

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, 23 March, 1982

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. D. James Walding (St. Vital): Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . .

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. JERRY T. STORIE (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Rupertsland, that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. LAURENT DESJARDINS (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, judging from some of the news reports, members of the House are undoubtedly wondering how the residents and hospitals of Western Manitoba are coping with the job actions implemented by the physicians in that part of the province earlier this week. As it appears that these job actions are putting pressure on the outpatient departments of certain hospitals. I've asked the Manitoba Health Services Commission to monitor the situation closely to determine precisely what problems are being encountered.

I've also asked the Commission to record any additional costs incurred, either by hospitals for additional staffing, or by doctors from changes in billing practices. While it is normal practice for unions to strike and the membership to absorb the cost of the strike, it would appear in this situation that the MMA are encouraging certain of their members to finance the job action by additional charges against the Provincial Treasury. This is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker, to this government and I have therefore instructed the Manitoba Health Services Commission to provide me with a list of alternatives as to how these additional costs may be recovered from those responsible for incurring the costs.

With regard to the matter of standards of care, I've already written to the College of Physicians and Surgeons asking them to advise me how they are monitoring the situation at the present time to ensure that standards are maintained and to ensure that medical services required by the residents of Manitoba are continuing to be provided.

I also intend to ask the College of Physicians and Surgeons as to whether or not the job action recom-

mended by the Manitoba Medical Association that would see nonemergent cases being referred to the emergency department of a hospital, is in fact good medicine by their definition.

I am also asking the College of Physicians and Surgeons if such irresponsible action by some of their members could not have the effect of impeding required services for true emergency cases, if and when these emergency departments have been inundated with non-emergent cases.

Mr. Speaker, I will keep the House fully informed with regard to the foregoing as I receive reports from the Manitoba Health Services Commission and the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L.R.(Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the Opposition I wish to thank the Honourable Minister of Health for that statement, Sir.

I must say that we would have two criticisms at this juncture. One, the action being taken by the Minister and the Manitoba Health Services Commission seems somewhat late. There are a number of patients in Westman, particularly in the Brandon area, who have already been seriously inconvenienced and the Brandon General Hospital itself has had severe additional pressures placed on it in the last 24 to 36 hours because contingency planning and pre-planning obviously was not conducted by the government or the Commission or by the Commission at the government's request.

When we discussed this issue last week, the Minister of Health advised the House that it was up to the College of Physicians and Surgeons to monitor this sort of thing. He indicated quite clearly that he had no contingency plans in place. Today, he concedes rightly that contingency plans are necessary and so 36 hours after the work-to-rule campaign began, we are seeing the emergence for the first time of some contingency planning, Mr. Speaker.

We cannot other than criticize the Minister and the government for that slow response to an action which they foresaw, which all Manitoba knew was coming, some seven to ten days ago, if not longer than that.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I have to ask the Minister and I will do so during question period, whether fee schedule negotiations are under way between the Commission and the MMA and if not, why not? There is no reason, Sir, notwithstanding the difficulty, notwithstanding the binding arbitration dispute, and notwithstanding the inconveniences caused all around by this work-to-rule campaign, there is no reason why the two sides at the urging and initiation of the government cannot be attempting to get together to deal with fee schedules for 1982-83. If the government has not invoked that kind of action, if the government has not taken steps to get those negotiations under way, then it is at fault, Sir, for the first time in this situation, at fault for not trying to resolve this situation and create a climate where the binding arbitration

issue could be settled peacefully.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. AL MACKLING (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table a copy of the Annual Report of the department. I'm advised that in its finished printed form, it's not available yet, but in accordance with the rules, I want to file a copy of the report. I think the Clerk has a couple of other copies if members do want to see them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. ROLAND PENNER (Fort Rouge): Mr. Chairman, I beg leave to table the 1981 Annual Report of the Manitoba Human Rights Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we reach Oral Questions might I direct the attention of honourable members to the galleries where we have 26 students of Grade 5 standing of the Governor Semple School. These students are under the direction of Mrs. Arvenitites. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Johns.

There are also 30 students of Grade 9 standing from the Ken Seaford Junior High School. These students are under the direction of Mrs. Roberta Carrns and this school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Kildonan.

We also have 42 visitors of the 84th Air Cadets, Thunder Bay, Ontario, who are under the direction of Captain Horton.

On behalf of all the honourable members I welcome you here today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism, and it pertains to the small business relief program. Can the Minister inform the House if the final guidelines for eligibility of that program have been issued to date?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. MURIEL SMITH (Osborne): The guidelines have been made available.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, in the press release of the eligibility it said it must be demonstrated that owners or shareholders cannot contribute further equity. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the Minister inform the House what is meant by further equity. Does this mean that people's

houses, cars, personal properties, will have to be made available as equity to be eligible for this program?

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, the intent of that is the further financial contribution in the area that one would normally draw on finances for a business operation. It doesn't mean one's personal belongings.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the question, the Federal Government program that they have for small business outlines very clearly the eligibility regarding that particular statement, and I ask the Minister if there is going to be a statement made regarding the equity that people will have to put forward regarding this program.

