this very issue he suggests that we are the elected people, elected to the Legislature to make decisions and therefore he is not interested in holding referendums on every question that comes up. I would like to remind the Member for Roblin of a meeting that took place in Grandview during the discussions, during the discussions on the last referendum, on the last question put to a referendum; namely, whether we should have a producer marketing board or not. And it so happened that the Member for Roblin was supposed to be the guest speaker at that particular meeting, Mr. Chairman, until a few people found out that I was in Dauphin, and decided to invite me to participate in that meeting. Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out to the Member for Roblin, who has escaped us for the moment, that the guest speaker turned out to be about a two minute speaker, and that the Minister of Agriculture of the day, addressed a large crowd of about 200 or 300 people, outlining the options that were then available for the people in that referendum, not dictatorship, but a referendum on the question.

The Member for Roblin stated, in his two minutes that he took up of that meeting, that he was for marketing boards if that was what the people wanted. If that's what the people wanted. And of course the referendum was to determine whether that is what the people wanted. Now he comes here and he suggests that e don't need a referendum, we know, after we had a very similar proposal go down to defeat in 1974, exactly this proposal, for a beef check-off to finance a beef organization in this province.

A MEMBER: It was a marketing board.

MR. USKIW: It was not a marketing board, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. The Member for Lac du Bonnet has the floor.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, there were two referendums for the benefit . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. The Member for Lac du Bonnet has tue floor.

MR. USKIW: For the benefit of our newcomers, there were two referendums. One was in 1974, and that particular referendum was put together, not by the department, but by the Beef Growers Association of Manitoba. It was their terminology, their vote, and the department helped them carry it out, as is the responsibility of the department through the Manitoba Marketing Board. That question did not carry. There was opposition to it at that time, overwhelming opposition at that time to that proposal. As a matter of fact, very few people voted on it.

Subsequently, Mr. Chairman, we had another vote going all the way with a beef marketing board. That too was overwhelmingly defeated. So we had two referendums, one for a beef check-off, whose sole purpose was to finance a beef organization in Manitoba — that was the limits of their terms of reference — to finance the association. That did not carry. That went down to defeat.

A MEMBER: Not overwhelmingly.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I believe there were roughly 5,900 votes that voted for that measure, out of a registration of about 7,900. I may be out somewhat. Not very much. We have staff here that may recall the figures, Mr. Chairman. I suggest to the Minister that we have the secretary of the Marketing Board here and he should ask him whether he could clarify for us just what the results of that referendum were. I would appreciate that contribution from the Minister if he can —(Interjection)— the first referendum, yes, and he will find out that that vote did not carry. Not only were the people disinterested and didn't bother registering for it, but those that voted were far short of their majority to have it established. So we have had two opportunities in an effort to determine what the beef growers in this province wanted. Both of them went down to defeat, Mr. Chairman.

If that was not the history, then I would not so much question the method through which this Minister is now introducing the beef check-off. But Mr. Chairman, this Minister wants to do it by legislation. He wants to legislate, he wants to use the heavy arm of government to force people to belong to an association whether they want to or not, and he is afraid of a referendum. If he was not afraid of a referendum, he could have one tomorrow. Mr. Chairman, this Minister is afraid to put this question to the beef producers of this province, knowing that it was defeated once, and the likelihood is that it would be defeated again.

MR. DRIEDGER: It would not.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Emerson says it would not. I suggest to him that he should try and find out. Because if he is right, then we are all satisfied, because the majority of producers would have made a decision democratically. It would have not been something that was forced upon them by the government of this province. That is at least a measure that should be undertaken by this Minister who claims, Mr. Chairman, to believe in a much freer society. Here we have the contradiction, the irony, that we're going to have a freer society, but he is not going to allow the producers a chance to make a decision for themselves, despite the fact that they had voted on a similar measure, and voted against it.

Thursday, April 20, 1978

Mr. Chairman, there is one other irony here, and that is a very tragic thing for our society today. That is that not only is this Minister denying the producers to make a decision today, but he is going to take the possibility of producers ever setting up a marketing board in this province under this legislation, by removing beef as a commodity under the Natural Products Marketing Act. Mr. Chairman, that is a basic discriminatory action against one commodity group. That is discrimination of the worst kind. We have it in a federal statute too. It is not what you would call a democratic approach, because I would have assumed that all parties that believe in a democratic society would at least want to allow the producers of any commodity to make that determination. But here we have a government that is going to foreclose that opportunity. The reason they want to foreclose it, Mr. Chairman, is because they don't trust the election of officers. Yes, this Minister suggests, Mr. Chairman, that when he sets up this beef organization by legislation, that there will be an election of a board of directors. But Mr. Chairman, he doesn't trust the motives of people that will be running for that office. And therefore, Mr. Chairman, he wants to preclude in advance the possibility that that board of directors may go to the Minister of Agriculture, may go to the Manitoba Marketing Board and say, we want to extend our powers. We now want to go beyond just funding an organization. We want to do something in the area of marketing. This Minister wants to preclude them from that opportunity.

Mr. Chairman, this is absolute hypocrisy. It's undemocratic, it's not worthy of a democratic system, whatever. It's an intrusion in the affairs of the beef producers of this province who should have the right to determine that particular question by a referendum, in particular because they have already voted on it once, and they have turned it down. Therefore that makes it all the more important that we give them an opportunity to decide the question again.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I'm certainly pleased that the former Minister of Agriculture went back into history, and certainly I would like to just go back and enlighten him briefly on some of the history that did take place in the province of Manitoba, in rural Manitoba. I certainly don't think you have to look too hard — as of last October 11th, certainly to see the decision that was made by the rural people of Manitoba on how they accepted his particular philosophy and his way of certainly putting forward the programs and legislating and his way of working with farm people, and certainly the Department of Agriculture.

I would like to also compliment the Member from the Roblin constituency, when it was brought out that he was in fact invited to speak to a group of individuals in his constituency, his constituency, and that the Minister of the day was certainly appraised himself to come along and intrude into the meeting and sell the program to the individuals . . .

MR USKIW: Mr. Chairman, on a point of privilege.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, on a point of privilege. The Minister of Agriculture has suggested to this Committee that the former Minister intruded upon a meeting. Mr. Chairman, in my comments, I indicated that I had an invitation from the people who sponsored the meeting. —(Interjection)— That's correct, I was on the radio program. —(Interjection)— No, no, that's not the point. I was asked if I would be prepared to attend and I offered to attend. It meant an extension of my time in that area but, Mr. Chairman, it was not an intrusion, it was an invitation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I do apologize if the member did say that he did offer to attend. I misinterpreted it that he intruded. I do apologize. He did in fact invite himself to the meeting.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, on a point of privilege.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet, on the same point.

MR. USKIW: No, we're not accepting that Mr. Chairman. That's nonsense. Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Agriculture has no basis for his accusation. I have indicated that I had been invited to a meeting at Grandview and that is the sum total of it. I don't appreciate, Mr. Chairman, the kind of sidetracking, the kind of commentary around this table which is, by the way, typical of the Conservative members since they have been the government, very typical.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I will go back to the point where he did say that he was . . .

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, just on a point of order, I am finding it difficult to hear the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister for Lac du Bonnet for all sorts of interruptions by other members around the table.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well, it's been that way all night; you should have joined us earlier. The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, for clarification for the Member for Selkirk, I do believe it is the "Member" for Lac du Bonnet, and not the "Minister" if I heard him wrong, because it is difficult to hear.

I just would like to clarify that I did think that I heard the Member for Lac du Bonnet say that the Member for Roblin was invited as guest speaker and in fact he found his way to the meeting by invitation after the individuals knowing that he was in the area, whether that be classified as intrusion or self-invitation, but he appeared at the meeting. The meeting, in fact, was certainly in regard to the implementation of a compulsory marketing board by the government of the day and the Member for Roblin spoke certainly with his philosophy and he, in two minutes, certainly had the following of, well, I guess in proportion to the province, he had 77 percent of the people supporting his ideas. The Minister of the day spoke for quite a long time, as indicated by the member himself, and he picked up approximately 23 percent of the people.

So I do think that we have to give a lot of credit to the Member for Roblin, in fact that in two minutes he certainly could say what the last Minister of Agriculture said in many minutes.

So we will carry on from there to some of the facts that were brought out, that in fact in that 1974 referendum, there were seven thousand and some voters of which approximately five thousand and some voted on a promotion program for the beef producers in Manitoba, that at that time, which was in fact not particularly in line with the proposal that is today, but it was handled by the Manitoba Producers Marketing Board, or The Natural Products Marketing Act, which in fact is not our proposal. Our proposal is to remove it from The Natural Products Marketing Act, which in fact was not voted on at that time but was indicated on March of 1977 that 77 percent of the fourteen thousand and some eligible to vote, of which twelve thousand and some defeated that marketing board philosophy by 77 percent.

Let us go back a little further into history which the individual talks about the implementation of programs. Certainly the records show that when the compulsion of marketing hogs through the indication that the Minister had said previous, that he did not certainly influence the Producer Marketing Board, I do believe it was his direction that all hogs in the Province of Manitoba go through on a compulsory basis through the Manitoba Producer Hog Marketing Board, that in fact it was legislated or certainly compelled by him to do so, that they did not have a voluntary marketing system but in fact he instructed them that that was what they had to do. And from that time forward, Mr. Chairman, the production of hogs in the province has certainly declined. I would like to say that probably there are more reasons than the compulsory, but that was one of the reasons that certain producers quit the hog marketing business because it was the heavy hand of government getting directly involved in the marketing of the producer's product.

I think we can look at all the commodities that the individual opposite was involved in and certainly did not have the complete desires of those people producing those products. When he talks about intrusion by himself, I think I have indicated one particularly good case and that's the Producer Hog Marketing Board where he did influence what happened with that particular board.

I would also like to say, Mr. Chairman, that we are at this time not certainly dictating to the farm people and the farm organizations. We are discussing things with them and when he says, he makes a comment that we are going to remove that — I do not say that we are going to remove that. I do believe that we will discuss it. This is what the Manitoba Marketing Board is to discuss with them. That is why we are certainly asking for the \$124,000 for wages for the individuals who are working for the government at this time and controlling the producer marketing boards or in fact working with them as the overseer body of them and certainly relates to the Minister of Agriculture.

So I think, Mr. Chairman, when we get back to the salaries involved that we are debating, the people who are employed by the Manitoba Marketing Board, it is a structure in place and we certainly need the people to carry on with the objectives of the producer boards.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina is next on my list.

MR. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have two questions. First of all, can the Minister of Agriculture indicate the nature of the vote for a beef checkoff in 1974? Was not the vote as to whether the producers were in favour of a compulsory checkoff and today we are talking about a voluntary checkoff?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I have said this many times, that when the legislation is placed on the table, there will be a good opportunity to debate it. I do believe, and I can state at this time that the main difference in that particular referendum is the fact that the beef producers organization would have been placed and remained under The Natural Products Marketing Act which in fact at any time the government of the day or any day would have been able to implement at their wishes, a compulsory marketing board, which in fact the 1977 vote pointed out very clearly that it was not the desire of the beef producers of Manitoba to have any need for any compulsion of a marketing board or any danger of it until in fact it is debated through the Legislative Assembly in the Province of Manitoba.

MR. ORCHARD: The second question: I find some of the discussion regarding marketing boards, particularly some of the comments from the Member for Lac du Bonnet rather strange to follow. In his earlier statements both here and in the House, he indicates that contrary to what the Member for Emerson would indicate was an election promise or an election statement that he would sign the poultry marketing agreement, and now, because of some event, maybe on October 11th, he has changed his heart and all of a sudden is finding Manitoba participation in the National Poultry Marketing Agency somewhat abhorrent. I find his position rather untenable when it comes to the vote on Manitoba marketing boards because if the Poultry Marketing Board turned into a money press or a printing press to make money for the major corporations in poultry production in Manitoba via the marketing board, I find the Member for Lac du Bonnet is going to have a great deal of difficulty voting "yes" to an appropriation for \$124,000 worth of salaries supporting Manitoba marketing boards when in fact they can turn into this evil and very despised, according to what he has said over the last couple of months, method of making corporations the dominant force in food production. If that is where the member's logic lies and how he finds marketing boards to be quite evil now when he is not in power and doesn't have to make the decisions, I think he is going to really be tearing himself apart when it comes to voting the appropriation of \$124,000 for such a corporate-mongering type of an organization.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose is next.

MR. ADAM: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I was prepared a half-hour ago to move away from this particular topic but, Sir, you allowed the Member for Roblin to bring it back in, to the delight of the Minister of Agriculture who kept it going for another half-hour. So I would just like to say, Sir, that since you have allowed it back into the discussion here, perhaps we should carry on a little longer.

I would like to say that for the last eight years we have heard the favourite cliché of the Conservative party and that is, "freedom of choice." That is one of their clichés. Now we find, Sir, that the Minister does not follow this very very favourable cliché that the Conservatives have been using for so many years, this freedom of choice. The checkoff, as I see it, will be compulsory; it will be automatic, we are told. I have all the press and the statements that the Minister has made himself at the Manitoba Stock Growers meetings that he attends quite regularly. I want to say that it is supposed to be an automatic checkoff of the shipper or the producer's returns. Therefore it becomes compulsory. It will necessitate spending time and money to try and ask for your money back again, stamps and time and money. And it will be, of course, worthwhile for a large shipper to write in for his refund but I suspect that many small shippers will not bother with it so you will end up with the large shippers asking for their refunds and the small shippers not.

Now, I would like to ask, you know, the Minister is trying to leave the impression that he has unanimous support, or almost unanimous support for this kind of a proposal. I suggest to him that if that is the case, he would not have the Member for Roblin, the Member for Birtle-Russell and he himself out in the country drumming up support for this kind of a proposal if he was so sure of his ground. I understand the Canadian agriculture movement is also opposed to this proposal. I suggest to you, Sir, very likely, I think the independent livestock producers are also opposed. So you have two organizations already, I believe, that are in opposition and I believe also that the majority of the members of the Manitoba Cow-Calf Association are also opposed, except for the leader who has been seconded from the Manitoba Beef Growers.

A MEMBER: Idle speculation.

MR. ADAM: There's no speculation about that whatsoever. I am suggesting to you, Sir, there is more than what meets the eye behind this and I would suggest to the Minister that you would be well-advised to have the vote on it because it was turned down in 1974. If he in fact believes in freedom of choice that we have heard so much about from the Conservative members, well, here is his chance to prove and practise what he preaches, or practise what he preached.

But getting back to this hog marketing, I am reading from an article here . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The subject is Marketing Boards. As long as you mention marketing boards at least once every five minutes, I won't rule you out of order. You know, if we don't have a little fun in this Committee, we will never keep a quorum; they will all want to go back into the other one.

The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: The Minister's name is mentioned throughout this article here, and one of the paragraphs indicates that the processors — the meat processors say that hog prices are too high in Manitoba, and I'm just wondering, does the Minister subscribe to this since his name is all throughout this article?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the mention is that my name is mentioned all through a newspaper article — I certainly have no control over what people print in newspapers and I do not —

(Interjections)— could I have order please, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. Chairman, they did, in fact, write my name in the paper and I certainly do not believe that hog prices are too high, and I don't believe that, if the article were read, I never indicated or said it in anything that I indicated to that meeting, and certainly would look forward to improved prices in all commodities in agriculture for the large and small producers, the individuals who are certainly the major part of the Province of Manitoba and add to the basic industry in the province. So I do not believe that anywhere in that article, that I have indicated that that is the case, but certainly I do not have any control over what is written and I do not believe that it is stated that I have said that, and I did not say it, and in fact I would like to see continued strong prices for all agriculture commodities.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Emerson is next on my list.
The Member for Rock Lake.

MR. HENRY EINARSON: Mr. Chairman, I was late coming in, and from the debate I have heard here tonight dealing with the Manitoba Marketing Board, and insofar as the particular Bill that the Minister is going to bring into the House, I would suggest that that would be the place to debate that so far as that is concerned, and I think what we are concerned about is the salaries for those people, as the Minister indicated, in regards to the Manitoba Marketing Board. If there is some area of complaints about the way that Marketing Board is operating, I would suggest the members would be justified in making some comments or even criticisms. But I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that we should get on with Estimates, and deal with the subject at hand.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(b)(1)—pass — The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, in listening to the Minister respond to my last contribution, I find it rather interesting that he has not been fully informed either by his colleagues or even by the staff who were in charge of the particular referendum in 1977.