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, any clarification that's required with regard to those details will be made available.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister, there are three private sector boards supporting the three enterprised Manitoba Small Business Assistance Centres. These boards are made up from people from private industry to advise the government. There are six private sector boards to advise on six specific industries within the province. Can the Minister inform the House what is meant by further equity? Does this mean that peoples' houses, cars, personal properties will have to be made available as equity to be eligible for this program?

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, the intent of that is the further financial contribution in the area that one would normally draw on finances for a business operation. It doesn't mean one's personal belongings.

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MRS. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, any clarification that's required with regard to those details will be made available.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister, there are three private sector boards supporting the three Enterprise Manitoba Small Business Assistance Centres. These boards are made up of people from private industry to advise the government. There are six private sector boards to advise on six specific industries within the province. Can the Minister inform the House if these private sector boards had discussions with the government or was the program discussed with the government before it was brought forward and the eligibility guidelines brought down?

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, the consultation was widespread in an informal sense. It's a program that the party promoted during the election and they consulted anyone they thought would have relevant

information. Those boards were not specifically consulted because they didn't come under the particular program; they did not have responsibility for that particular program.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, this program is for —(Interjection)— Small Business Relief Program is what it's called. Could I ask the Minister if any of the industries such as the small business section of the banks, or the small business section of the co-operatives, or the small business section of the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce, was there specific discussion with these organizations regarding the eligibility guidelines and the program in general?

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, there were discussions specifically with the banks and informally with the other groups that have been named. One of the difficulties in developing this program is that there is no institution in this society that has the required data so that we had to make the best guesstimate we could on the basis of available data. We found the banks very co-operative in sharing with us the kind of information they have and we have designed the program as carefully as we possibly could so that our projections should come in as predicted.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. A. BRIAN RANSOM (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Some confusion seems to have arisen concerning the extent of the federal cutbacks to the province and the impact that will have upon provincial revenues. It has ranged, Mr. Speaker, from initial estimates, I believe, in excess of \$150 million to an indication yesterday by the Minister that it was going to be in the range of \$63 million. This morning there is a press report to lead one to believe that the actual impact on provincial revenues will be approximately \$38 million.

I wonder if the Minister of Finance would care to clear up the misunderstanding that may exist with regard to those figures?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I will do my best to. There were a large number of different figures coming out over the last number of months because of three different proposed equalization formulas.

First of all, the existing formula which exists until March 31st; secondly, the Ontario formula which was initially put forth by the Federal Government on November 12th, 1981; and thirdly, the five-province average which came out later.

In addition to that, there were a number of other factors which complicated the issue. One was the census figures of 1981 which became available within the last month-and-a-half or so and which resulted in some negative adjustments for Manitoba because of our population loss relative to the total population of Canada.

Finally, there were some differences, some changes, as a result of specific measures negotiated by the

provinces with respect to entering into the new equalization proposal. There was a transitional assistance arrangement for Manitoba in its initial three years.

There was one other factor and that was the matter of an offsetting increase in tax revenue to the province as a result of the November 12th Budget. We started off with an estimated loss of \$160 million in November. At that time, there was a projected offset of a \$31-million tax increase which would have, you could say, provided us with a total loss of \$130 million. That \$160 million now, dropped down with the changes since November 12th to approximately \$60 million and the tax increase to offset it had dropped from \$31 million to \$24 million because of the changes in December to the November Budget. That's where the approximate \$38-million figure comes from for the year 1982-83, but I would hasten to add that although that doesn't sound as significant as the numbers that were being thrown around at first, the total numbers net after having deducted our increase in taxation benefits over the five years still amounts to \$719 million. Maybe that will help the honourable member.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister how much money he expects to get by way of federal transfers in 1982-83 as compared to 1981-82?

MR. SCHROEDER: I don't have the 1981-82 figures in front of me, but I believe that in equalization we were expecting approximately \$390 million for 1981-82 and we are now expecting \$431 million for equalization. I don't have the 1981-82 EPF figure. We are now expecting \$464 million from the Federal Government in EPF payments for 1982-83.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, it would appear from those figures that actually the province will be receiving more money in 1982-83 than they did in 1981-82, which of course does not constitute a cutback. I wonder if the Minister would undertake to check those figures in detail and provide them to the House.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister could advise the House under the new fiscal arrangements that are to be brought in, what percentage of post-secondary education costs will the Federal Government bear?

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Speaker, I don't have the exact percentage. I certainly would like to get back to the honourable member on that question, but he suggested that there was no cutback because there will be more funding in 1982-83 than in 1981-82. There is a cutback from what we would have received under the old plan. I must say I'm glad that the honourable member is not doing the negotiating for Manitoba, because if he was taking the position that this was a good deal then, indeed, we would have ended up quitting with our bargaining a long time ago.

There is a serious decrease from where we would have been under the old system, and in the view of this government when we get less under a new so-called improved plan than we would have gotten under an old unimproved plan, then we prefer the unimproved plan to the new improved plan. We are concerned. In fact, Mr. Speaker, this government is so concerned about a possible misunderstanding by the Conserva-

tive Party of the effects of the new arrangements that just afternoon I was in touch with Jake Epp, the Member for Provencher, to discuss some of the problems we are having, because I understand that some of the federal Conservative members have been taken in by some of the Liberal numbers, Flora MacDonald for instance. I believe that when all the figures are out the members on the other side will again agree that Mr. MacEachen's numbers, although they sound very nice, the bottom line is that Manitoba loses 719 million from where we would have been under the old system.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I object to the Minister trying to say that I favour the position that the Federal Government has taken. What I have attempted to do, Mr. Speaker, is to find out which figures are accurate, because one can go back in the record and see that first of all there was talk of \$161 million cutback; then \$120 million cutback. Then the Minister couldn't tell us what the cutback was; then the First Minister went to Brandon and said it was at least 100 million; two days later the Minister makes a statement in the House that it's 63 million; this morning in the paper it says that it's 38 million, Mr. Speaker. All we're asking for is a clarification of the figures. I believe in his answer the Minister undertook to take that. Perhaps he would confirm that he is indeed going to get the answers — specific answers — to those questions.

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Speaker, I will do my best to provide full detailed answers possibly with tables so that they can be more clearly understood. I recognize that there is some difficulty in following all these numbers and in my first answer I very specifically tried to explain why there are all these complications. There is a good reason why we came from 160 million down to the 38 million and it has to do with those various items that I first referred to.

Again, I will provide the Member for Turtle Mountain with as many numbers as I can and in fact, I will try to get that done before the end of this afternoon. I would encourage the members on the other side, rather than to sit there and suggest that because we're getting a few more 1982-83 dollars than 1981-82 dollars saying there's no cutback, to support the Manitoba position so that we will not lose as much money as we currently would be losing under the new system.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. DONALD ORCHARD (Pembina): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System. Did the government instruct the Manitoba Telephone System to place an additional satellite dish in Thompson?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. LEONARD S. EVANS (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, the MTS has responded to the needs of the operator in Thompson and I indicated to that member the other day, I think we're getting repetitive questions here. The fact is that the MTS, by this action, I

believe, has met the needs, and is meeting the needs of the people in that good community of Thompson.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Speaker, once again, I ask a very direct and very simple question. Did the government instruct MTS to place the satellite dish in Thompson? I don't want the rhetoric that we've been getting. I would just prefer a clear answer. Did the government instruct?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, on March 15th the Honourable Member for Steinbach asked the question, he wanted to know about the trust fund that I'd previously allowed for \$2 million for the program of capital facilities. I'm informed that because the previous administration had offered the capital facilities programs at the rate of \$2 million for two years that we are now in a position that we must remain within the limits of their revenue allocated one-year period. The trust fund is completely depleted and we will review this during the presentation of the department Estimates.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye): I wonder if the Minister could inform the House whether or not the formula that was adopted, I believe by the government when he was a member back seven, eight years ago and the previous administration, whether that formula which divides the lottery revenues between Cultural Affairs and the Recreation and Sports Departments, has the government changed that particular formula?

MR. DESJARDINS: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

MR. GARY FILMON (Tuxedo): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for Housing in this province. In view of the government's announcements I believe some five weeks ago of their Mortgage Interest Rate Relief Program, I wonder if the Minister could tell the House how many Manitobans thus far, who are faced with the adverse effects of mortgage renewals, have qualified for the government Mortgage Interest Relief Program?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Housing.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, I'll take that as notice, I don't have the statistics with me, but while I have the floor, might I indicate that the forms that the honourable member was asking about are being mailed out this week and now are available.

I would also like to answer a question in respect to another matter, Mr. Speaker. An honourable member asked in respect to the Parks Branch's activities in respect to the Falcon Motor Hotel and I'm in a position to — (Interjection) — yes, they asked about the El'nor Hotel and that hotel is not involved in the proceedings that the Parks Branch were compelled to initiate in

respect to what is apparently really a derelict building, left derelict largely because of the fire that occurred. It's most unfortunate, but the owners of that property have not been enabled to restore it and it is a problem being there on the right-of-way on the highway, I should say. The department is concerned to have that property cleared, if it's not being developed and that is what has taken place, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FILMON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I wonder, following up, firstly I'm pleased that only five weeks after the government has started to publicize the Mortgage Interest Relief Program, we finally got forms out. That's a good sign, I suppose. I wonder if the Minister could tell us just what is the amount allocated in the Budget for this year for the advertising program which is currently under way on radio, I believe television, and certainly in the newspaper for the Critical Home Repair Program.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, I don't have the details of the advertising budget at hand but I can assure the honourable member that the expenses will be far less than the propaganda that he put out when he was in office.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that I can't recall any particular advertising campaign that was conducted by MHRC during my term as Minister, he's going to have to go quite some way to achieve that. I wonder if the Minister could indicate to us what advertising agency is being used to prepare the advertising program.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, again I'll have to take that as notice, but I'm sure it's a much more effective advertising agency than the honourable members used.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. MAUREEN HEMPHILL (Logan): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I rise in reply to the question raised by the Honourable Member for La Verendrye. I'm sorry that he's not here to hear the answer to the question. I'm sure he's going to be very pleased with the information.