The Minister expressed the view that his colleague, the Member for Roblin, and I were somehow on opposite ends on that question. As a matter of fact, in the time that I took at that particular meeting, I didn't make one statement that supported the proposal that the producers were voting on. All of the meetings that were held by myself, in that particular campaign, had to do with explaining to the producers the question that was before them — why are we having a referendum, what is the meaning, what will be the meaning of the results of that referendum in that the decision was their own.

The departmental resources were not used in promoting the concept. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, the departmental people were advised to stay away from it, because it was controversial, and that we didn't want to have the department accused of having taken any particular position on the question. —(Interjections)—

MR. HYDE: Who mailed out all the pamphlets?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, order please. The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: The department, Mr. Chairman, at no time, suggested to the producers that they should vote for the measure, they merely illustrated the reason for the question being put, the history of the research that went into the formulation of the question, and that the decision was purely the decision of the beef producers of this province. And that was the role that I played in any meetings that I was invited to, and in particular the one in Grandview. At no time, in that evening, did I suggest to anyone that they should vote for that particular measure, and so the Minister of Agriculture should note that for any future debate, that it was not a question of the Conservatives with one point of view, and the New Democrats with another point of view. Logically, I think it's fair to say, that, yes, as an individual, I believe in the concept of orderly marketing of agricultural products, but I also believe that where there is no consensus, no visible consensus on the question, that that can best be decided by the people who are going to be affected by it, and that is why we had two referendums. Because it was my view, in spite of the fact that the committee of farmers — committee of twelve — recommended that we implement the measure without a referendum, despite that recommendation, Mr. Chairman, it was my decision to have a referendum because I didn't believe . . .

MR. DOWNEY: Not on the recommendation.

MR. USKIW: Oh yes, because I didn't believe, Mr. Chairman, that there was enough consensus out in the countryside on such a fundamental change in marketing of beef in Manitoba. That is the reason for the referendum.

It would have been much easier, on the part of the government, to have gone ahead with the recommendations of the committee — much easier, Mr. Chairman, much easier — because the committee did recommend that we should move ahead with a partial approach until we had an elected board, and at that stage we could go all the way with a full-fledged marketing board operation. And since, Mr. Chairman, we were moving on that question from Day 1, with an elected Board, that we weren't even proposing to appoint an interim Board, a provisional Board, that it was to be elected from Day 1, therefore the total question was put and all its ramifications spelled out. None

of the implications were hidden, Mr. Chairman. They were spelled out very precisely so that people would have an opportunity to make a decision based on all of the facts that were available at that particular time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Minnedosa. What's your point of order?

MR. DAVID BLAKE: Mr. Chairman, we have discussed this thing in the last half hour, this same point has been discussed over and over and over again. I suggest that the former Minister of Agriculture is filibustering this particular Item, and surely the committee can move along to some more important business as far as the department Estimates are concerned. We've listened to this story over and over and over again, it has become a broken record, and I know we are not going to stifle debate in this committee, but it has become absolutely ludicrous to sit here and listen to the former Minister and the Member for Ste. Rose repeat the same argument over and over and over again. They got their answer in the rural areas last October 11th, and they refuse to accept it.

Now, I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that we try and move things along to some more productive debate than what we've been hearing in the past half-hour or hour.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet on a point of order.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, in my twelve, thirteen or fourteen sessions, I can't remember, I don't recall ever, Mr. Chairman, where a member of the Assembly has suggested that there should be a termination of debate. Never, Mr. Chairman. I find that appalling, that this government is now trying to stifle debate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Selkirk on the same point.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, I'm amazed with the Member for Minnedosa, because like the Member for Lac du Bonnet in the past eight years, I do not recall of any instance where there has been an attempt to terminate Estimate review with regard to any department. All it demonstrates to me is that the Member for Lac du Bonnet, in his logical fashion, must very well be getting to the Member for Minnedosa, and the Member for Minnedosa must be commencing to feel some embarrassment by some of the inconsistent and illogical positions that he and his party have been accepting.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For the benefit of the Member for Selkirk, I have been as fair as I can to everybody here and I've tried once in an hour and fifteen minutes to put the question, so I am not trying to stop the debate.

The Member for Lac du Bonnet back on the subject.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I would now like to ask the Minister of Agriculture, how does he interpret the role of the Manitoba Marketing Board? What is their function? Who do they report to? Who gives them direction?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, Number 1, they report to the Minister of Agriculture; their function is to oversee the Producer Marketing Board, that's Number 2; what was the third question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet. Would you repeat your questions please?

MR. USKIW: What is their role?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, to oversee the Producer Marketing Board.

I'd like to speak to one other thing. I think, of course, to go back to the Manitoba Marketing Board, the purpose is to pass the salaries of the individuals who are involved in the Manitoba Marketing Board. I would just like to bring forward what the Member for Emerson certainly clearly indicated some days ago, what in fact the last Minister of Agriculture in the Province of Manitoba and in the last administration had said at a meeting prior the last election, that in fact if he were elected, he would certainly be signatory to the National Broiler Agreement, and in fact has completely reversed his position since not winning in the last election as government. So, I think, some of the things that he is indicating here, if it holds true to what is on the record, certainly brought forward by the Member for Emerson, I think we have to question some of the things that are certainly being stated by the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I gather, and I would like the Minister to correct me, that it's his interpretation that the Manitoba Marketing Board reports to him. Is it his intention that the Manitoba Marketing Board follow any policies laid down by the Government of Manitoba?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, as I've indicated, it is certainly the responsibility of the Manitoba Marketing Board to report to the Minister of Agriculture.

Thursday, April 20, 1978

MR. USKIW: I asked the Minister, is it the responsibility of the Marketing Board to follow the policies laid down by the Government of Manitoba and in particular, the Minister of Agriculture?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, as I have indicated, it is their responsibility to report to the Minister of Agriculture and work under the regulations that are laid down for them, and advise the Minister on what they recommend.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I now ask the Minister whether that isn't undue interference on the part of the Minister in presuming to have the Manitoba Marketing Board report to him, and to take direction from him from time to time.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I did not say that. I said it was the responsibility of the Manitoba Marketing Board to report to the Minister.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Minister indicated that the Board would have to function in accordance with the regulations provided to them by the Minister of Agriculture, and the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

I now ask him whether they are going to be exempt from having that kind of surveillance from the Minister and the Lieutenant-Governor in Council?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, no they are not.

MR. USKIW: Well then, Mr. Chairman, I would like the Minister to answer me why he suggested that the same role that was played by the last Minister was, indeed, a dominant role and a dictatorial role over the Manitoba Marketing Board?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I believe it is very easy to clarify that they were acting under the regulations as laid down by an Order in Council, in fact, they will not be trying to promote the philosophy of government but, in fact, acting under the regulations of government.

MR. USKIW: Can the Minister of Agriculture cite to me, Mr. Chairman, an example of any change in the terms of reference that the Manitoba Marketing Board now operates under compared to what it did six months ago? Come on, tell us what the changes are. A bunch of nonsense.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I would say that it would be quite fair to say there are no proposed regulatory changes, no changes in that regard and certainly as I have said the Manitoba Marketing Board or the overseer board of the Producer Marketing Boards listening to recommendations from those Producer Marketing Boards, and in fact if the Manitoba Marketing Board is doing the job, it will recommend to the Minister what probably are the desires of the Producer Marketing Boards and then could be acted upon. It is not in fact in reverse as I have indicated the previous Minister has done, it was in the reverse that the philosophy of that previous Minister was to dictate to the Board and to the Producer Boards what his desires were.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: On a point of privilege, Mr. Chairman, this Minister only a few moments ago failed to produce any shred of evidence to suggest that. I asked him to do so, and, Mr. Chairman, this Minister corrected himself on a very similar statement here this evening. Now he repeats it again. Mr. Chairman, I don't believe that this Minister knows what he is saying here tonight.

Secondly, I want to ask him whether it is his intention to allow the Manitoba Marketing Board to function independently of the Minister of Agriculture, so that there would be no ministerial interference.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I have stated many times, I do not feel that when he is questioning the credibility of the present day Minister of Agriculture when we have evidence of his. . .

MR. USKIW: Well show us the evidence.

MR. DOWNEY: Well I have pointed out the interference with the Producer Marketing Board, in fact with his direction to certainly make it a compulsory marketing board, that all producers had to market their hogs through the Producer Marketing Board No. 1. It is also in regard to the last statement that I have stated many times that it is the Manitoba Marketing Board that recommends to the Minister the desires of the Producer Marketing Board and the Minister at that time can certainly make the final decision but not in reverse — the Minister tell the Marketing Board to tell the Producer Board of his particular philosophy and desires and I think I have stated that many times and certainly would hope that we could carry on and certainly discuss the salaries that are before us in the Manitoba Marketing Board.

MR. USKIW: You don't want to discuss substance, you just want to talk about salaries. We're talking about much more than salaries. Mr. Chairman, it is very amusing to watch the Minister try to squirm out of some of his own statements.

I would like to now deal with the comments made by a number of people here and in particular I believe the Member for Emerson having to do, and indeed the Minister made some comments with regard to this, having to do with a meeting held during the election campaign with broiler producers, wherein it is alleged that I had committed the government to signing a national broiler marketing plan. Now, Mr. Chairman, that was not so. We had a meeting in Grunthal, there were a good number of producers there, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DRIEDGER: Point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Emerson.

MR. USKIW: What's the point of order, Mr. Chairman?

MR. DRIEDGER: I wonder, in view of what the Minister just said, can I bring witnesses to substantiate his statements here, or how do I substantiate it. Right here now, it's word against word, this type of thing and I would like to bring in the people that he talked with and have him substantiate the statements that he made here. That he promised that he would sign it before December and after the election he stood up and the announcement was made by the present Minister of Agriculture, he said he would have never signed it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would think that's a disagreement of opinion rather than a point of order. Back to the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I tried to illustrate for members opposite but perhaps I shouldn't fault them, they haven't been around that long and they don't know how things function. But they will learn, Mr. Chairman, after they have made a number of errors, they will learn how the system functions.

Mr. Chairman, at that particular meeting, I was asked why I was refusing to sign the national broiler marketing plan. Not that I went there to tell them I was going to sign it, I was called there to explain why I was not signing it, Mr. Chairman. And the opportunity to sign it, Mr. Chairman, was in July at the Victoria Conference of Ministers. And at that time, we decided that we would not sign that agreement. And we raised a couple of objections; we raised a number of objections, but two were very important to us. One was, that within the plan was a provision that would give consideration to provincial self-sufficiency, an argument that we fought in Ottawa with the Federal Government when they tried to bring that measure into their legislation when the original legislation was passed in the House of Commons, and were successful in deleting that reference from the National Act, Mr. Chairman. We were not about to compromise our position with respect to one commodity after having fought for so long to make sure that that is not the way in which we are going to share the Canadian market with respect to any commodity. So that was one provision that was unacceptable to us and we were not prepared to sign that document, as long as that provision was there.

The other one had to do with a reference to quota values and we were not prepared to sign a national marketing agreement for broilers that spelled out any possibility of quota values because, Mr. Chairman, it is our interpretation that that in the end results in increasing the cost of production and making the industry less competitive and therefore we would have never signed the document that would allow, that in fact not only allow but would enshrine in the agreement a measure for quota values. Those are two very serious objections on our part.

The meeting in Grunthal, I had indicated, and again, we spent about an hour or two together, I had indicated that we could not sign the agreement as it was presently worded. Secondly, had we been successful to change the wording, I wouldn't have wanted to allow an agreement to take place that would provide for a monopolistic situation, as it existed then in Manitoba to continue. And the example I raise has to do with poultry, with eggs, rather. When we set up the Egg Marketing Board in Canada on a national basis and indeed in Manitoba, Mr. Chairman, we asked the big people to step aside.

A MEMBER: I don't doubt that.

MR. USKIW: That's right, we did. We put a limit of 25,000 hens on a unit of production so that we would have more units of production in Manitoba and so, Mr. Chairman, that the industry would not be concentrated in the hands of a few people. Mr. Chairman, I can tell you I have great compliments to give to Labatt's and Ogilvie's. Real compliments, Mr. Chairman. I'll tell you why. Because they were about the largest egg producer in Manitoba, and their man came here, I believe his name was Peter Arnold who is now deceased, the late Peter Arnold, and he said to me, "Mr. Minister, we respect what you are doing, we don't want to fight with your government, perhaps we should sell our barns off to the producers and we should be in the processing end, but we shouldn't be in direct production." That's really the co-operation we had from Labatt's which I commend them for, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I am not prepared to support a monopoly measure for Canada Packers as this Minister is proposing to do; for Champ Foods, as this Minister is prepared to; for Friendly Family Farms, which this Minister is prepared to do. Eleven production units happen to represent 48 percent of our production. Forty-eight percent of our production by eleven producers in this province, Mr. Chairman, and they call that farming.

A MEMBER: Is that true facts, or is that the same as Grunthal?

MR. USKIW: Those statistics are about six months old. That legislation, the Natural Products Marketing Act was never put on the books to give increased monopoly power to people who already had monopoly power. That was put on the books to provide for bargaining position for many producers producing small or average amounts of production per farm, not, Mr. Chairman, to enhance the position of large corporations, national corporations, and multi-national corporations. It's a perverted exercise to say the least. It's a measure that should be stricken off the books, Mr. Chairman. And if this Minister wants to deny a commodity group an opportunity to participate under the Natural Products Marketing Act, it shouldn't be beef that should be taken out, it should be broilers. If any commodity should not come under the jurisdiction of this legislation it should be broilers, because that's where the industry is concentrated, fully integrated. It is not owned and operated by ordinary farmers outside of a handful of people, but is controlled and monopolized by huge corporations and they don't need the protection of the state, Mr. Chairman. They don't need the protection of the state and that's what this Minister is trying to do. He is trying to give protection to the big people and he is removing it from the little people. He is denying the little people an opportunity from ever getting together to use that piece of legislation to their advantage. And that is why, Mr. Chairman, we take issue on this particular appropriation.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I will just comment briefly because I think that the past Minister is certainly trying to point out his credibility with the farm people and the way agriculture has gone in the last eight years in Manitoba, and I don't think the farm people certainly did not let him down in the Province of Manitoba or his government on October 11th. They in fact told him how credible they were with the farm people and certainly I continue to look forward to many years of prosperity in the agricultural community working with the farm people and not dictating to them. So I think if it's credibility that he wants to argue, they told him last October 11th how credible he was.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina is next on my list.

MR. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just before we pass this, I would like to commend the Member for Lac du Bonnet for wiggling around and making sure that he almost denied saying what he said at Grunthal but not quite denying it. I would also like to point out to the Member for Lac du Bonnet that in his comments that the recommendation for a marketing board came from a twelve person group, I think the record must show that that twelve man group or twelve person group was a group appointed by the former Minister of Agriculture, not a duly-elected group, and with potential true representation of the farming committee and the beef industry, that those appointees could have fallen victim, and I only say this in pure speculation, could have fallen victim to the political bent of the former Minister of Agriculture and his desires for marketing boards despite the fact that he has admitted tonight that they are evil.

The second thing I would like to point out, that the Member for Lac du Bonnet in his term as Minister of Agriculture and particularly in the referendum vis-a-vis the Marketing Board of some year and a half ago, or a year ago, although he says today that he maintained a completely neutral stance, strictly providing the information to whomever wanted that information, I only have one comment to make. That being that in my area, the only meeting that the Minister of Agriculture of that time attended was a meeting called by one Rudy Usi8 who was definitely in favour of the marketing board and he had the Minister of Agriculture there to provide information to the meeting. But, when requested to come to an a-didate meeting or a meeting of the people opposed to the marketing board, he was somewhat scarce and hard to come by. He would not go to a meeting that was against the marketing board.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, on a point of privilege.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet. What is your point of privilege?

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, all of the invitations were accepted from whichever side they came, I was prepared to attend every meeting. I couldn't attend two in the same night if there were any, and I don't recall any that were turned down. . I don't recall any. I recall a lack of invitation to a number of meetings from the anti-group. Yes, I can recall that, Mr. Chairman, but I don't recall an incident where there was an invitation where I was not prepared to go, not once.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet again, please. I mean the Member for Pembina, sorry.

MR. ORCHARD: I wouldn't like to check back in the former Minister of Agriculture's invitation book

because I am quite sure that it won't show invitations that were declined or if it did, it might not indicate that he went — if he had a choice of two meetings to go to, one that was an all-candidate and one that was a Rudy Usick meeting, where he might have been? I'll leave that up to the Minister to decide but I fully suspect it would be a Rudy Usick meeting in favour of the vote.