I have specific information regarding the property tax situation in Hanover School Division to present to him, Mr. Speaker. First of all, as he is aware, and as I have announced in this House previously, the Hanover School Division, like all other school divisions in the Province of Manitoba, faces a 4.2 mill rise in the Education Support Levy, Mr. Speaker. I want to make it clear that they face that 4.2 mill increase in the Education Support Levy as a direct result of the Conservatives' Education Support Program, Mr. Speaker.

This was a program that was legislated by the Conservative Government, where we met all of the components of the program; we raised the \$469 million required and we put in an additional 54.4 percent of direct provincial dollars. We put in more provincial

money than the previous government put in before. In spite of that, Mr. Speaker, there was a 4.2 mill rate increase as a result of the Education Support Program. Fortunately, for the taxpayers of Hanover this government brought in a supplemental program that gave assistance to Hanover and every other school division in the Province of Manitoba to reduce the tax mill increases resulting from their program and I would like to tell you specifically what help Hanover gets.

They receive \$474,275 in supplemental grants; that translates, Mr. Speaker, into a 10.8 mill of property tax relief. Their program, Mr. Speaker, caused an increase of 4.2 mills and our program caused a mill rate relief of 10.8 mills.

I have one more question to respond to, Mr. Speaker. It was a previous question put by the Honourable Member for Tuxedo and he asked me if I was bringing in the supplemental program to help my friends and the answer, Mr. Speaker, is yes, because as the honourable member knows, I have friends on every school board in the Province of Manitoba. I would like to tell him what help some of these friends are getting.

The Seine River School Division receives \$338,242 in supplemental grants and experiences a mill rate reduction of 8.3 mills; Mountain School Division, a 7.2 mill relief; White Horse Plains 6.9 mill relief; Pine Creek 6.7 and Inter-Mountain 5.8. I could go on, Mr. Speaker, but we know that none of these areas are represented by government members.

I have one last piece of information to communicate from one of my friends. "Mrs. Hemphill, re the Educational Support Program and its effect on Pine Creek School Division No. 30. The Pine Creek School Division Board would like to thank you for the additional funding your government has provided to the Educational Support Program. Without the additional funding, our mill rate increase for 1982 would have been 22 mills. The additional support has decreased the mill rate by 10 mills which is a tremendous help to our local taxpayers."

I suggest to the honourable members opposite that before they take any more licks they check with their school divisions to find out what would have happened had we left the program the way they brought it in and what did happen with the changes that we brought in.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BANMAN: I wonder if the Minister could inform the House whether or not the business tax in the town of Steinbach for school purposes will be going up 17.1 mills.

MRS. HEMPHILL: The Hanover School Division has not finalized its budget, Mr. Speaker, so I do not have that specific information, but I can tell you that it is quite possible. It is quite possible that figure is true and the reason is that the Hanover School Division is one of the disadvantaged divisions with low assessment and low per pupil expenditures caught in the disparity and the disadvantages created through the Educational Support Program that they brought into

place. If they want to increase the quality of educational programs based on the money that they were given through establishing 1980 as a base year, the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that is going to be hard on the taxpayers of his division because they didn't get a fair deal in the initial program.

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, on the same question I raised yesterday, I wonder if the Minister would confirm then and she can go back and do the numbers, but confirm that the information which I have that there will be a 17.1 mill increase for school purposes and that translates then to a 21.8 percent increase for school purposes?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. CLAYTON MANNES (Morris): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In view of the Minister of Education's remarks and comments to the effect that a reduction in the tax mill increase — I hear the Minister talk about mills and percentage terms and we all wonder really what it means, I'd like to ask the First Minister the question, in discussion with local councillors of the RM of MacDonald this morning I learned that the total 1982 property levies for education purposes are to increase by 24 percent or, in dollar terms, \$482 on a section of land. How is this fact rationalized in light of the comment in the Throne Speech which made reference to an easing of the effects of property taxation?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable the First Minister.

HON. HOWARD R. PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I think that the Minister of Education has done a good job of dealing with the question of the support that is being provided in respect to education at the property level in the Province of Manitoba, that this government indeed is providing assistance as per the legislation that was processed last year in this Chamber. As a result of providing assistance as per the previous government's legislation, we indeed have resulted in a 4.2 mill increase. What has happened is that we have retained the extent of provincial funding at 65 percent.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt, and I don't think there should indeed be any doubt in anyone's mind that this government in maintaining support at 65 percent as was the formula of provincial support last year, that we have continued the process. Had the previous government had continued in office, Mr. Speaker, then I think the Honourable Member for Morris would indeed have been getting up with comments about very, very sharp increases away beyond what he has mentioned this afternoon that, indeed, under the previous government, there would have been slippage, if we follow the kind of pattern that was established in 1978, 79 and into 80 as a result of the previous government's attention to financing of education at the local level.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. MANNES: Mr. Speaker, in spite of the First Minister's and the Minister's of Education reference to reduction in tax, we are still talking about \$500 a section of land increase. Does the Minister realize that

with the price of wheat being frozen and the price of barley dropping some 30 cents a bushel and that all farm costs are expected to increase some 15 percent, and if he realizes this, how does he expect grain farmers and businesses, in general, to meet the new taxation burden?

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, as I said yesterday when the question of the price of wheat and barley was raised in this Chamber that honourable members across the way could indeed perform in a very practical and a very concrete way by joining with us in connection with the proposals in respect to the changes in the Crow rate affecting transportation costs for western farmers, I would like to hear from the Honourable Member for Morris as to his position in respect to the Crow.

MR. MANNES: Mr. Speaker, our side, too, welcomes the debate on the Crow and we'll leave it for this minute but has the Minister in all matters related to pushing back the increased tax burden upon business in a manner with no reference to revenues or profit. At least the Crow issue makes reference to revenues and profit. But, this issue, forcing back taxation as a fixed cost, how long does he expect, the First Minister expect, our small businesses and farms, the very backbone of our economy to maintain viability?

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, it is for the precise reason that indeed the system that was enacted last year is, in our view, inequitable that we have launched a review of that particular legislation in order to ensure that there is greater equity introduced into the education support program than that which is the case presently.

It is for that reason that the Minister of Education provided an additional \$14-some million this year, in order to remove to the extent that it was possible some of the inequities that existed within the previous legislation as passed last year by the previous Conservative administration in the Province of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

I would also like to point out to the honourable member, because it's very interesting it's not the Honourable Member for Gladstone that is asking the question, the Minister of Education made reference to this and I indeed would table this letter, the letter from Pine Creek School Division that demonstrates very clearly how this government, in a very short period of time, moved to remove some of the inequities involving some of the school divisions such as Pine Creek School Division No. 30 in a very short space of time after assuming office.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education.

Can the Minister of Education confirm that the Education Support Program that was introduced by the previous government, did not bind her government or her as a Minister to putting any portion whatsoever of the increased expenditures in this year's budget on the property tax roles in the form of the foundation levy? Can she confirm that was a decision

solely of her and her Cabinet and the government she represents to put 4.2 mills on the foundation levy and there was nothing within the Education Support Program that bound her to that decision? It was her decision and hers alone.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MRS. HEMPHILL: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can answer that question. I will respond to what the honourable member said because I know what his question was if he had framed it in the way of a question.

We had to meet the program requirements and we had to meet the dollar figure \$469 million. We maintained every aspect of that program, the 65/30 traditional split, we maintained. We put more direct provincial dollars in than had been put in before and we did have some choices, Mr. Speaker, we did have some choices. Do you know what we could have done, Mr. Speaker? We could have raised that entire amount as the Conservative government previously did through the Education Support Levy last year when they raised a \$104 million for that program through the Education Support Levy and raised the mill rate increase to 30 mills. Now, Mr. Speaker, we could have done that, that was a choice that we had and we chose not to do that because if we had not put an additional \$26 million of direct provincial money into that Education Support Program, all of the school divisions would have faced a 12 mill increase, not 4.2, a 12. So, we did have a choice and we chose to put more provincial money in than you put in before and to reduce the level of the mill rate impact on the local property taxes.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister confirm that concurrent with the increase in the foundation levy that was introduced as a part of a total overall refinancing program for education in this province, divisions throughout the province, can she confirm that concurrent with what she says was an increase in the foundation levy there was a decrease in the special levy throughout the province, the net effect of which was that only 5 out of 58 divisions in the entire province ended up paying an increase in their tax mill rate levy last year, whereas this year virtually every division in the province is going to pay a net increase in school mill rate on their property taxes? Can she confirm that?

MRS. HEMPHILL: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member's question was related to the Foundation Program, and I would want to remind him that they removed the Foundation Program when they brought in the Educational Support Program. It doesn't exist and it didn't last year.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, approximately a year ago, the First Minister and the Leader of the Opposition said that the Conservative government had wasted millions of dollars on a needless Hydro rate freeze. He said that the money could better have been used to