Furthermore, the information that came out with the ballot, that non-bias piece of information, I believe some three pages in length, had every indication that a marketing board was the Messiah to the cattle industry. It was written by the Department of Agriculture under the authorization of the Minister of Agriculture and if it wasn't, then he didn't know what his department was doing. If a three-page document that went out saying all the advantages of a marketing board did not indicate that the Minister of Agriculture was very pro marketing board for beef, then I suggest that he took 77 percent of the beef producers in Manitoba for fools that they weren't, because they could interpret the meaning, the full message that the Minister of Agriculture delivered during his attendance of meetings and during his mail-out with the ballots.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next on my list is the Member for Emerson.

MR. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I have a question to direct to the Minister of Agriculture but for clarification's sake, when the former Minister of Agriculture, the Member for Lac du Bonnet, indicates that we have a lot to learn here as new members, I would just like to say that if a total distortion of facts is what we have to learn, then I don't know whether I want any part of it. — (Interjection)— I'll bring you facts.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, order. The Member for Emerson, carry on.

MR. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, the question is, to the Minister of Agriculture, what is the procedure in terms of let's say the Manitoba Marketing Board and then the various producers' marketing boards? When a producer marketing board makes a recommendation to the Manitoba Marketing Board, what is the normal procedure? I am referring in terms of when they recommend a transfer of market share quota in the dairy industry and it was disallowed and the Milk Producers Marketing Board at that time was trying for an orderly transfer of quota. I'm just wondering, Mr. Minister, could you indicate what the procedure has been in the past on this?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, in regard to that — I'm sure the member opposite is well aware — the producer boards would certainly recommend to the Manitoba Board what their desires were and the Manitoba Marketing Board in return would recommend to the Minister in fact what was desirable of the producer marketing board. I can certainly see where that has not changed at this time, that that is still the procedure in which we are carrying out. 68-03 **MR. CHAIRMAN:** Is the Member for Emerson finished? The Member for Selkirk was next on my list.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to suggest to the Minister of Agriculture that he is the Minister of Agriculture and that he ought to not assume the role as though he was the critic of the Member for Lac du Bonnet. He should attempt, I would think, if we are to have a constructive discussion, to attempt to deal with the pertinent points raised by the Member for Lac du Bonnet. It seems to me that the Minister of Agriculture is exposing the weakness of his position by rather than dealing with the arguments presented by the Member for Lac du Bonnet, he instead wishes to refight the old election campaign of last year, then even relate back to incidents much earlier than the election campaign of last October. All that that demonstrates, and I'm sure it will demonstrate in time to Manitobans, is that the Conservative Party basically does not have an agricultural policy except insofar as that agricultural policy is geared toward bettering the interests of agribusiness in Manitoba.

I thought the former Minister of Agriculture asked a very pertinent question to the Minister of Agriculture and I was looking forward to his answer, if in fact a major segment of the producers in any particular segment of agriculture are controlled, are few in number and control a major segment of that industry and use the framework of a marketing board in order to protect a monopoly position? Does he apply one set of rules there and a different set of rules where the number of producers are many and covering a larger area? I think that is a very pertinent question. What is the position of this government on marketing boards? Is it one position if it favours and betters the lot of a few in the agribusiness, or is it geared towards encouraging the development of family farming in Manitoba?

I want to say this, that it is my view that the former Minister of Agriculture, the Member for Lac du Bonnet, encouraged the development of family farming in this province. As a result of doing that, and the result of doing that, Mr. Minister, he ran into difficulty with the agribusiness, with Ogilvie's and the packing houses and the others in the agribusiness in this province, along with their allies in the Progressive Conservative Party in Manitoba and the expressions by the Member for Pembina, the expressions by the Member for Emerson indicate to me very very clearly that there is complete and total lack of understanding of basic farm policy on their part. I want to, for one, in this meeting this evening indicate that I think that the Minister of Agriculture, by abdicating any attempt to answer the Member for Lac du Bonnet, is acknowledging the basic weakness in the Conservative Party's position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I think it shouldn't be too hard to answer the particular member. In fact, it was the last Minister of Agriculture who allowed that particular situation to develop, which certainly has developed over the past eight years, that he allowed that to happen.

Secondly, it is the intent of this government to certainly encourage the family farm unit owned by the farm people themselves, not by that big family government of NDP that was buying all the land in the past eight years.

Number three, in answer to the fact that the last Minister did not get along with agribusiness, in fact he got along with large corporations because he just recently stated how well he got along with Labatt's, Mr. Chairman, so I would like to close with that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Springfield is next.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, I think this discussion instead of discussing the Estimates of the Manitoba Marketing Board, has got into a question of confidence or non-confidence in various Ministers of Agriculture. I would point out, Mr. Chairman, that I represent a rural constituency and it is a point of pride with me that I did take the time to talk to a lot of farmers in my constituency. It is my opinion that the former Minister of Agriculture was perhaps my most substantial asset in terms of my election and —(Interjection)— He certainly was. Mr. Chairman, I am stating my opinions and I am not responsible for conclusions drawn by others. I suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, that the family farmers that I represent, stated by their ballots last October that they had no confidence in the previous Minister of Agriculture, his policies and his administration. On that basis, I think we got a very clear indication of how the farmers in my constituency felt about the matter. I think the present Minister of Agriculture has a certain mandate to proceed and a vote of confidence from the farmers of Manitoba —(Interjection)— I guess he will have to take his chances.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Selkirk.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, again, as the Member for Springfield is rehashing the last election again, I don't intend to do that. But I'm still awaiting from the Minister of Agriculture some reference — he laughed, he jeered at the statistics presented to us by the Member for Lac du Bonnett, but he has made no effort, he has made absolutely no effort to speak to those statistics except to jeer at them. He has seven members of his department present. He has made no effort to deal with those statistics, with the very substance of the presentation by the Member for Lac du Bonnett and I think, again, that the Member for Lac du Bonnett certainly has asked a question which concerns me a great deal as to whether or not in this particular instance, the mechanism of the marketing board is being utilized in order to protect the lot of a few that are engaged in agribusiness.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I thought I indicated in the past many hours of debate on the Manitoba Marketing Board that in fact it was certainly in place to look after and certainly the control body or the overseeing body of the producer marketing boards, and that was the role of it. Certainly there is no intent to change that; that in fact is the mechanism that is in place. That is what we are debating and the wages of that particular mechanism. As far as the staff who are behind me, they have been very patient, sitting here waiting to answer some questions of myself within the department as it relates to the Estimates that are before this very body this evening and have done for many days. I am sure that they are quite prepared to answer me on anything that relates to the programs; that they are here as supportive staff as I am sure in the past eight years they were here for the previous individual and certainly are quite prepared to carry on with the Estimates.

However, I do not believe that they came here to listen to the members opposite to continually, continually philosophize and try to dominate the farm people with their philosophy that was so certainly explained to them or indicated to them on October 11th in numbers of support that they got from the farm community. I would like to just back to the fact that we are here and I have answered him, that the Manitoba Marketing Board is in place as an overseeing body of the producer marketing boards. —(Interjection)— The Member for Lac du Bonnett says, "Right," agreed I have answered the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(b)(1)—pass — the Member for Lac du Bonnett.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, now that the Minister has indicated he is prepared to give us the statistics, I ask him how many broiler producers there are in Manitoba and can he give us a breakdown on the production of the integrated operations, the agribusiness operations as distinct from the people who are *bona fide* farmers, and their production totals?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, in answer to the first part of the member's question, I believe he has answered in previous statements some of the statistics in the latter part and I would have to check out the percentages of the numbers of producers holding control of certain amounts of it. I do believe that there are approximately 112 present producers in the broiler industry. The last report that I had, there were approximately 70 producers of broilers or potential producers of broilers which he, and these were small producers, which he in his philosophy would not allow into the industry with his philosophy that they could not enter the industry. But it is our intent, with the entry of the national agreement, that we do allow those people to produce for export markets, for markets which they themselves individually can accomplish or the producer marketing board can accomplish or create or develop. So it is our intent to help those 70 small producers get into the industry which he was not able to do. I certainly would look forward to the developdevelopment of more broiler industry and more broiler producers, of small producers in the Province of Manitoba, which in fact he had not indicated he was prepared to do.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister is tremendously amusing. He is not giving us the answers. He told us that there were 112 producers. I would like to know what percentage of production is produced by the top 11 producers in this province, of the total?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, as indicated by the Member for Gladstone, it is approximately the same as it was six months ago but I do believe it is approximately 48 percent produced by 11 producers. That is approximately the figures that I have. But I would indicate as I have done so many times that the previous Minister of Agriculture allowed that particular situation to develop. It is our philosophy that we allow the 70 producers to eventually enter into the production of broilers and at that time we would have some 200 producers in the broiler industry. So that is the intent of our government of today.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I would like to now ask the Minister through what method he is now going to introduce 70 new producers. Is he prepared to eliminate all the quota regulations that now exist, and have existed in this province for the last number of years, to allow any number of new producers into this industry, because he is telling us that they were under some undue restriction by the previous Minister. I want to tell him, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister not once restricted anyone from production in the broiler industry. The broiler producers' marketing board may have denied people quota. That's right. I want to know whether this Minister is now going to open up the flood gates, whether he is going to allow anyone to get into the broiler business or whether the present quota limitations are going to continue.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I certainly would think that it would be immediately impossible to say that we would, as the Member for Lac du Bonnet has indicated, that you would open the flood gates and certainly cause hardship to some of the producers that are in the industry. I think the number 1 thing that I'm concerned about when I have stated that there are 112 producers of broilers in the industry, that it is not, in fact, the 12 larger producers or the 11, but it is the 100 that I'm concerned about, the 100 small producers which he, in fact, was not interested in and, in fact, as I've stated, it is our concern that those additional 70-odd could enter into the production of broilers. The production of those particular people would certainly add to the employment of the Province of Manitoba. I would hope that, with the agreement of the Federal Board and the encouragement of our government and our marketing branch, that within very short order . . . But let me also put on the record, Mr. Chairman, that it took the last Minister of Agriculture eight years to get us in the situation that we are now in with regard to the few individuals that are producing such a large percentage, and he allowed that to happen. I would hope that we wouldn't take eight years to get us out of that, in fact I would look forward to a much shorter period of time, and I can assure you that we are very concerned about the small producers. In fact I do think that in the coming months, with our philosophy, that we will be able to open up some of the restrictions that were certainly placed upon the producers by the former Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I would ask the Minister whether or not he is going to allow new producers into the production of broilers even if the present Broiler Producers Marketing Board do not wish new ones to be allowed in.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, as I have indicated for many days now, and our government have certainly indicated to the Province of Manitoba, that it is the desire of our government to work with the producer boards of the Province of Manitoba which he was not prepared to do. He did not listen to any producer board whether it be dairy, whether it be broilers, or egg marketing boards. He did not listen. The Egg Marketing Board tried for two years to have a meeting with the former Minister of Agriculture and were unable to do so. I would like to also say, Mr. Chairman, that it is the desire of our government to listen to the producer marketing boards, not dictate to them with the heavy hand of government which he had placed on them in the past eight years.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I asked the Minister very precisely, and I would appreciate a direct answer, since he is going to allow for new production to take place I want to know whether he is removing the present restrictions which keep people from entering into the production of broilers. I want to know whether I can get into the broiler business tomorrow, or next month, or whether I could have gotten in yesterday. What is the policy of this Minister? He keeps talking about a restriction on the part of the previous government which is not correct. If there was a restriction it was on the part of the Producer Marketing Board with whom the government did not interfere in that regard. I want to know whether he's removing any restrictions on production, whether he is changing the regulations which have empowered the Broiler Producers Marketing Board to function to date, and what those changes are.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, as I have indicated, that we are, in fact, talking to the Producer Marketing Board. In fact there have been discussions taken place that they were, as a producer marketing board, made up, I would have to indicate, of farm people, not of large corporations as he has indicated but certainly of farm producers, family farm units who make up the Producers Marketing Board. It was a unanimous desire of that board, or vote by the board to enter into the national agreement and it is our intent, as I have stated in entering the agreement, if an individual can develop a market on his own, an export market, that they will be able to produce broilers for that market. So we are not restricting them from entering the broiler business if, in fact, they want to go in and get a market for themselves in an export market, either individually or collectively as a board. Those were the terms on which we said we would enter the national agreement in marketing for broilers.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I asked this Minister whether or not he is going to allow my colleague, the former Attorney-General to get into the production of broilers at any time that he chooses, not because he has developed a market that doesn't exist today, but because he is going to be more efficient than the existing producers that we have in Manitoba right now. And I want to know whether this Minister is going to allow the freedom of opportunity to anyone who wants to get into the production of any commodity.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, it would be very difficult for the Minister of Agriculture today to allow the Attorney-General of the past to enter into the business of broilers because, in fact, some of the regulations that were in place left bias that the former government discriminated against individuals who were not farmers and certainly we still have those regulations. As we have said some changes in the regulations certainly are anticipated. They have not been tabled — one of them being the Farmlands Protection Act which certainly was left and certainly drawn so loosely that it really, in fact, did not do anything that would help the farm people.

So I would just, you know, go back to the very fact as I've said, we're debating the Manitoba Marketing Board which is the overseeing body of the producer marketing boards and that is the job that they have to perform.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(b)(1)—pass — the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: I ask the Minister of Agriculture again whether anyone around this table, or any existing producer, can either enter into production of broilers or any other commodity that is restricted now, or increase their existing production? Is it possible, or will it soon be possible, for anyone, any new person, to get into the production of a commodity now regulated by the Marketing Act, or is it going to be possible for existing producers to expand without restriction their productive capacity in the production of any of those commodities now governed by this marketing board?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I would hope that it would soon be possible that the farmers and the producers of this province could expand and we could certainly have new producers enter into the production of these commodities.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I've been hoping for that for many years. Mr. Chairman, I've been hoping for that for many years.

MR. DOWNEY: I know, but you couldn't accomplish it, Sam, and you had all the power in your hands.

MR. USKIW: I want to know whether this Minister is going to remove the regulation that has denied it from happening, that has disallowed it, Mr. Chairman. I want to know whether there are any changes in regulations that are going to allow new people to enter into the production of any one of these commodities which are now regulated, or whether the Minister is merely hoping, Mr. Chairman, as I was merely hoping for a good number of years, that the markets would somehow expand and that there would be room for more people in the industry. I want to know the difference and so far this Minister has not been able to give us the difference between the existing operation, as he inherited it, and the operation that he foresees and the regulations that will apply under his terms of reference.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I think in answer to the member, it is, as I've said, our intent to work with the producer marketing boards and I'm very sure that with our philosophy and the desire of the people to produce . . .

MR. USKIW: What's your philosophy? Tell us what your philosophy is.

MR. DOWNEY: Number one, the philosophy is that we work with the producer organizations; we do not work in opposition by buying land and completely having the heavy hand of government completely over top of them and we will certainly hope to encourage more people into the production and we certainly look forward to the involvement of the producers, not the dictatorship of socialism that was on them in the past eight years.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7. (b)(1)—pass — The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Agriculture is obviously in a very untenable position. He is in an untenable position, Mr. Chairman because he would like us to believe that new found opportunities would be advent of his government, that people would have more freedom to do things that they want to do, but Mr. Chairman, he refuses to change one regulation that has restricted those people for the last 20 years in some commodities, for the last 10 years for other commodities, for the last three or four years for some of those commodities. He refuses to commit himself to relaxing those regulations which have restricted production in Manitoba.

Mr. Chairman, it's a phoney argument that he is putting forward. He is not changing anything. He is not changing anything, Mr. Chairman. He is not changing anything. Everything is carrying on as is, but he is attempting to operate on the pretext that it is changing, that something is going to happen. I have been patient, Mr. Chairman, I have been waiting since the 24th of October because now that I have a little more free time perhaps I would be interested in getting into the poultry business, back into the potato business, Mr. Chairman, which I gave up my quota in 1969 for obvious reasons. But, Mr. Chairman, this Minister doesn't want me back in the industry. This Minister doesn't want me back in the industry. He wants to maintain the same regulations, he wants to maintain those regulations to keep people like myself and the Member for Ste. Rose and the former Attorney-General from getting into the agricultural industry.

And yet, Mr. Chairman, he tries to suggest to us that this is all in the spirit of some new-found freedoms — that we are much freer in Manitoba by some point in his imagination. I don't know, Mr. Chairman, what it is that has changed since October. I don't know, Mr. Chairman, what has changed since October 24th with respect to the operation of the Manitoba Marketing Board, with respect to the regulations that were on the books then and, Mr. Chairman, this Minister can't even indicate to us what changes he is going to make to those regulations.