lower property taxes among other things. Does the First Minister intend to remove the hydro rate freeze?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, that question as well as the question of education tax and property is under review.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I gather from the First Minister's answer that indeed he is looking at the possibility of removing the Hydro rate freeze and judging by the response of the Minister of Natural Resources that it should be removed; that the people of the province can look forward to the removal of that rate. Mr. Speaker, can the First Minister confirm that is indeed what he said, that he is looking at the possibility of removing it?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. WILSON PARASIUK (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I think there is no secret that the technical staff in Manitoba Hydro for some time, indeed when the previous government was in power, had had some concerns about the effects of a politically imposed rate freeze on the future rates that Manitoba Hydro consumers would have to pay. They have raised that at the technical level, Mr. Speaker, and I have asked them to do the technical homework required and that they make a technical report to the board, and that that technical report be referred to me. Mr. Speaker, this is a matter that has to be dealt with at a technical level and that one indeed, Mr. Speaker, cannot, like King Canute, try and hold back waves that in fact can drown you when those rates have to come off, if in fact they were an artificial imposition on Hydro and have hurt Hydro's position especially, Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that we have had two years of very low water levels that have in fact hurt Manitoba Hydro's financial position.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister could advise the House and the people of Manitoba when we can expect a decision with respect to the government removing the Hydro rate freeze.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, there is no decision that will be taken in that by the government. This is a matter that will be put forward by the technical group. I would, in fact, bring in their report before the Legislature. I would give the Opposition the opportunity of looking into that technical report when the Public Utilities Committee of the Legislature meets and then, Mr. Speaker, we would decide what to do from there. This may indeed be a matter that would most appropriately be dealt with by referring it to the Public Utilities Board for a technical review by the Public Utilities Board, Mr. Speaker. This is a matter that is very important to the future of Manitoban's and shouldn't be dealt with in a crass political manner, Mr. Speaker, as it was dealt before. I think it is possible to deal with the whole matter of Hydro rates through a technical pro-

cess, Mr. Speaker, and that is the intention that we have right now and that is the process we are following.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. PAWLEY: On a point of order. I would ask the honourable member if he would have the courtesy of tabling the document he was reading from insofar as the statement that he alleges to myself.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I'd be happy to table this, it's the New Democratic Party Caucus dated April 9, 1981, and it's signed by Howard R. Pawley. —(Interjection)— In view of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Energy and Mines would like to take the Hydro rate freeze question out of the political arena, can he confirm that when Mr. Cherniack, the Chairman of the Board, makes his report to the Minister that indeed the Minister will have to introduce an Act into this Legislature to remove the Hydro rate freeze?

MR. PARASUIK: The reports that will be passed on by Mr. Cherniack will be the technical report that will be prepared by the technical staff of Hydro under the direction of Mr. Blachford, the Chief Executive Officer of Manitoba Hydro, who is a technical person, Mr. Speaker, responsible for the technical work of all staff of Manitoba Hydro. That will be the report that will be forwarded on to me, Mr. Speaker, and that undoubtedly will be the report that will be looked at by the Public Utilities Committee of the Legislature of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for oral question period has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, just before calling for the continuation of the debate on the proposed motion No. 14, Interim Supply, I'd just like to point out that I've spoken the Opposition House Leader pointing out that on information received from the Deputy Minister of Finance and the Minister of Finance, that respect to Interim Supply we're approaching the end of the year. —(Interjection)— Well, I want this as a matter of record, it's not really anything very amusing for those who have to receive their cheques, including the School Divisions, School Grant Payments of \$70 million will have to be made by April 1st, or the School Divisions, about which we have heard a lot today, will be out of funds, and so too the Civil Service Payroll cheques at the end of next week. I'm just pointing that out as a matter of record, with the hope that both sides of the House co-operate in moving this particular matter along, and therefore I'm asking that No. 14 be called for debate.

ADJOURNED DEBATES ON SECOND READING BILL NO. 14 — THE INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT, 1982

MR. SPEAKER: On the adjourned motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance, The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on the same item that the Minister raised I simply would point out to the House that when an undertaking is made by this side of the House, through the House Leader, it is not necessary to put it on the record.

MR. SPEAKER: On the adjourned debate, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance, Bill No. 14, the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I adjourn this debate in order that my colleague, the Member for Arthur, could speak.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on the Interim Supply and I think the point has to be made and made very clearly to the Government House Leader, that I'm sure the spirit of co-operative House operations and paying civil servants and funding of school boards will be honoured by members of this side of House, something that the members who are now in government didn't have the courtesy to do just some year ago when they felt that it was more important to try and make political hay at the betterment of innocent people of Manitoba, and it has to be very well understood, I'm sure, by those people who were deprived of their pay cheques on time a year ago. So we, Mr. Speaker, I am sure, will honour the people who are dedicated citizens and will pay them in the proper manner.

Mr. Speaker, question period today, I think, is a good example of what we have seen in the government benches since the government took office. We have seen the First Minister, who all at once has taken on a new kind of a leadership role, something that I'm sure all the Manitobans have been waiting for for the last four months, where in fact he all at once thinks that he has all of the things running as nice and as smoothly as possible.

Mr. Speaker, in speaking again on Interim Supply, I think there are certain things to deal with the agricultural community that are important, but also the economy in general has to be talked about.

I cannot remember — I'm not that old a person — but I cannot remember at any time in my history or my participation in the province when in fact we have seen a more depressed farm community, small business community, in such a state of mind. It is not and I don't want to use the term in the depths of a depression, but we are in a point of time when we are in what I would call not a positive approach to their businesses. We have seen the livestock industry in particular under a depressed price situation, the livestock, beef herds, the prices for beef, but let us look at some of the

other areas that we have to look at as well and that's those people who are dependent upon the farm community.

The farm machine dealers who have normally at this time of year looked forward to the future sales of the farm equipment that they've ordered in some several months before. The fact that they are unable to put forward the kind of deals that would be encouraging for those farmers who would normally be buying equipment and we have, in fact, seen a stagnation in the other service industries that the agriculture and the other people throughout Manitoba would normally be a part of.

Mr. Speaker, when we look across the way and we hear the rhetoric from the government when they say we have this Small Business Relief Program or Interest Relief Program, we have a Farm Interest Relief Program that they promised some several months ago. When you look at the chintzy amount of money and I use it as a chintzy amount of money because I think it will be known in the history of this province as the Minister of Agriculture and Autopac's Mickey Mouse program to help the economy of Manitoba. \$23 million, Mr. Speaker, over a period of two years.

What happened, Mr. Speaker, when the Province of Manitoba some two years ago were faced with one of nature's worst blows that have been given to the people of Manitoba? We first of all, Mr. Speaker, saw a flood that ravaged the whole of the Red River Valley; I believe there was a lake some 60 miles wide and right from the United States Boundary to the inlet of Lake Winnipeg. Mr. Speaker, we saw the First Minister of the day and his Cabinet and his colleagues respond to the needs of the people and have been paying for those costs ever since, the dyking programs; not so concerned about making political hay, but making real and effective programs to help the people in those affected areas.

The members opposite are laughing, Mr. Speaker, but they'll be laughing a little bit different when they find out how far \$23 million goes over 30,000 farmers and the numbers of small business people and the homeowners in this province. When they have some 29,000 farmers who are still waiting for an Interest Relief Program and only 1,000 may have qualified for what I would consider a no-help program to start with.

Mr. Speaker, the following year we had one of the most severe droughts and forest fires in the Province of Manitoba. It wasn't a political reaction to the people of Manitoba as we're seeing come from the New Democratic government. There were some \$40-odd million, Mr. Speaker, applied to the farm community, applied to all those people, any person who needed help and there wasn't any bureaucratic hoops to put them through. There wasn't a matter of having to say that I'm about to lose my livestock operation or my farm, that I'm right down and out. Government, feed me a little more of this succulent thing that the NDP government have. No, Mr. Speaker, the First Minister of the province, now the Leader of the Opposition unfortunately, responded with his cabinet and his government, not to make the political hay that the people opposite are trying to make with their Mickey Mouse program.

Mr. Speaker, they understood the needs of the people of Manitoba. That wasn't only to help the farm

community, the people on the farm. It was to help the packing house industry in the City of Winnipeg and the City of Brandon. It was to help, Mr. Speaker, the industries of the farm machinery people where farmers were buying equipment. —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture will find out very shortly when he may have and I use this figure very carefully and he isn't even giving us the information. For an open government, he isn't even telling us how many farmers have got one red cent out of it. So let's just use those figures. There are 30,000 farmers in Manitoba and I will make an estimate that there won't be a thousand farmers receive interest relief and I don't know one farmer that doesn't need it, Mr. Speaker. —(Interjection)— Now, he's hedging. He's fudging and he's backing up to the wall. Why, Mr. Speaker, don't they put a program in place that all the farmers can qualify for and all the businessmen can qualify for and all the housing people can qualify for?

There's an individual the other way, I believe it was the First Minister said, you're giving us the dickens for not spending money or for spending too much money and not putting in programs. Mr. Speaker, it is they that can't have it both ways and I'm sure that it won't take very long until they find out exactly why they can't. They can't have it both ways, Mr. Speaker.

I go back and make reference to a program when we ran into a very difficult time and a shortage of hay and fodder, Mr. Speaker, and there was a member opposite at that particular time and it was the spring of the year, a little later on, but as we moved along into the situation we put programs in place, but the member opposite who's now the Minister said, why don't you let those cattlemen get into those Crown Lands? He said, let's let the farmers on the land. What's the first policy that he changed, Mr. Speaker, to take that land back away from the people; to cancel Crown Land sales; to do exactly what he said shouldn't be done when he was sitting on this side of the House. He can't have it both ways, Mr. Speaker. He's saying on one hand, let the farmers into the land and let them use it, Mr. Speaker, and what does he do now? The first policy that he's introduced is, we'll freeze the sales of land to farmers. Mr. Speaker, that's the Crown Land policy.

Then we go to the supporting, the real program that was helping farmers with interest relief because there is an interest relief program in our Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation where a person who has land and remember this, that if you're going to lose your farm, it's the land they take away, Mr. Speaker. But this Interest Relief Program of the Minister of Agriculture doesn't qualify for land incurred debts. I don't know where he expects the farmer to live; on the road allowance, Mr. Speaker? Is that where he expects all the farmers of the future to live on? No, that's right, Mr. Speaker. That is right; that's for wildlife.

But, Mr. Speaker, the very program that was meant to help the farm community with an interest relief through MACC, where in fact, the first \$50,000 of debt, the interest rate on that was reduced by 4 per cent and he cancelled that. How can he go to the farm community and the people of Manitoba and say he's got an Emergency Relief Program in place when in fact he cancelled one of the best programs that this province has ever seen. He's looking at it, Mr. Speaker.