What he is telling us is that he is going to take away freedom from people who have yet to date not used that legislation, and he is going to foreclose that opportunity to them. That is the only thing that he has told us, which is indeed a change of policy, but it's a denial of freedom, Mr. Chairman. It's a denial of basic human rights in this province with respect to the peoples' opportunities, the peoples' desire to bargain collectively in the marketplace. It's a denial of their basic rights as was established many years ago by this legislation and this Minister is talking about new freedoms, holding all of the existing restrictions and adding new ones — adding new restrictions.

We are now in a position where we can't even ask this Minister to form new marketing boards to cover those commodities that have not yet been set up under a marketing board operation in this province. I ask this Minister then, Mr. Chairman, whether he is going to allow additional marketing boards to be formed with respect to those commodities that are not yet marketed in that way in Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(b)(1)—pass .

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I have asked the Minister a question. Is this Minister going to allow the establishment of new marketing boards in this province or have we seen the full lot of them? Is this the end for people who want to bargain collectively, those commodities that are not yet handled in that manner. Will those people be given an opportunity to use the Natural Products Marketing Act?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, as I indicated prior that when he makes a statement of where is the freedom, I think it is very plain to see that number one, that the producers have the freedom to discuss with the Manitoba Marketing Board, and the Minister, and our government, some of their ideas and it certainly is not as I said earlier, dictated to them what should take place by the last Minister, but we are certainly in discussion with them. I cannot particularly say that there will not be any producer marketing boards in the future development, in fact those are things that no one can predict in the future. It is not our intent at this time to implement, as government, any marketing boards for commodities that are not covered. Certainly we are continuing to discuss with producers in the Province of Manitoba what their desires are.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I then ask the Minister whether or not he would allow for the

establishment of a Marketing Board if he had a request from any particular commodity group, at this point in time, for the establishment of such an agency.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, just as I have stated, the purpose of the Manitoba Marketing Board is to take recommendations from producer organizations, from marketing boards, and if there were a recommendation come forward, it would certainly have to be considered. I am not saying it would be or would not be, that is the process, and at this time there is not, so it is completely a question that might happen in the future.

MR. USKIW: Well then let me be more precise. Should the beef growers of Manitoba present a submission to the Manitoba Marketing Board and through them to the Minister, or either way, for such an arrangement for the marketing of beef in Manitoba, is it reasonable to expect that this Minister would allow them an opportunity to use that legislation in that way?

A MEMBER: That's really hypothetical.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(b)(1)—pass; 7.(b)(2)Other Expenditures, \$37,000. The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: I would like to ask the Minister what is the procedure now for getting into the broiler market? Would a producer wishing to enter — so far all we've heard from the Minister is pie in the sky. He's hoping that someday there will be a pie up there that somebody can latch on to. There's no direction, there doesn't seem to be any willingness on the part of the Minister to go in any direction as far as the broiler market. He has mentioned that there are 70 producers that he wants to bring in to the broilers. How do these 70 producers get in within the next, say three months? Do they have to buy a quota — how do they get in?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I did not say that there were 70 that I particularly instructed or that I want them in. They are desirous of producing the product. The process is not changed on how you get broiler quota as of today and certainly as indicated in our negotiations with the Producer Marketing Board and the National Board, is that if there is a market developed individually, collectively, by them or their Board for export markets that they would be allowed to go ahead and produce for that market. If they did that within three months then they would be allowed into the industry.

MR. ADAM: If the Minister is going to allow them in, how is he going to allow them in?

A MEMBER: You have to know the mechanism.

MR. ADAM: What is the mechanism?

MR. DOWNEY: The mechanism is through the Producer Marketing Board and through the Manitoba Marketing Board.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, what was the mechanism before? What has changed in the mechanism now? I would like the Minister to illustrate for us. What has changed?

MR. DOWNEY: As I have said, Mr. Chairman, that the change in fact is that upon entry to the National Marketing Board the individuals or the collective organization as a Producer Marketing Board would be able to produce for that market that was developed by them.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the Minister is answering in a very hypothetical way because we have not yet entered into a national plan. As I understand it, I want to know what has changed in the procedures between October 1st and today in terms of the entry of producers in the production of broilers in Manitoba or any other marketing board commodity. What has changed to date?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, as I have indicated, the entry to produce today has not changed since the first of October until today.

MR. USKIW: Well then, Mr. Chairman, I ask the Minister to explain to me how he was able to sit there and allege that somehow there was some undue interference before the change of government in this regard when he now tells me that nothing has changed and the rules that were there still apply and the functions of the various agencies still apply. How is the Minister able to tell me those two things, two opposite statements, the same evening, Mr. Chairman?

MR. DOWNEY: I don't believe that I said there was any interference in the Broiler Marketing Board but I did indicate that there was interference by the previous administration in the marketing

procedure of hogs, and it was in fact changed to be a compulsory marketing board.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I would like the Minister to indicate to me that since the hog marketing regulations were altered to make hog marketing compulsory through the board, whether there has ever been a presentation to the Manitoba Marketing Board or to the Government of Manitoba asking that those regulations be removed or asking that the board be dissolved or that we have a referendum on it. I would ask the Minister to indicate that to me.

MR. DOWNEY: In answer to that it is indicated to me that there was in fact a group of individuals that contacted the previous administration to explore the very fact that there could be possibilities of calling for a referendum on the compulsion of hog marketing in Manitoba.

MR. USKIW: I wonder if the Minister could then indicate to me what the Manitoba Marketing Board's position was with respect to such a request.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I do not believe it got to the Manitoba Marketing Board.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(b)(2)—pass; 7.(c)Agricultural Products Marketing Commission, \$8,000 — Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could explain to us what is intended with regard to that particular commission. My understanding was that it is being dissolved and yet there is an amount of money allocated.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the money in place is anticipated for the winding down of the Agricultural Products Marketing Commission, there were some commitments in the selling of buckwheat to Japan I believe, and it was in the winding up of this particular program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 7.(c)—pass. .

Resolution 14: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$426,800 for Agriculture — pass.

The hour being 10:22 I suggest Committee rise.

SUPPLY — MINES AND RESOURCES

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would direct the honourable members to page 57, Resolution 81, Mines, Resources and Environmental Management. We are on Item I. (a)(2). The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether the Minister is going to have his staff available to him this evening, because there was one matter which I think he may need their assistance on.

Mr. Chairman, just before the adjournment hour the Minister, I think, made it fairly plain to the Assembly that he would not substantiate any part of the alleged massive reduction of expenditures which were going to be spent by the previous administration, but which the Conservatives came to the rescue and reduced them by \$300 million. That this Minister, in any event, was not going to substantiate any of those expenditures in his department by identifying what those reductions were.

I did ask him what the vacancy rate was and what the existing staff level was, and I wonder if the Minister would give me, for my information, once again the total number of reduced staff man years from last year to this year in his department. He did give it in his introductory remarks. I can't remember them all. I wonder if he could just give me the global, the total figure.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I believe the figure is 35 staff man years.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Chairman, I would like to make it clear that what I have said that I am prepared to do, is that I am prepared, fully, to discuss the printed Estimates that are before us; and that within those Estimates there will show some reductions in expenditures from the previous year.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry if I caused the Minister to demur with my remarks which I thought did not contradict his.

I understood the Minister to say that he would discuss the reductions which appear on the printed sheets, but that he would not discuss the alleged reduction of several hundred millions of dollars which the Conservative administration claimed it was able to effect by reducing departmental estimates.

I have another question, but I wonder whether the Minister would go this far, and I will not be pushing it very hard if he doesn't. When he came to office, was he able to determine that any departmental estimates were approved of by the Minister of the Department, when he came in —

which he then reduced?

MR. RANSOM: Well, I have no hesitation in saying, Mr. Chairman, that the Estimates process obviously had a long distance to go before the final Estimates were arrived at. I do not know to what extent the previous Minister had dealt with the Estimates to that point. I know that they have been through staff to some extent, and that some efficiency cuts, I believe was the term that was used, had been made by that point.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, what the member is confirming is that without a hoo-hah, without a Task Force, without the assistance of the Great-West Life Assurance Company, that there was an efficiency cut on existing expenditures within the department prior to the change in administration, and that there was no Ministerial approval of departmental Estimates that he knows of, when he came to power. That is what he has indicated. If I am wrong, I wish the Minister would correct me.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not going to contradict the honourable member. All I'm saying is that when I assumed the responsibilities for the department, there was a set of Estimates that was substantially along in the process of preparation, and that we have advanced them from there, and the figures that are before us show that we substantially reduced it from what it was last year.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I will deal with this substantial reduction in due course. In terms of efficiency, we know that there was an efficiency exercise gone through prior to the Conservative administration, and I will concede in every way, Mr. Chairman, in every way, and I will argue, that there has been a reduction in an area in which there was a profound difference of opinion between the Conservative administration and the New Democratic Party administration with regard to mineral exploration. And I will concede that, Mr. Chairman, and I ask the Honourable Minister to concede that that is not an efficiency change, that is a change in objectives and philosophy, and we will argue as to whether that will save the government money, save the public of Manitoba money. I'm going to argue it's going to cost us money — and I don't expect the Minister to agree with me — but in terms of efficiency of administration, Mr. Chairman, now I want to show what has happened with regard to efficiency.

I want the Minister to concede, which he's going to have to do by the figures, that when you have a department of 750 people, and a 10 percent vacancy rate, which is on a consistent basis, then all you are paying for is 675 people. And the 10 percent vacancy factor gives a department the opportunity of both losing people and picking them up in a certain fashion, and in accordance with certain deliberation, in accordance with making sure that they are not rushing into things, but doing it in a particular way. And I'm not even saying the right way. I'm merely saying that it means that you are doing it in a particular way.

When you have a department of 675 people, and a vacancy rate which is less, Mr. Chairman, it doesn't necessarily mean you are saving money. It merely means that the pressure to fill positions is much stronger and, Mr. Chairman, what you wind up with — by the member's own figures — is the same number of people employed.

We were told that 35 people have been reduced from last year's staff man years, that last year there was a 10 percent vacancy factor which means 75 people were not employed. When I asked how many are employed this year, the member said that there are 43 vacancies on the regular staff and virtually none — virtually none — on the term staff. Which means, Mr. Chairman, there has been a reduction on the vacancy feature of 33 people. The honourable member says that he has 35 less staff man years, but he is paying for the same number of people. He is paying, Mr. Chairman, within one or two by merely reducing the vacancy factor and increasing the pressure to fill vacant positions. He can declare a reduction in 35 staff man years but still pay the same number of people.

Will the Honourable Minister admit that what changes under those circumstances is not the number of people that you are paying for, but the pressure and the anxiety with which old positions are filled? Because, Mr. Chairman, those are the figures that the Honourable Minister gave me. He said that we have 43 vacancies, whereas last year he would have had 75, that there are 35 people less employed in the department and therefore, Mr. Chairman, we are back to the same number.

I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that in capsule form what we are seeing in one department is happening throughout the government. That with a staff of 17,000 people there is always a certain number of vacancies and if those vacancies are 10 percent — and I'm not suggesting that they are the same figure in the other departments as they are in this department — then there would be 1,700 at any time not employed. And if you have reduced your staff man years by 1,000 and have reduced your vacancy feature from 10 percent to 5 percent — which is what is done here — there is the same number of people employed.

Now, Mr. Chairman, don't misunderstand me that I would say that that means nothing has been done. I believe that this administration wants to employ less people. This administration has a peculiar notion that a nurse working in the hospital — male or female — is less productive and of less value to society than an attendant working in a massage parlour — male or female. Because one is in the public sector and one is in the private sector, and anybody who works in the public sector is a drone and anybody who works in the private sector is wonderful.

The Minister of Labour said yesterday something which will, Mr. Chairman, go down to haunt this government and to bring that one person in ten maybe to reconsider, the kind of decision that they

made and I accept that decision although I tried to change it; the honourable members on the other side talked as if that decision once made indicates that we are wrong and they are right. What the honourable members forget is that that decision is up again for judgement every four years and what they fail to realize is that what they talk about as now being the will of the people of Manitoba and that these are the policies that were voted for, they are the identical policies that they went to the public with in 1969 and were rejected on. So when you are praising yourself at having satisfied the will of the people — and really Mr. Chairman, it surprises me most when it comes from people like the Member for St. Matthews who talks about the people in his constituency which are by a hair, 50 percent, what he would call socialist, and 50 percent Conservative, that they have spoken with one voice.

MR. DOMINO: Give the Liberals some credit.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, in the last election the Liberals held their left and their right collapsed. If the honourable member wishes to interpret it in another way, let him do so because it will only cause him more trouble next time when he doesn't know what he is up against. —(Interjection)—

Mr. Chairman, I will say that in 1969 we can analyze what has occurred differently. What I do say, Mr. Chairman, is that in 1969, and you can go back to your publicity, go back to your literature, go back to the campaign material, you will find that the same policies which you now say are self-evident to the people of the province of Manitoba, were rejected by the people of Manitoba.

But, Mr. Chairman, what is wrong with my calculations? The Minister said that there was a 10 percent vacancy rate on 750 people, that's 75 people — Up to then am I okay? He now says there are 43 vacancies and he has reduced that by 33. How many people has he hired? How many people are working? The same number who worked last year. Now I am not saying, Mr. Chairman, that's not an accomplishment because I want the honourable Minister to know that in my view if you can hold staff at a level and you believe that you want to go in that direction, which I concede I do not — I concede that that is your view, not my view — but if you can hold staff at a level which you have done, I would say that from a conservative objective you are doing rather well, not in accordance to my objective. But you are misleading people — and I don't even know whether the Minister is aware of his own figures — into thinking that there have been great reductions because if the staff man year complement is reduced and the vacancy factor is reduced, you wind up with the same figures for last year and this year and I wonder whether I am saying something wrong. Have I fallen into a fallacy from the figures that you have given me up until this time? —(Interjection)— Well those are the figures he gave me. Okay.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, the figures that I gave were for the permanent staff man years and perhaps slightly misleading. In addition to the reductions in permanent staff man years, there is another 41 staff man years covered by contract persons that are reduced as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I suggest to the honourable member that he should go back to his remarks before 0:30 because he said that the term people were almost fully employed. Well, Mr. Chairman, I listened very carefully and it will be on Hansard, it will be on Hansard, that I asked him what was the situation with regard to the vacancy and he said that there was 10 percent vacancy; and that how many people are employed now? He said there are 450 staff man years of which there are 44 vacancies and then there are term positions which are virtually filled. If I am wrong on that, I apologize to the Minister but it will be in Hansard and recorded. I suggest to the Minister that if these new figures are correct then what will happen is what I predicted and what he, I thought, indicated this afternoon but if it's not already happened, it will happen. If there are 88 vacancies in the department, which he now says would be roughly the same as the 10 percent as before, if there is that number of vacancies, Mr. Chairman, then what will happen is that that vacancy factor will be reduced by pressure of hiring and you will be back to a position where your 33 alleged reduction merely indicates, merely indicates, Mr. Chairman, what will happen is that the hiring will take place quicker, the vacancies will remain open for a shorter period of time, and if you haven't had that experience, I can tell you that that will occur because your staff will be under pressure to do it and you will be back in the position where the number of people that you hired will be the same but that you will be able to show a reduction in staff man years because your vacancy factor will reduce as well. If that has not already happened, which I thought occurred from the figures that I wrote down this afternoon, then it's going to happen within six months and you are not going to be in any different position.

Now, Mr. Chairman, again I repeat, I don't think that the Minister should regard that as a lack of any progress towards his direction because frankly, although I indicated, and I do not try to absolve myself from responsibility, that no Ministerial approval had been given to any departmental Estimates last year — and I say that now and the Minister will not contradict me — there would have been some increases. I could not, Mr. Chairman, I could not, in the face of a commitment to an environmental protection assessment program, which I was not the hottest person for, but I, Mr. Chairman, do not, ignore that there are different people and different views on this question which have to be given consideration. The Member for Fort Rouge would have added many more staff man years to that program than I would have but the resolution in the House on that program came from the Member for Riel.

Oh yes, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Riel introduced a bill. , Well, the Member for Fort Garry is

shaking his head. I assure him. —(Interjection)— I meant Fort Rouge; I didn't see you shaking your head, I heard you. But I saw the Member for Fort Rouge. —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Fort Garry at least has put me in an equal category; I don't think he ever did that before. That's not bad.

In any event, it was the present Minister of Finance who either moved the resolution on it or a bill, or made a significant speech on that question in the House with regard to an environmental protection assessment program. The very type of program which the Minister has indicated not only will not be added to, but will be cut in terms of some of the staffing assistants it has.

I, too, Mr. Chairman, will consciously admit that I could not reduce the number of inspectors that are trying to follow through on the environmental protection measures which were put into place. You cannot have a Clean Environment Commission. You cannot have an Environmental Protection Branch. You cannot have environmental regulations without people following through to see that these things are done. And therefore I will concede that my figures on staff man years would have been higher.

What I don't concede, Mr. Chairman, is that there has been, or will be by virtue of the figures presented by the Minister or even the new ones, because you have aggressive staff. And they should be aggressive; you should be happy that they are aggressive. And if you have cut them down by 37 people and they used to have 75 vacancies, the pressure of events will require them to reduce that vacancy factor to get back their people. And what will occur — and I want the Minister to be aware of this — in my view, in my respectful submission as a person who has had this type of thing happen, is that you will have people being hired more quickly with less consideration and with less opportunity to make sure that one is properly staffing the department, than you will have by suggesting that you are going to reduce these Estimates.

So I make that point in a general way, Mr. Chairman, with regard to the number of staff. I make it in a general way with regard to the government as a whole. The administration had better wake up to the fact that this announcement of a reduction is something which they felt had to be told to the public of Manitoba, in order to try to underline their assessment of what the previous administration did. But if we take this record as a capsule form of what is going to happen in the government as a whole, and they say that there are 17,000 civil servants and they are going to reduce those staff man years to 16,250 — and I don't know where they expect to go — and there was previously a 10 percent vacancy factor, then we will be right back to the same position by accelerated hiring, by more hurried hiring, and by desperate, in fact, attempts in some cases to fill up vacancies that are left open by the type of procedure that is being followed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, let me get the exact figures on the record. Over the supper hour, my staff put together the exact figures on the staff man year complement. Of that 756.38, there are 593 that are permanent and 163.38 that are term. There are presently filled 550 of the permanent. There are 140 of the term filled. Presently vacant permanent 43, and of term 23.38. And I realize that previously I had said that most of those positions were filled. On checking, there were 23.38 vacant there. That's 7.3 percent vacancy of the permanent and 15 percent vacancy of the term, for a total of 9 percent.

Then, the 35 staff man years that I referred to as a reduction for permanent staff man years, in addition to the 35 permanent staff man years, we have reduced by 41.03 staff man years that were contract. We have now virtually eliminated contract employees — some of which have been placed on term status because they are of a more permanent nature.

MR. GREEN: Everytime the honourable member gives me figures, I'm going to go back at him. Because what you now tell me is that there are 550 permanent employed and 140 term employed which is a total of 690 employed. Employed — that's including the vacancies. Because the total complement is 593 and 163, and the total employed is 550 and 140. So it's a total of 690 people.

Now, maybe this is unfair, but you said that there were 750 employed last year with a 10 percent vacancy which brings you down to 675.

MR. RANSOM: . . . I gave a figure for last year beyond that I said that I thought it was approximately at a ten percent vacancy rate last year.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, this afternoon I got up and said, "How many employees did the department employ?" And he said, "750 people." I said, "What was the vacancy factor?" And he said, "10 percent." And I said, "750." I would have guessed somewhere around 1,000, but perhaps my problem was that part of the staff was shifted to another department, so the figure of 750 was given to me by the Minister this afternoon. Perhaps the Minister can now get the figure as to how many staff man years were employed last year — because he gave me 750 this afternoon as I sit here, Mr. Chairman. I asked him and I said that I would have guessed at 1,000 and I thought I was making a bad guess' and then I said that some have been shifted off to Renewable Resources and that's probably my mistake. How many were employed last year?

MR. RANSOM: Well, last year the authorized staff man years were 791.38 and they were reduced by 35 to 756.38.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, that's fine. 791 were employed last year. There was a 10 percent vacancy factor — that's 80 people off that — leaves 710, 711 to be exact. We are now employing 690 people, which means there are 20 people in the department less. —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, I have taken the contract figures. Here are your figures. The full-time people, 593; contract people, 163. Those are this year's figures. Term, 163; the number that you employ are 550 and 140 of those people, that's 690. Last year there was 710, that's 21 people. Now I say to you, Mr. Chairman, that those 21 people, we've reduced now from 33 to 21. There are 21 people less, and I say to you, Mr. Chairman, that those 21 are going to be changed and it's already reduced by a third. The so-called reduction of 33 people has been reduced by 12, which is a third. In another month it'll be reduced by another third; and in another month it'll be reduced by another third because you still have 80 vacancies.

And what your department is bound to do — and I don't know whether the Minister is going to agree or disagree — but I tell him that what the department is bound to do, and if you've got aggressive people and they've got staff man years open, and they don't have the ability to move, is to reduce the vacancy factor, and they don't have to reduce it very much. They have to reduce it by 20 people and they are right back to where they were.

Now, will the Minister accept what I am saying, that in terms of what he is trying to do, I don't consider this terrible. I congratulate him. It's still the same. But what I tell the people of Manitoba is that there is no reduction. There will be no reduction. There will be the same number of people employed, because the accelerated rate of hiring will eliminate the so-called reduction and there will be a smaller vacancy factor. There must be, unless you've got lazy people working in your department, and you don't. I know that they are not lazy, and therefore they are going to fill up those staff man year positions faster in order to undo what you have done.

Your environmental protection people, they don't now say, "We don't need inspectors." They don't say, "We don't have to now check. You've given us a problem with regard to determining the cause of gas leakage in the Interlake and hog ranches in various parts of the province". They're not going to say, "Well, we don't have to do it any more". They're going to say, "We've only got 10 inspectors where we used to have 12. We used to have three vacancies. It is nine. Now we're going to have no vacancies. We're going to get them faster. We're going to have a less qualified person. We're going to move a little quicker, but we're going to get those people".

And, Mr. Chairman, I say this as having much more significance than with respect to this department because it's got to happen through the administration. Anybody who has administered anything bigger than a peanut stand, that the First Minister always talks about, will know that this is going to happen. And I'm not criticizing the Minister, because I believe that the Minister sincerely believes that we have spent too much money and that we have to bring some rationalization into this government. I want to merely indicate to him that if there has been a reduction it has not been of the nature that has been stated, and will soon be, by accelerated hiring processes, exactly where it was before.

I also acknowledge, if the Minister will want to have that acknowledgement from me, that I would not have been able to make some of the reductions that he made. And if he wishes to take an admission to the people of the Province of Manitoba that the former Minister said that he wouldn't have been able to get rid of some of these inspectors; that he wouldn't have been able to emasculate entirely, although my friend from Fort Rouge will say that he did it partly and it's just as bad and you can have his support on that; that I would have continued with the Environmental Protection Assessment Program within the terms of reference that our government had set forth, I would have seen that it could have operated. I say that there were some areas in which it operated very well. I think that it did an excellent job vis-a-vis the hydro transmission connection between Canada and the United States, where they had to review and assess, together with the Planning Branch — the PLUC Committee, I think it was called — I wonder if the Member for Morris, the House Leader, is he the Chairman of that Committee now? Yes. Well, there was a problem between those two areas. The House Leader should be aware of it. That the Environmental Protection Branch, through strictures on our part, tried to limit themselves to contaminants to the air, land or water. The Planning Branch had to think in terms of land use, foliage, population counts and what have you. When I left the department these things had not been clearly delineated but we were working in that direction, and I hoped they were.

But if the honourable member wishes to get an admission from my side, yes, he's right, I would not have been able to limit the number to the extent that he has limited it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: I almost hesitate to — I do hesitate to put these new figures —(Interjection)— I know you will, that's why I'm hesitating. The permanent staff man years, as I gave you before, permanent and term were correct, 791 down to 756.38. In addition to those, in 1977-78, there were 78.22 staff man years used for contracts. And that has been reduced to 1.29 for contracts, so that the grand total of permanent, term and contract positions was 870, which has been reduced to 758 and I'm quite satisfied that that is the last set of figures.

MR. GREEN: Now we have 870 people employed in the department which is getting closer to what I said it was. Because this afternoon it was 750, and I said I remembered more in the neighbourhood of 1,000. But we're getting there, maybe another few questions and we'll get up to the 1,000. But we have 870 people. Now we'll take a 10 percent vacancy rate, and if the honourable member will permit me a fast rounding I'll take 90 people off that. So that we means that we are talking about 780 people who were continuously employed.

Now he says that there are 758 people employed. That's employed. That's the new figure. — (Interjection)— That's the establishment right now. Staff man years? And you will take a vacancy off that? Well, if we take a vacancy off that, Mr. Chairman, we're down to 690.

MR. RANSOM: We would reduce the 758 by 43 vacancies.

MR. GREEN: So we will be 715 as against 780. Well, Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Minister is going to have to go back and redo his figures because on that basis, if we take the vacancy feature from last year to this year then, Mr. Chairman, he has reduced his staff by 65 people and as much as I admire the candour of the Minister, I do not believe that he would have come in here and told us he reduced his staff by 32 people when he reduced it by 65 people, because that's what he is now saying. If I take the total complement — that's 870 — last year, and the total complement of 758 this year, then he has reduced his staff by 120 people, the staff complement. And he's told us only 33.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I find that very difficult to . . . Mr. Chairman, when we talk about permanent staff, when we talk about permanent staff I hope that the Minister is not making it even more difficult. I am not talking about people who happen to be hired for the time being or on a rush basis because there is a flood program or on a rush basis because there is another immediate hiring of 50 people that are going to be let go next week. We are not going to be able to get anywhere with those kinds of figures. I want to know, and that's why I asked him at the beginning, what his normal staff complement is, what his vacancy feature is, and how many people he would have employed on a normal basis? And what he has indicated in his first answer is that he has reduced the staff complement by 33 people. Now he is telling me he has reduced it by 870 to 758, which is 120 people. Now, there must be something else there. There must be some immediate hiring because I frankly think that if the Minister had reduced his staff by 120 people, which is what he is now saying, he wouldn't have come in here and said that the Minister was an exceptionally competent administrator. He would have said that he was an ass and he hired 120 people too much, which I have now reduced. And I just don't believe that you have reduced your permanent staff by 120 people. Or why did you tell us it was 33?

MR. RANSOM: I guess this is precisely the difficulty that arises when you have so many different categories of people working in the Civil Service. If the honourable member will permit it, I think the best thing is I will have my staff put it on a piece of paper and we can both be looking at the same figures that show the reduction in permanent and term and contract and the shifts that have been made from contract to term. Perhaps we can resolve it that way.

MR. GREEN: Okay, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to leave it at that. I only want to say that I believe what the Minister said when he first came in, that he has reduced his staff by roughly 33 people, that the vacancy factor was 10 percent last year and that the vacancy factor has been reduced somewhat so that your reduction in staff is partly removed by the fact that there would be accelerated hiring. I'm going to suggest that to the Minister because I believe that that makes sense and that is what will happen no matter what figures he presents tomorrow. If you had a 10 percent vacancy factor and you have reduced your staff by less than that 10 percent, then you will have accelerated hiring, more desperation at filling vacant positions and part of the reduction will be taken up by reduced vacancy factors.

I make that statement without reference to what the figures are because although there may be an aberration that can take place between one set of figures and another for a momentary period, this will be the result of it in any event. And certainly this was the result that I was left with when I asked for those simple figures. What was the complement? — 750. What was the vacancy factor? — 10 percent. How many people did you reduce? — 33. What is the vacancy factor today? — 44. Now we are right back to where we started.

Now, I accept the fact that those figures no longer are satisfactory, that you are going to have to check those out. But even if you show, Mr. Chairman, a new set of figures which even for a moment will change this argument, it won't change it in the long haul. In the long haul you are going to be back where you started.

MR. RANSOM: That's a prediction on behalf of the former Minister and my prediction is not the same. We will bring in the written figures so that we are all looking at the same thing. But I can comment on a couple of points that the honourable member made. He referred to the Environmental Assessment Program. There really has been no change in the Environmental Assessment Program. There were two staff man years, I believe, dealing with that particular agency and one of those had never been filled. There also appears to me to be somewhat of an overlap between the Environmental Assessment Agency and the Interdepartmental Planning Board and the Interdepartmental Planning Board appears to be handling the issues that we have to this point had to deal with. So I do not consider that the activities of the environmental assessment and review process have been curtailed.

I said in my opening remarks ten days ago that these Estimates reflect both some policy decisions and restraint as well and the honourable member, I believe, gives me credit for attempting to implement restraint. Whether or not those reductions will result in a lower level of service to the people of the province remains to be seen. I am quite satisfied that in most cases we will be able to carry out a satisfactory level of service. When the honourable member refers to the activities, for instance, of what we might call the health inspectors, the environmental officers, it is a question of deciding what appears to be a satisfactory level of compliance. What is the difference between getting a 90 percent compliance and an 85 percent compliance? —(Interjection)— Well, the judgment has to be made and in my judgment, Mr. Chairman, with the cutbacks that we have made, we will still be able to provide a satisfactory level of service in those areas. That of course remains to be seen, whether that is done or not. I don't think that we can prove it through discussion of the Estimates.

MR. GREEN: In looking at 4.(a) down to the bottom line, the line (c), up to Canada-Manitoba DREE Agreements, I'm just sort of guessing that the only substantial salary difference is that you have not filled the position that was either a Deputy Minister's position or the Assistant Deputy Minister, that is that Mr. Cawley and Mr. Roper occupied two positions; Mr. Roper now occupies both positions, or has there been an addition to make up for Mr. Cawley's absence? —(Interjection)— There hasn't been? I'm sorry, has there been or has there not been?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Which number were you referring to?

MR. GREEN: It would be, I believe, in 4.(a) that previously there would be Mr. Cawley, Mr. Roper, and several Assistant Deputy Ministers, Dr. Bowen, Ian Haugh, Mr. Podolsky, that Mr. Cawley left and there was no change in the other staff complement.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, 1.(a)(2) refers to salaries which covers the Deputy Minister's position; the policy advisor position has been eliminated. Mr. Roper now fills the position of the Deputy Minister. What confused me, Mr. Chairman, was that you made reference to 4.(a) somewhere and I was quickly turning the page to look for 4.(a) and found you were back on 1.(a).

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, I felt it was probably time to slightly change the topic before the people of Manitoba realize that no one knows how many people work for the Department of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management, and I had visions in my mind as the Minister went up and down the escalator on figures of 50 or 60 civil servants being moved out, getting their pink slips and then saying, no, we made a mistake, come on back in again. It seems like we're running government by the accordion principle, you push it in; you push it out, according to who has the latest piece of paper.

But my point that I think I am more concerned about from the remarks from the Minister is, where in fact the kinds of restraints or cuts that he has administered have been felt. Particularly in terms of his comments about something called "a level of service" and we were promised by the first Minister and by his followers during the campaign and since then, that the level of service in the province would not suffer. We now have the Minister of Environment saying, "Well, it may suffer, not that we'll stop the service but we are going to reduce the level of compliance substantially or will reduce it at least." I am much interested at this stage to find out exactly what it is that the Minister feels was unnecessary in the way of program in terms of his department, that if the number of contact employees have been substantially cut back as he maintains, which areas of his department's responsibilities are being eliminated or being reduced, so we will know which levels of service within this department have been thereby eliminated or reduced. In other words, if it is a matter of priority, could the Minister please tell us what his priorities are and in particular if it is in the question of environmental management he's, I think presenting what can only be considered a very dubious principle which is that somehow you are going to establish an arbitrary figure of service that you seek to attain and not try to attain the best level of service, and if the Minister is really saying to us that he is prepared to accept second best, or third best, or to do the best you can under all the limits, then I think that that raises some very serious questions about the administration of his department. Because there is going to be a lot of people out there who are going to say, "Well now, if the Minister of Environment is saying that we're going to reduce the level of compliance from 50 percent under the old regime — if that's what it was — to 25 percent, then that substantially increases my chances of getting by with major pollution. And so the odds are so much better that I'm going to put that sort of dirty water into the stream and I am going to put the smoke into the air because the chances of getting caught are going to be so substantially reduced because we now have the Minister of Environment saying I am prepared to accept a reduced level of service that it really makes the whole notion of environmental protection or regulation a farce." Because you really are increasing the odds into a really kind of a pretty good gambler's position. That person out there who wants to pollute or thinks he can pollute to save money or whatever his reason, knows now the chances of having to live up to certain standards are pretty minimal, that gives you a pretty good incentive not to obey the law.

That really begins to concern me, Mr. Chairman, if that is what the Minister is saying to us, that he is now going to accept a substantial reduced level of compliance, then what he is really admitting to, is contrary to what the First Minister said, and contrary to what this government said, they will not reduce essential services or reduce the responsibilities of government, because in fact, that is what they are going to be doing. It is dangerous for the Minister to even admit it in this House and I would hope that maybe I'm offering him an opportunity to correct his statement, because if what he has said just a few minutes ago holds true, then there is going to be a lot of people out there in the province who all of a sudden are going to be given a pretty free licence to disobey the law that has been passed by this Legislature because we are simply saying we are no longer prepared to provide the means of enforcement or sanction of that law.

Then I would suggest if that is your case or your policy, then you better change the law, because there is nothing worse than having a law that can be flagrantly disobeyed because no one is going to bother to enforce it. And I would hope that the Minister might provide a little bit more explanation as to what exactly he meant when he said he is prepared to accept reduced levels of service in these very critical areas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: First of all, Mr. Chairman, when the honourable member wants to know what areas the reductions have been made in, I suggest that when we commence an orderly search of the review of the printed estimates, that line by line, we will find out where the reductions have taken place.

Secondly, when he started speaking in respect to compliance, he started out at a level that wasn't too far away from what I said and by the time he finished speaking he was talking about us being prepared to accept flagrant violations. He refers to something which he calls the best level of service. I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that there is no best level of service. There has to be a level of service which the administrators decide, the people in charge of the department decide what is an acceptable level of service. It is something akin to diminishing returns and the effort that you put into it and if the difference is only, say, dropped from 90 to 85 percent then that has to be judged whether or not it is acceptable. I must say that to this point the programs I do not believe have been assessed on that basis and I believe that is a desirable thing that we must work towards in being able to say what are the outputs that we get back for the money that we expend in the department.

When we talk about maintaining a level of service, again the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge throws in essential services. Now we come to another value judgment in terms of what is an essential service. I would prefer to talk about any particular activity or program that we are involved in and perhaps we can deal with what the member considers to be the best level of service and perhaps I can tell him whether we can achieve what he considers to be the best level.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, the Minister reminded me when he was speaking of a book I once read when I was studying the problems of international relations and it was written by a very funny fat man called Herman Kahn who talked about nuclear explosions and how we could accept a minimal sort of or an acceptable number of losses was 15 million people being killed by nuclear explosions, and that was acceptable in terms of 200 million. It wasn't very acceptable to the 15 million people that were going to sort of be blasted off the face of the earth.

It seems to me that we're now beginning to play with some very important terms that relate back to the purposes and goals of this government, because what he is again coming back to is the fact that, reading between the lines of what is being said, we are really saying that we are reducing substantially the areas of environmental protection in this province, and that, while it's not my duty to say what the level of service should be, the Honourable Minister has now said in his own terms that he doesn't know what the level of service will be, that this government has introduced across-the-board cuts simply for the sake to fulfill the peculiar purposes of reducing the size of government — that's the goal — without any awareness, any consciousness, or any attempt to find out whether those cuts themselves, how those cuts are going to affect specific areas of program or policy.

And so what we are doing is sort of wandering in to a blindman's alley of simply hacking away at the programs of the government without having any notion as to whether they were good programs or bad programs or whether the level of service was acceptable or unacceptable or whether it was 50 percent or 85 percent that was being served. And that, perhaps, is the most damaging statement the Minister could make is that there really is no attempt at any kind of Ministerial discretion or control, nor is there any — (Interjection) — The Member for Roblin says, "The Feds don't help." Well, I suggest the Feds are the only thing that's keeping the province going. They're the only ones putting money into the economy of this province. It sure as heck isn't this government that's putting any money into the economy, and if it wasn't for that investment I'm afraid the Member for Roblin wouldn't just be having demonstrations every second day, he'd be having demonstrations every day because there'd be no one working if that investment wasn't taking place. — (Interjection) — Well, if you've had it up to there I suppose, Mr. Chairman, there's a lot of people in the province have had it up to there with you as well and that — you know, you don't get 4,000 or 5,000 showing up there every evening simply because they've got nothing to do or the T.V. programs are bad. They're doing it because they recognize that this government is severely sort of cutting into the life blood of this province through its own blind obedience to some principle that government is bad. You know, *ipso facto*, it's just bad. Let's cut it out.

The Minister of Mines and Natural Resources and Environmental Management, Mr. Chairman, has

made some very, I think, telling admissions this evening about what he's up to — that he is not up to anything that's related to his program or policy. He's being given the dictate by the First Minister and by his management committee sort of saying, "We want you all to be loyal soldiers and to sort of show your loyalty by reducing, whether it's 35 or 65 or 85, we're not sure of that any more, but whatever it is you've got to sort of, I guess, show up as sort of children in Sunday School every Sunday morning to show that you've done your lessons well, but it has no relationship to the level of service or program that's being delivered by this department.

And so, Mr. Chairman, what we are now facing is that we don't know whether the Environmental Protection Program of the Province of Manitoba is of any use any more. The Minister says, "I don't know if it's of any use any more. I'm guessing maybe that by taking a number of staff man years out of this program I may be reducing it down to the point where it is meaningless because there is no effective level of compliance any more."

And that, Mr. Chairman, is perhaps the worst aspect of this kind of across-the-board surgery. It really isn't surgery — it's a form of butchery, I guess, that's been going on, which is simply to cut for the sake of cutting, not for the sake of trying to discriminate between what is good or bad, what was useful or non-useful, what was an effective program and what was a non-effective program, and the Minister has admitted that that is not the kind of analysis or assessment that he undertook when he took over his department. He was simply interested in getting rid of the bodies — getting rid of the numbers — with no relationship or connection whatsoever to program or service. And if that is going to be the standard that is being applied in all departments, Mr. Chairman, then the kind of protests that we've seen so far are perhaps maybe even misplaced — that maybe we shouldn't be as much concerned about just the sheer numbers of people who are being fired or being let go, but what we should be much more concerned about is the fact that they are basically dismantling without any conscious awareness of a number of important programs and activities without even being aware of what they're doing. And that, Mr. Chairman, is perhaps the most serious indictment that should be levelled — that we have a government that really is out of control because it doesn't know what it's doing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: I thank the honourable member for his comments. I thank the former government, the Opposition today for their comments and their contribution to this very important subject matter that's before the Committee tonight. I thank the Government of Canada and other jurisdictions across this great country of ours for what they've contributed to the environment and the safeguards that's so necessary to protect it for generations yet unborn.

But again it's a problem, and it's a serious problem, and we've dealt with it in this Legislature all the years I've been here and this government, I'm sure, is going to try the best way they can to deal with it and again I congratulate the former government, the former Minister, for their contributions, and the government before that and even go back to the days of the great D. L. Campbell and his government. But it's a very, very difficult problem and even with all the resources and all the people that we have in this country — it's something like the Honourable Member for Brandon said today, if we were to go back and try and tick the old telephone system, we'd need every citizen in this province to deal with manipulating our telephones in the old days. And this environment thing is one that just grows bigger and bigger and bigger.

I have problems in my constituency — I don't think there's a member in this Legislature today that doesn't have problems with the environment — serious problems. We have grandchildren, and I don't want to leave a heritage and I'm sure the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge doesn't want to leave a heritage to these young people that's going to take our places in the days ahead, and I hope that, while we may not have all the answers — and he said the federal people have all the answers — I submit very humbly they do not. Because I've watched the Federal Environment Council working in my constituency over the years and they certainly do not have the answers. In fact, I would submit maybe today — with the Budget that the Government of Canada is spending in this country, which is the highest Budget we've ever had with a million people unemployed — maybe we should put those million people to work looking after the environment and that might not be a bad idea to safeguard that heritage and make darn sure that it is transferred the way it should be to future generations. But I submit that wouldn't go very far in a political arena because we don't have that type of dollars to look after only one problem.

But it is a very serious problem. I can cite instances today. They're building a lagoon in Roblin to handle a nursing home or personal care home and the Member for Brandon East flipped the sod there in the last election — never checked the environment. He never checked nothing. He just went in there in the election, tried to get rid of me, flipped the sod and said, "I want to build 40 more homes in Roblin" — never told the town, never told the municipality, never told nobody. So what! The first problem, Mr. Chairman, is the fact that there had been no studies done on the environment, no studies on where they're going to locate because once that 40 new units of housing goes in they have to have a new lagoon. So very skillfully now the town and the municipality is going to move. So they're going to build a new lagoon, and they're going to once a year or twice a year — the Shell River is one of the fresh, free streams that's left in this province of pure water — but they're going to have to because of people and because of the environment, because of the problems of a growing

population, they're going to have to twice a year let that lagoon, while it's chlorinated and it's treated, but it's going to flow into that.

Now, my jurisdiction is just down the river about ten miles so they're not going to be able to swim between the 15th of May till the 16th of July. They've swam there all their years. Generations have swam in that stream. But that's the problem. That's how difficult it is to deal with environmental matters. I do thank the honourable member and I thank the members, the Leader of the Opposition and his government and what they've done. It's a big pool that we're into, and I hope that when the debates are over that we can all work together as a team as closely as we can to deal with this very, very important matter, not only for Manitoba but for all of Canada. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, I didn't mean to stand up but the Member for Roblin has so inspired me by his comments that to discover that the Conservative Party has a Ralph Nader in its midst comes as an amazing revelation. I appreciate and reward the remarks of the Member for Roblin. I think he has made an important statement. My only concern is that the Minister who is administering these programs without any awareness will sit down with close consultation with his colleague who obviously has acquired a very fine and a very valuable sense of understanding these problems.

I think he missed one important point though, which is equally necessary to put on the table. That is that environment is not something that should be divorced from economics or efficiency or restraint, because I think it can be put very clearly and lucidly Mr. Chairman, that you can save yourself a lot of money by having proper protection of the environment. One of the things that we have allowed to happen — I think the member used examples — that by allowing major pollution to take place unabated or unenforced, as the Minister now seems to be prepared to do, that ends up being far more costly than the actual enforcement or regulation of it; that the amount of money that is spent in terms of bad health or polluted water, which then has to be subject to enormous treatment cost — far more expensive to put in expensive treatment cost than to prevent the pollution at its source. Far more costly to deal with problems of chemicals in the air than to try and do something with the way in which they are emitted.

I think that is one of the lessons that we are slowly learning in this world of ours, that the kind of prevention of pollution and contamination is the best kind of cost efficiency that you can get, and that if, for a government that is taking as its hallmark restraint and efficiency, and using the tabula of economics as its base of judgment, then I would think that the best promotion that they could follow would be to improve and upgrade the level of prevention and protection that they have.

I still come back to the point that is at issue, Mr. Chairman, and that is that the Minister has said tonight that basically the kind of cut-backs and restraints that he is administering have no relation to any assessment or understanding, or consciousness of the impact that it is going to have upon the programs delivered by this department. It therefore means that we are engaging in an activity of blind, sort of severance programs without any foreknowledge or projection of the impact or influence that they will have in our province. That, Mr. Chairman, is penny-wise and pound foolish of the worst kind, because it could end up that he is cutting the best programs and letting the worst programs go ahead, if he isn't aware. All I'm simply saying is, I'm not going to argue with his objective of restraint, let's take that as it's given, they've got four years to do it, but surely to goodness that restraint should be employed in a more rational way. It should be employed to cut back on the bad programs or the programs that have outlived their usefulness or that are relatively ineffective, and improve and aid and abet the good ones.

But if the restraint and cutback is taking place without any of those kinds of criteria, then we really are into a kind of a very foolish game, and I would only, sort of hope that before we go much further in this kind of blind course of action, that the Minister would get a hold of things and say, I'm not going to restrain any more until I know what the heck I'm restraining, and I'm only going to, sort of cut back in those areas which no longer have much usefulness. Until he does that, I'm afraid that the administration of stewardship he's providing this department is very suspect.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I'm rather amazed at the description that the honourable member applies to the process that went through or did not go through. He is entirely going on supposition and I think he demonstrates that he doesn't really have any appreciation for what's involved in administering a department, particularly when he's speaking in reference to compliance with regulations. He speaks as though somehow you would establish 100 percent compliance rate, and in order to establish that sort of objective, Mr. Chairman, there virtually is not the manpower available to do that sort of thing, despite any amount of money that you might have available. So in establishing programs they are indeed looked at very carefully and some judgments are made, some judgments based on the best estimates or the best knowledge of the people involved, as to what they think is an acceptable level of compliance. I can assure the honourable member that it is not 100 percent compliance, and I think that perhaps the previous Minister would agree with me, at least on that point, Mr. Chairman.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, I don't know if the Minister was listening very carefully. I was not insisting that he have 100 percent compliance. I was simply responding to his own statement. Now he

has changed his statement. But previously he had said that we cut back without looking at the specific programs. He said that we simply administered this across-the-board cut, and he said, and I think Hansard will bear out, that I don't know what the impact upon the individual programs will be. He said, "I haven't had time to work that out." Now, I think, Mr. Chairman, the Minister seemed to deny it. I think Hansard will prove me correct, because I listen very carefully. He was saying we had to cut back, we had to follow through with our goals of government severity, and I don't know what the level of compliance or the level of acceptable service will be. All I am saying is, how do you cut something back without having some notion. If 50 percent is the best figure he can do, fine then, he should be able to say so now. If he could say that I am prepared to trade off, one inspector or three inspectors or five inspectors, for a ten percent reduction, or a fifteen percent reduction in numbers of inspections carried out, or the areas of geography covered, or number of man hours spent, then he should be telling us that. That's the kind of information that should be administered in terms of justifying or demonstrating that we know why these cuts were made and who is being affected by them. But if we're simply doing it on sort of a guesstimate or by someone's sort of ad hoc judgment, then that really isn't good enough.

It is his own terminology that I'm using back on him. He is saying, "I am proposing that we can reduce down to what is still an acceptable level of enforcement." I simply wanted to know what that level was. He says, "I don't know what that level is because we haven't bothered to look at it yet."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, it is perhaps ironic that I should be offering even the slightest word of defence for the new Minister of the Crown responsible for this department, but I think that perhaps he can be saved from his own statement, that they have made substantial or significant cuts in the staffing of this department, and that therefore the Member for Fort Rouge would be justified in drawing the conclusion that perhaps vital and necessary functions of the department were no longer capable of being carried out. But my colleague, the Member for Inkster advises me that some examination, perhaps it would be fair to say preliminary examination, shows that in fact, despite the publicity that has been given to so-called cuts in staffing, that with respect to this particular department, that all that has happened is that the number of vacant positions has been reduced, perhaps even disestablished, but that's not a substantive point. Out of it all, and on the bottom line, the net result I believe will indicate that the number of actual persons, staff persons within this department today is approximately the same as it was 12 months ago, within just a very few numbers variation.

Of course, there are different ways that one goes about attempting to show the detail of the administration of any department, including this one, but I think I can visualize in my mind right now just what is unfolding here, nothing sinister, nevertheless, let's keep it simple. The department staffing is about the same as it was a year ago. There has been some decrease in positions, but at the same time, the vacancy rate in terms of numbers of established but vacant positions is less than it was a year ago, so that the end result is that the number of actual persons on staff, on strength of the department is more or less the same as 12 or 24 months ago.

Therefore I assume that the Minister is in a position to carry on with these vital and important functions that this department is charged with, and environmental protection in particular. The Member for Fort Rouge certainly is right in raising this as one of the several important concerns that we must face up to in our day and age with respect to giving more attention, and yes, a greater percentage of our disposable wealth as a country, as a province, indeed, all the countries of this planet, towards the protection of this planet's environment, and our local natural environment.

Of course, the Honourable Member for Roblin is not altogether wrong either. It is one of the very few times, I might say, Mr. Chairman, that I found myself even in partial agreement with him, because when he makes reference to the Shell River and the fact that it has been for all these many, many years an important and desirable natural resource, if I may call it that, to the people living in proximity to it in that part of the province, and indeed to any others who care to visit and camp there, it is unfortunate if yet another further impingement of man is causing, even by the slightest degree, a deterioration of water quality. That community and that river, of course, are witnessing or going through the same kind of sort of agonizing decision that other towns, other communities, have had to go through over the years.

I can think of the fact that it is only in relatively recent years, going back perhaps to the mid-'60s, not much longer than that, that even as important a stream as the Red River was literally being discharged into with large volume institutional untreated wastes that it was really tantamount to being treated like an open sewer. Indeed — and this is no exaggeration, I tell my honourable friend from Roblin — that in the summer of 1961, because of a combination of abnormal drought or dryness, low precipitation and therefore low water levels on the Red, and also however, because of there being absolutely no sewage treatment of the entire sewage output of the University of Manitoba — and that can be considerable, no pun intended — and of Headingly Jail, and of the community of North Kildonan in those days, direct large diameter pipe discharge of sewage into the Red River at all three places, and then some. As a consequence of which that summer whenever westerly winds were blowing, and they are the prevailing winds, the paint on the west side of houses on the east banks of the river were being discoloured, literally discoloured, and in some cases, even blistered.

Now that's admittedly an isolated example, but the honourable members who raise questions of concern for the environment surely can find equally dramatic, indeed, I'm sure more dramatic

examples, if they only care to search their memory or search the records of history. While this is happening on a local scale, there is, in altogether too many other places in this world, environmental disruption and pollution taking place, to the point where some of the people with specialized expertise are beginning to fear and to voice the gravest of concerns with respect to the ultimate destiny of this planet and its people.

Of course, one must never despair, because we have seen dramatic examples of how rivers, streams, once even badly polluted, have been restored to, if not a state of natural equilibrium, something close approaching to it. We all know the Red River, we know from direct experience, it has been cleaned up considerably. Pickerel have never been found or caught anywhere near the dock at Selkirk for about 40 years. Last summer, perhaps the summer before even, but certainly by last summer, pickerel were being caught by some of the young fellows in and around Selkirk almost as a matter of routine.

This has come about, not because of some miracle, or because of wishful thinking, but because of the investment by towns and cities along the Red and by provincial institutions such as the University and Headingly Jail and the City of Winnipeg, most majorly, of many millions of dollars, and that has been a cost of government that I would think would be acceptable to all spectrums of political ideology, presumably.

The same thing has been true, on an even larger scale, with respect to the Rhine River. The same thing is certainly true, equally dramatically true with respect to the City of London, not so much the pollution of the River Thames, but with respect to air pollution, which was very very bad in the decades up to about the late '50s, mid '50s, late '50s, and then with significant improvement.

Mr. Chairman, without going into a long story about that, there is also an irony attached, because one of the reasons why there has been improvement of air quality in that particular city, is because of the conversion away from coal over to relatively clean liquid hydro carbon fuels such as natural gas and oil. But of course, as we all know now, that is living in a fool's paradise, because if any fuel on this earth is in jeopardy in terms of its ultimate long-term supply, it is not coal so much as oil and natural gas. So sometimes there are no easy answers, and what seems to be the most dramatic remedy can sometimes prove to be really to our greater disadvantage.

Let me give one more example. Because of the crusading efforts of certain numbers of people on this continent in the mid '60s, late '60s, by the early '70s it was decided by governments, I believe federally in both the U.S. and Canada, that automobile exhaust standards must be tightened up, a little more red tape and bureaucracy, I'm afraid, but nevertheless, that was the decision. And in order to give effect to it, the only practical way, it was argued, was to introduce such things as catalytic converters and various other kinds of mechanical devices which would, admittedly and demonstrably, clean up, by degree at least, the amount of pollution emission. But lo and behold, the cost, not in dollar terms so much — that's not really so important sometimes — but the cost in energy terms was to compound and aggravate even further the rather horrible pattern of increase in the consumption of non-renewable liquid hydro carbons, oil and gasoline in this case. So now we are turning the clock back in the other direction, and undoubtedly, indeed it has already started, there is a discontinuation of regulatory requirement for the installation of such devices as catalytic converters, related devices that clean up the exhaust, but at the expense of increased consumption of non-renewable fuels. So there are no easy answers in most cases. No easy answers, just intelligent choices. If we're lucky, there are choices.

The Member for Roblin said, and I think he was serious but I can't be sure, that because there was high unemployment in this country, that the people, or most of them in that category of being unemployed, should be assigned, he said, to working on and cleaning up the environment, which made me think of two things immediately.

No. 1, that if it were only done the way he suggests, a million people, average salary of about what? wages, \$8,000, \$9,000 a year, and if you include the expense of keeping somebody at a job, there are always ancillary expenses, always, always. So say, \$8,000, plus \$2,000 or \$3,000 at the least of ancillary expense of keeping a person employed. If they're doing anything, they need some form of tools, equipment, specialized clothing, something, so we're talking then of \$10,000 or \$11,000 per person. And if you take the round figure of a million, then that comes to \$10 or \$11 billion, which lo and behold, by coincidence, happens to be the deficit of the Federal Government this year. So all of a sudden, it's \$22 billion. But then I rather suspect that that would not be supported by honourable gentlemen opposite, since they regard \$11 billion as being untenable.

Maybe it is untenable in the long run, but as Lord Keynes said, in the long run we are all dead. I would like to know' from honourable members opposite, you know, to what extent they are prepared to go beyond lip service to the commitment of public moneys to high priority tasks. Is environmental protection a high priority task? Well then, it seems to me that there should have been some increase in the staffing of the environmental protection division here, the environmental management group. —(Interjection)— I'm not really wanting to be facetious. I believe that we have in place perhaps what I could take the liberty of describing as being a solid environmental management group and a solid capability. You can always get arguments that it should be increased but I believe that we have made a good start, keep things on an even keel. I don't expect 100 percent compliance, or 100 percent enforcement perfection. I'm not one of those who believes that unless you get complete adherence or enforcement that the law shouldn't be on the statute books or the regulations, I believe that they are desirable in and of themselves because they are at the very least guidelines, at the very least information, it's all part of a learning curve, and over the course of years, collectively we learn to do

better in terms of respecting the environment; inspection and enforcement can also improve. I for one, and I don't think any of my colleagues are faulting the government of the day because of some alleged inadequate enforcement or inspection procedures.

May I say in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, that I will take at least half of what the Honourable Member for Roblin said seriously, in the sense that at a time of high unemployment, particularly high unemployment among youth — and that's certainly the phenomenon of the current unemployment here, and by the way all over the free world — just look in any of the international economic journals and you will see that youth unemployment is being written about a good deal because it is dramatically larger and more pronounced and concentrated among youth than ever before. Well, if that's the situation then to try to think creatively of new ways of employing some of the younger people in an environmental protection and improvement situation, really deserves the highest of close attention from senior officials and really from the Ministers of the Crown and the government caucus.

It's not exactly brand new. In the depths of the depression, the late President Franklin Roosevelt initiated, among a host of other programs, — I guess two many programs, he probably would have been called a communist or a Marxist by some of the honourable gentlemen opposite — because they were spinning off programs like alphabet soup in those days, TBA, FAA, CCC, and a whole host of others. But the one that I want to make specific mention of this evening, was the Civilian Conservation Corps. Civilian Conservation Corps really was a forerunner of people employed for the purpose of ameliorating and improving the environment. Maybe not in exactly the same sense that we think of the environment today, but really it did have to do with that indirectly. And it was good for the country, it was good for the environment of the country, it was good for the young people who would otherwise have been in idle unemployment, passive welfare, and I'm wondering why we seem to be hesitant, embarrassed, I don't know what, to think in terms of gearing up for a major effort of that kind once again. Goodness knows there is literally no end to the kinds of things that can be done to improve our local communities and to better guard and safeguard our environment and our natural ecological systems or local subsystems. It will take extra manpower, but I believe that that's what we have something extra of in our country these days, and in our province.

But in the final analysis, there is always the haunting thought too, that we could be doing more in this country. I take the liberty of mentioning this now because it is under the aegis of Mines and Natural Resources — make reference to energy, and that is, at a time of high unemployment, that we could be making a beginning. Some might argue that we are making a beginning in Canada, but it is of such a completely minor incipient beginning that it hardly warrants the term beginning. Toward a beginning to what? A beginning toward the application, the starting of the application of applied technology to the production of renewable energy, not just hydro, because certainly there are three or four provinces in this country who have given a high enough priority to hydro, certainly right up to their fiscal capacity, not fiscal capacity but right up to their credible debenture capacity practically — although I would argue that we have never exceeded it, but I am thinking when speaking of renewable energy in this context, of the possibilities of the practical even if modest, small scale production of energy from biomass, whether it be forest or field or a combination of both. There is in the United States at least signs that are tangible. You can see them. You can look at them, where research and development has been taken beyond academic research and development towards the applying of mechanics and technology itself to see whether it can be made to happen.

We could be doing this in our country and in Manitoba on a very modest scale, but at least we could make a start, and I would hope that the Minister, once he has had an opportunity to become acquainted with the administration of the department that he will be able to turn his mind and ingenuity to that. There is ample scope.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I find myself largely in agreement with the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition. I have no intention of attempting to outdo him in my professed concern for the environment. I think he's quite aware of the interaction between the economy and the state of the environment. The difficulties that we are faced with today is to maintain some type of environmental quality, or a level of environmental quality that contributes positively to the life of individuals and still maintain a functioning economic system as well, and because of the increasing costs of energy, I believe we are faced with a very difficult economic situation. In the immediate term, we have to take a very careful look at the dollars that we are expending, and I don't think that we can assume that simply dollars spent necessarily means a higher quality of environment. There has to be some resolve, some goals to work towards. We have been in government for a matter of a few months and I don't intend to make any lavish promises at this time. We have the Estimates before us that deal with the particular program for the coming year and I suggest that as we go through those, we'll see what programs that we're embarking on in 1978-79.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable House Leader.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to raise a point of order. It has to be almost done every time we embark on a new set of Estimates because my honourable friends opposite seem to keep forgetting that when the change was made in the rules in dealing with the Estimates, it was done specifically to avoid the kind of repetition that I now begin to see developing. My honourable friends

Thursday, April 20, 1978

are debating the administrative item, and I know with a little bit of ingenuity, I suppose you can stretch that to cover almost everything. But that is not the intention of the format of the Estimates. Covering subjects that were covered by the Meer for Fort Rouge and the Opposition House Leader can either be covered far better on the item dealing with Environmental Management, or when we get back on the Minister's Salary. This is an administrative item, and I hope, Mr. Chairman, that we can keep the debate to the item that is under discussion, notwithstanding the kind of ingenuity that has been displayed this evening in wandering away from that particular subject.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: Presumably that was a point of order and I would just like to respond as follows: That the Honourable Government House Leader may well be right. I'm not sure he is. I leave that to my colleague, the Member for Inkster, but certainly if someone helped to set the pattern of airing here, he must include his own colleague the Member for Roblin, who made some, shall we say, somewhat inspiring comments and I was merely responding in the very same vain and subject matter.

MR. JORGENSON: . . . sometimes that's the cross that a House Leader has to bear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If I could just make a remark, I've been listening quite intently this evening, and I have found that everything is appropriate and apropos to the items under discussion. We have wandered somewhat but there has been some suggestion that we are discussing 1.(a)(2) Salaries under Administration, even though we have wandered a little bit. Being a little new, I have to be guided by your judgment, and I would hope that we would have some co-operation, and as the Honourable House Leader did mention, under Administration, 1.(a)(1) Minister's Compensation, it does give us quite a bit of latitude, and if we can get back to that point, I would appreciate it.

The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: On a point of order . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, also a point of order? On the point of order, the Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, just to the point of order, I think that the House Leader makes that point of order in an attempt to save time, and I would suggest that the time can be best saved if that speech is left out on each Estimates, because it's going to happen every time and the Minister is not going to be able to avoid it. Because it can be done, and I think that when the Minister introduces his Estimates at the beginning, it is natural for some debate on the salaries of the administration people to deal in some general matters. That doesn't mean that the change has been a waste, because I then think the other items do deal with specifics and go more quickly, but I think if the Minister raises the point to try to save time, then he should take my suggestion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, I don't normally speak to this kind of point of order, but I think it is useful to set the precedents if we're going to examine these Estimates. What I would assume would be within the latitude of this particular item, would be to certainly question the Minister in terms of the relative priorities that are being placed in the administration in terms of the allocation of funds and of people, which was really the thrust of my remarks, not in terms of the general universal environmental protection, but to determine from the Minister, which I have not yet been able to find out, what judgments and choices within the administration have been made related to his sense his sense of priority of his department, and whether that sense of priority is being followed through with amounts of dollars and emphasis on one program or the other, which I think is a fair statement within the administrative scope, otherwise the rest of it we can't make any sense of until we get that sense of what the Minister's position is. I assume we'll be allowed that kind of discretion in our remarks.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, just when I got mixed up with my numbers, I asked a question and the Honourable Minister is quite right, somehow I turned the page and where I knew 1 was supposed to be, I saw 4. If the Minister will turn his page, he'll see the mistake I made. Where I got to 4.(a) I wanted to be talking about 1.(a) and he's quite correct. He did give me the answer that I wanted, that really one of a certain senior level of personnel, that the only item that we looked to in No. 1 which is a substantial change, is that there is one salary that has been eliminated. That is the salary of one of the senior personnel, who, if we look to the person himself, Mr. Cawley left, Mr. Roper became the Deputy Minister and there were no other changes. There was nobody, for instance, to take Mr. Roper's previous position. And that was I think what the Minister agreed to, but then he said something which puzzled me a little, because he said — and maybe I'm going to be walking into some

kind of a problem — I don't remember that there was anything other to Mr. Cawley's position than the Deputy Minister of the department. That Mr. Cawley took the position that was previously held by Mr. Mayer, who was a Deputy Minister, Mr. Wallace who was a Deputy Minister, and then Mr. Cawley became the Deputy Minister. Mr. Roper took Mr. Gobert's previous position as the Assistant Deputy Minister in charge of Mines and also became Mr. Cawley's assistant as well.

But in other respects, Mr. Weber, Mr. Podolsky, Dr. Bowen, and then Mr. Haugh was made an Assistant Deputy when we went into the mining field in a big way, but the Minister appeared to suggest that one position, previously occupied, and I think he said policy adviser, was not refilled. Am I misunderstanding, did Mr. Cawley have a designation other than as Deputy Minister of the department?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, first of all, this is not the item where the ADMs are located. This is in the Minister's and the Deputy Minister's office. The position that Mr. Roper now occupies is the position that Mr. Cawley had. Mr. Roper was in the position of policy adviser. That position has been eliminated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: I got the impression that you were saying it was the other way around. Frankly, the mistake is mine. I regarded Mr. Roper as an assistant to Mr. Cawley, Assistant Deputy Minister, and for one period in charge of the Mines Branch essentially but as an assistant to Mr. Cawley throughout the department. However, that explains it. The position that you referred to as policy adviser is the one that Mr. Roper previously held and the essential elimination from item No. 1 totally which is reduced somewhat, largely I would think, salary increases, etc., the other would be taken by — well, no, there is some other item here that I haven't seen — but the essential item in that area was the elimination of one of those senior people.

MR. RANSOM: Essentially the elimination of the one staff man year of the position that I had always termed a policy adviser. In addition, there were some minor adjustments in other ups and downs of salaries.

MR. GREEN: That's the only significant change. There is one staff man year out of item No. 1 that has been eliminated. Otherwise, things are almost on an even keel.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1. (a)(2)—pass; the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. J. R. (Bud) BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I was very interested in the remarks of the Minister in response to the Member for Inkster and one of the remarks he made is that some of the changes reflect policy change and some reflect restraint. So I think over the debate that has taken place so far relative to the Estimates, we have knocked into a cocked hat the idea of restraint, because for all intents and purposes, the budget hasn't changed that much. It's pretty well the same.

Learning from the House Leader that sometimes you can make your case by telling a story and being reminded that the First Minister doesn't like dialectic arguments, I too am not too fond of dialectics because in the final analysis you end up in the position of nothing, and I have yet to find anybody, even Haeckel's explanation that nothing destroys itself. I haven't found anybody to explain that to me. So I won't be involved in dialectics too much in this House. But nevertheless, I was very interested in the Minister's remarks when he talks about listening to the administrators set the standards which are going to be acceptable to the government. I, as one of the citizens of the province, am a little bit disturbed about that. I too, will admit that you can't attain that 100 percent environmental control or environmental protection, but nevertheless a person is elected to establish those levels and accept the responsibility of them.

In making my case, the story I intend to tell is of a classmate of mine who, in graduating, was hired by one of the Caribbean Island governments to be a milk inspector. He went down to this island as a milk inspector and six months after he was there he closed one of the milk plants, and the owners of the plant went and talked to the governor and the governor opened the plant again. So he flew home. He just packed his bag and came home. Well, they flew after him because it was a tourist island, they had a very good tourist trade. And to get him to go back because this was bad publicity to have this inspector resign or quit, because they had no intention of protecting the people by inspecting their milk plants. So anyway they promised him to try and clean up the mess and he went back. They did. Nevertheless, I tell this story, if you don't intend to do anything, you don't need anybody. I think the Minister will have to accept that as a far out conclusion of his argument. So it is his responsibility to tell Manitoba just exactly what standard he is going to establish for the department. It's not up to the administrators to tell the Minister what is acceptable. It's up to the Minister to tell this House what is acceptable.

It disturbs me somewhat, Mr. Chairman, because one of the first things that we had in the government, they say that if somebody's not complying with the statute of this particular province then we'll ask the Attorney-General not to press charges. Exempt them from the Act. Now if this is going to be government policy, then he can further cut back his staff. Because regardless of what standard you set, there is a relationship between the number of people that you have working and therefore a direct relationship between the number of dollars that you allocate for any particular

program, and the effectiveness of that enforcement or standard that you're going to reach. And whether you try and evade the question by saying that 100 percent is not attainable, does not change the situation, that even if your target is only 20 percent enforcement or 30 percent or 40 percent it takes a certain number of people to keep it at that level, then those are the numbers of people that you have. I hope that the Minister, as we go through line by line, will continue his candour because he has been candid with the House in the answers that he has given us to the questions that have been asked. He may wonder why I as a Member for Winnipeg Centre, and it's a wonder somebody doesn't chirp over there, "How many mines are in Winnipeg Centre?" because that is usually the argument, that nobody should be involved. All of the mines and minerals and everything else that are in this province are held in trust by this government.

One of the first things that I learned as a new MLA being a member of a Committee that was going around the province relative to LGDs, was the policy of your group when you were in government before to give away our natural resources, to give them away. The deal that was made with INCO, that is a sweetheart, that is really a sweetheart. The idea that INCO can come into this Province of Manitoba where the minerals are and be given the deal that they were given over the years, make the money that they made over the years from Thompson, take the profits from them and when it becomes a little bit uncomfortable because of our environmental control or because of our wages, invest the profits from that particular mine in Guatemala or Venezuela or wherever they are — I think that is a betrayal of the trust to the government of the natural resources which belong to the people of the Province of Manitoba.

There are some mines or some minerals which are owned by the people who hold title to those lands but nevertheless all of the rest of it is in trust to this government and the announcements that have been made so far that are going to be administered by the moneys that we are talking about right at this particular moment, Mr. Chairman, I'm most apprehensive.

So that as we go through these items, I hope the Minister will point out that this is a definite change in policy and he doesn't hide behind that word which I will not even say because it has almost become a dirty word in my life. These are cutbacks. I hope that he will have the intestinal fortitude, as the Minister of Industry and Commerce does — he doesn't believe in government being in business. So I hope that the Minister, in going through the administration of his portfolio, has the candour to tell the people of the Province of Manitoba that all of the minerals, all of the resources of this province will be given away; we won't be able to develop them ourselves; we won't be able to go into partnerships with people to look for them, exploit them; that he has got us all in this province in the position where the only people who can develop our resources are people from outside of the province primarily. And if that is the policy of the Minister, then I think it is incumbent upon him to advise the people of this province.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to go back just briefly to a couple of items that were under discussion earlier in the evening and this afternoon. I found the discussion earlier this evening about numbers of staff somewhat confusing and I believe the Minister had undertook to provide us with some figures laid out in document form for the Committee tomorrow.

In the interest of saving time, I would refer him to a two-page document that his colleague, the Minister of Industry and Commerce, produced during his Estimates which gave for both of the years 1978-79 and 1977-78, a breakdown by a different section of the department showing the various categories so that a direct comparison can be made very easily. If he doesn't have a copy of this, I would be willing to pass it over to him for his interest. If such a document were made available to members of the Committee, I believe that the discussion could probably go quicker as we move through the department.

Another one of my colleagues who was unable to be here this evening wanted to know if we could get an organizational chart of the department for members of the Committee. In his absence, I'll pass on that request to the Minister, if he can give me an indication that such a chart would be made available to members perhaps tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: I believe we can make such a chart available. It is the same organization as existed in the department in the previous year.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to go back a little further now to the question that I asked the Minister this afternoon and appeal to him to reconsider the decision that he made at that time when he declined to give me an answer to a question having to do with the preliminary Estimates. The Minister may not be aware that this House doesn't take kindly to a member who simply refuses to give information to the Committee. I wonder if the Minister wouldn't care to reconsider that . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: On a point of order, the Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Cuairman, on a point of order, that matter was already dealt with today.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: I do not believe that the issue was dealt with. The Member for Roblin may think in his opinion that there was sufficient discussion on the matter but I would remind him that as a member of this Committee, I can raise the question as many times as I wish to.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the same point of order, the Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: I think the record will show that the matter was raised earlier today in the Committee. The Minister made a ruling and I think that it should go to rest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On a point of order, the Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: On the point of order, Ministers make no rulings in this House, Mr. Chairman. The fact is that a subject is canvassed; the member said he would like the Minister to reconsider. I do not remember when the question of reconsideration was previously raised and I think we will save a lot of time if we don't have that kind of interruption.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: On the same point of order, I withdraw my allegation that the Minister had made a ruling May I say again in correction of that allegation, that the Minister made a statement in answer to the question that was raised by the Honourable Member for St. Vital on the same subject matter. I think the rules of our Committee said that we deal with the matter only once.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Still to the point of order, Mr. Chairman, I am, as the Member for Inkster noted, asking the Minister to reconsider the decision that he made. Now, if you wish to rule that out of order, then we will take it from there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I acknowledge the Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: I am quite prepared to attempt to answer any question dealing with the printed Estimates before us.

MR. WALDING: Well, Mr. Chairman, I wish the Minister had heard the extent of my appeal to him before making a decision so abruptly, or repeating his decision so abruptly. The question was asked not as any deadly trap for the Minister. He should know that in the normal circumstances that it wouldn't have been raised by me or by any member on this side.

I wonder if the Minister, being new to this House and new to the portfolio and standing up to present his Estimates to the House for the first time was not just a little nervous and understandably so, especially knowing that our chief critic on this side was the Member for Inkster, and wondering whether that nervousness perhaps might not have made him over cautious or just a little bit too defensive or maybe acting a little too hastily in this case. What I believe happened when he refused to give us that answer was that he caused far more debate than would have happened if we had been given that information. I would remind him and other members of the Committee again, Mr. Chairman, that his colleague, the Minister of Industry and Commerce, when asked exactly the same question, gave that information to the Committee very readily, very promptly. I was satisfied with it and I believe my colleagues were too and we moved on to the next item; there was no delay. I would assure the Minister that exactly the same thing would happen now.

Let me go back. The reason that the matter was raised was because of his colleague, the Minister of Finance, who raised the subject in the first place. What we were attempting to do was simply to check on that statement and it was an unsupported statement, Mr. Chairman, there was no documentation or backup given, that is all that we were trying to do. We were not trying to pin down this particular Minister or make things very difficult for him. We were trying to obtain that information in respect to another Minister of the Crown. Now the Minister of Mines might feel that there is some matter of Cabinet loyalty involved here but I would suggest to him that perhaps he is carrying that matter of Cabinet loyalty too far; that he does not have the responsibility of somehow protecting or supporting the Minister of Finance when he makes some particular statement and that it is the responsibility of the Minister of Finance to support and to defend the statement that he made. It is not the task, the job of the Minister of Mines to do that for him.

Let me suggest again to the Minister of Mines and appeal to him to consider that decision that he made this afternoon. Simply give the Committee the figures of what the original preliminary

Estimates were and what was the amount that he recommended to the Cabinet? Two figures will do it and we can move on, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I can only restate my position that my understanding of the discussion of Estimates is that we deal with the printed Estimates that are before us. There is a comparison between last year's expenditures and the projected expenditures for this coming year and as we go through it line by line, I am quite prepared to give every detail that I possibly can in comparison between last year and this year and the changes that have taken place in the programs. I am not prepared to discuss information that is not directly related to the information that is presented here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, can I ask the Minister, as we go line by line on each of these amounts and appropriations, whether he is willing to give us, for each of those, the amount of the preliminary Estimates for that particular line and the amount that he recommended to Cabinet on that particular line?

MR. RANSOM: No, Mr. Chairman, the recommendations that I make to Cabinet are for me to know about and for Cabinet to know about. They are not for discussion here. I don't believe they ever have been for discussion here. I am prepared to deal with last year's expenditures, the changes that we have made to arrive at the estimated expenditures for 1978-79.

MR. WALDING: Well, Mr. Chairman, I have to wonder what it is that this Minister is trying to cover up, what he is ashamed of and why he will not share that information with the members of this Committee. His colleague who sits behind him and just to one side felt no embarrassment. He apparently had nothing to hide when it came to his preliminary Estimates or his recommendations to the Cabinet. Mind you, he did have a little more experience in the House and perhaps that is what led him to be open and to give freely to the members of the Committee that little bit of information.

The only conclusion that is possible to draw in the circumstances, Mr. Chairman, is that the Minister of Mines, as distinct from the Minister of Industry and Commerce, did not in fact reduce those preliminary Estimates at all. We can only come to the conclusion that he took the Estimates that were given to him by his department, didn't exercise those cutbacks or that restraint at all and simply took them to the Cabinet where the strong men in the Cabinet leaned on the Minister and sharpened their pencils, took out their axe and chopped a little here and chopped a little there and that's what it is that is brought to us.

We can only conclude that the Minister of Mines is in fact a little too embarrassed to admit to that and that's the reason that he sits in silence and says, "No, no, no" to this Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, I cannot control what the honourable member wishes to conclude, but if he is prepared to go to the effort of looking at the total expenditures of the department last year and the projected expenditures for this year, he will see that there is a substantial reduction.

The Honourable Member for Inkster said that he did not think that he would have been able to, or would have wanted to, bring about that type of reduction. So how the Honourable Member for St. Vital can say that somehow we didn't make any reductions is certainly not apparent to anyone on this side.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, the Minister either misunderstands me or deliberately distorts my words. I did not say that there was no cut. I assumed that there was a very definite reduction from the first preliminary Estimates that the Minister received to the final figure that we see before us now. I made this assumption with Industry and Commerce and asked the Minister of Industry and Commerce if this was in fact true, and yes, he agreed that it was. He then went on to tell us that he had in his consideration of those Estimates, had cut something like \$2 million and a little bit more, \$2.3 million from those preliminary Estimates, and that that was the figure that he had submitted to Cabinet and that Cabinet had further cut them down by another \$600,000.00. It seems obvious that the Minister of Industry and Commerce had satisfactorily carried out his duties as a loyal Conservative and a member of the Cabinet in cutting back these Estimates.

I am simply asking the Minister of Mines, did he do his job in the same manner, or is he now too embarrassed to tell us that he did not?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(a)(2)—pass — the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: Well, Mr. Chairman, I hadn't intended to prolong debate but, you know, the Minister is absolutely correct. It is incumbent upon him, and there is now way of us forcing him to do that. In fact, I kind of empathize with him. I got myself into a little bit of hot water last year with some figures. I

used Stats Canada figures. A new precedent has been set really. The Minister of Industry and Commerce in his usual candour way shared this information with us, but it should be noted that this group over there went through the Province of Manitoba telling people that we were stupid, incompetent and you're trimming fat. To date, including what the Minister has put before us to date, they haven't substantiated these charges.

We have Mr. Riley, who we can't get at, from Texas giving interviews when he's down looking after his dogs. I understand that he has got dogs down there.

It was for hundreds of millions of dollars that we were going to spend in addition to what we had printed last year. So surely the Minister will understand why we are pressing him for some substantiation to these charges, these allegations.

So I join with the Member for St. Vital, that while there is no way that we can force the Minister to produce these figures, nevertheless, the truth is coming out, Mr. Chairman. These allegations that they have been bandying about, including evening before last when the First Minister got up here and all these horror stories he was going to bring out — I was in here with bated breath yesterday. I listened to the most boring speech I've heard in the nine years that I've been here, so that when the Minister sits there and wonders why we're pressing him on this particular point, it is because of these allegations.

I don't mind the present Member for Wolseley going through my constituency and telling people I'm a communist and an atheist and everything else, but when you people as a political group, collectively, go through this province and say that there is fat in there, that when we were in government we were a bunch of lazy bums, and even worse than that — the opulent society, the whole citizenry, under our administration, expected too much.

During these Estimates, we intend to probe and find out just exactly where this fat was.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding that we are dealing with Item 1.(a)(3) on Other Expenditures in Administration, and if the honourable gentlemen opposite have some questions on that item, I'll surely attempt to answer them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(a)(2)—pass; 1.(a)(3)—pass; 1.(b)(1)—pass; 1.(b)(2)—pass; 1.(c)(1)—pass — The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether the Minister would check the records to see whether the Minister ever recommended what should appear in Water Commission reports, or had Water Commission reports edited and sent back to the department and presented in a way which reflected the Minister's view rather than the Water Commission's view?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I have had no reports put forward to me by the Water Commission, I believe.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has all of the records of this government since 1969, and I am asking the Minister whether he is able to find any occasions when the Minister told the Water Commission what they should have in their reports, or edited their reports, sent them back and then had them brought to the House as reports of the Water Commission, edited by the Minister?

MR. NSOM: Well, Mr. Chairman, the honourable member and I seem to have a little difficulty understanding each other. I thought he asked me whether I had received any reports from the Water Commission. I have not taken the time to search through the records to see if the previous member had taken any action of the nature to which he refers.

MR. GREEN: Then I gather that no such action has been brought to the attention of the Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Correct, Mr. Chairman, no such action has been brought to my attention.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: On this particular point, Mr. Chairman, one of the regrettable things about responsible government is, as we become Ministers, we become responsible for everything. You are responsible for what we did in there, and we will be responsible, when we go back in, for what you're doing at the present time.

This is a very serious question that the Member for Inkster, the House Leader for the Opposition, has asked, and I think it is incumbent upon the Minister, now that the member has raised it, to go back through the files and check it. And if he doesn't know, the proper answer to the House is that at the present time I haven't got that information. I will check. Either that or refuse to answer the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(c)(1)—pass; 1.(c)(2)—pass; (c)—pass; 1.(d)(1)—pass — The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I would like the Minister to advise whether the Clean Environment

Thursday, April 20, 1978

Commission will, under his department, act at the instigation of the government as was suggested by numerous members, particularly the Member for Rock Lake and the Member for, well I think Roblin but I'll take it back if I'm wrong, in suggesting that we went and told the Clean Environment Commission what orders to make throughout this province. Now I tell the Minister that we didn't, that the Clean Environment Commission made its own decisions as the result of the evidence that was presented to it. But I want to know whether there will be a new policy now that there is a government whose members believe that that's what the Clean Environment Commission should be doing, or does, and that is, follows the orders of the government as to telling people when they should stop a pig farm or stop a smoke stack or prevent some pollution into a river, that it's going to be the position of the government to tell the Clean Environment Commission what they should be doing rather than let them make findings as an independent commission which they have been over the past nine years?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, the relationship of the Clean Environment Commission to the government is unchanged.

MR. GREEN: Would he also agree, then, if he says it is unchanged so there is no equivocation in his answer, in that the Clean Environment acts independently on the basis of the evidence presented to it and receives no direction as to its decisions — the decisions it will make — from the government.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, that certainly is the way the Commission has operated since my assuming responsibilities in this government and I have no evidence to indicate that it operated otherwise previously.

MR. GREEN: I would thank the Honourable Minister for indicating that. I would hope that he would make it known to some of the members on the other side of the House, who continually insisted that the Clean Environment Commission was the agent of the administration in the decisions that it made, and not the commission of the administration, but that it acted under the direction of the government as to the decisions that it made, and I'm glad that that is not so. I assure the member that his belief that it wasn't so under the previous administration is correct and I would hope that he brought that to the attention of some of the members of the government backbench, who believe that it should be otherwise, and was otherwise.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I was unaware of any difficulties that the honourable member may have been having and I have not been, therefore, attempting to deal with those alleged difficulties.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(d)(1)—pass; 1.(d)(2)—pass; (d)—pass — The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I move the Committee rise.

MR. JORGENSON: I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if the Honourable House Leader would like to finish this Item. He hasn't called the whole. No, we have not called the complete item. I had intended to move the Committee rise as soon as we completed this Item. —(Interjections)—

MR. CHAIRMAN: I haven't dealt with 1.(a)(1) at this point.

MR. JORGENSON: Well, 81 is the complete Item, and normally that is called at the end of the particular Item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 81—pass. Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

The Chairman reported upon the Committee's deliberations to Mr. Speaker and requested leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

MR. SPEAKER: The - Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. ABE KOVNATS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Meer for Winnipeg Centre, that the report of the Committee be accepted.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Mines and Resources that the House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned until 10:00 a.m. Friday.