What is he looking at, Mr. Speaker. He's looking at the fact the private enterpriser, the farmer who all his life built this country, fed the people and they did it through private ownership and private enterprise.

There's one other area I want to talk on and I will be communicating directly by letter to the Minister because there are a few innocent people that got caught in a situation under their old land-lease program. Mr. Speaker, the members opposite had a program where they bought the land and leased it to the farmer; now, after pressure in the House from the Conservative Party and probably there was one Liberal left in this country at that time - they're now a distinction and thank God they are, they're distinct in the western part of this country and they will be eliminated in the eastern part after —(Interjection)— extinct, that's right, I'm sorry. I'm sorry, it's the stink that's coming from the other side of the House that I have to worry about, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the Minister corrected me on the word "distinct." Mr. Speaker, the program which the member opposite, and I hope he pays some attention to the communication that I sent in a letter because it's important. There are some individuals, and he immediately says if they didn't buy the land they wouldn't have been in this problem, well, if they hadn't bought the land they wouldn't have had a capital gain to worry about which would have helped them in these dire times.

An individual, Mr. Speaker - and it's important that he listen to this - an individual went into the land-lease program, the government bought the land from the individual, leased it back to him, leased that land back to him; now the individual, because of the economic conditions, wants to sell this particular piece of property and make a capital gain. Well, under the rules of the old Land-Lease Program, and I'm sincere about this and we were considering what we could do to make it change, under the rules of the old Land Lease Program, Mr. Speaker, that individual would have to pay back the capital gain to the province. Mr. Speaker, the details I won't get into, but the principle, Mr. Speaker, is what we have to deal with. I believe those individuals, and I would support the Minister if he would assess it in this way, those people probably need help worse than anybody else today because they are now in a situation where they owe a lot of money; not just to the province, but they owe it to other people. Mr. Speaker, I believe it should be the responsibility of the province to look at those cases and reassess their policy of having to pay back all of that capital gain, and I say "all" to the province.

Mr. Speaker, those individuals are caught in a very difficult situation. They, Mr. Speaker, have as much right to have consideration on that as one of the other - and maybe it isn't a broken election promise yet but we haven't heard much about it and I'm going to bring it for the first time to this House since the election. The now Premier of the province in the election campaign said that the Province of Manitoba, when we're elected, will refund the capital gain to the farmers of Manitoba. Where is it? Have you announced your program, is it in your Estimates? Remember that election pledge for those retiring farmers, that the provincial share of the capital gain would be refunded to those people who were retiring? Are you pleased that

I reminded you? I hope that you are, Mr. Minister because you shant forget. If it's as fair to give those people back the money, I agree, I think those other people who are in that particular difficult situation should have some consideration given to them. I would watch for his actions in that regard. —(Interjection)— No, Mr. Speaker, this individual will be retiring but he will be working at something else because, in fact, he's in a financial situation. He's not the only one, there are quite a few, Mr. Speaker, and I know the Minister is aware of them.

Mr. Speaker, we have the individual who is now the Minister of Communications and what is he doing? What is he doing, and this I have to be quite honest with the people of Manitoba and Members of this Legislative Assembly, for a member, old landslide from Thompson over here, Mr. Speaker, he can give them a satellite dish because they live in Northern Manitoba. But, what about my constituents in south-western Manitoba? What about the constituents for the Member for Russell and Roblin? What about the Member for Dauphin, Mr. Speaker, does he not have enough intestinal fortitude to stand up and say to his Minister of Community Service and Telephones, we want the same kind of communication facilities and systems in southern Manitoba that they're given in the north. We're second-class citizens, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the Member for Brandon East, the Minister responsible for the Telephone System, and he didn't have the intestinal fortitude to stand up and answer a question in this House, Mr. Speaker. Where is he, Mr. Speaker; why hasn't he got enough backbone, Mr. Speaker, enough class to treat us all equally? Yet he is the great man who is supportive of non-discriminatory legislation, you know. Mr. Speaker, he wants everything equal. Well, I would support him, Mr. Speaker, but I would like the people of southern, western, northern, Interlake, Outerlake, in the lake, whatever lake, I'd like to see him give the same services to all the people of Manitoba and not just old landslide from Thompson.

Mr. Speaker, what did we give to Thompson? We gave them a tremendous market for all the metals that come out of that mine, Mr. Speaker. Where does he think the metal goes; does he think it goes into the spacearm that is out in space right now, like he is, he is spaced out most of the time, Mr. Speaker. It goes into farm machinery, it goes into all those things that people do. You know, for the Member for Thompson who wants to put himself on that own little island, he is a member of a community that I am very proud of because I think that's as much a part of my community as southern Manitoba is a part of his; I think we have to work in that way, Mr. Speaker. —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, that's right, we had a man who represented that city very well.

But, you know, for the people in that community, for the people in the labour movement of which I'm not against, they've got collective rights to protect themselves. Every time we turn around they're demanding more out of the system; and what are they putting back into the system? Are they putting back an equal amount so that we can all do better? We're starting to see some moves take place. We're seeing some of the automotive agreements where the labour unions are now negotiating with those people who are helping

the management, they're backing off a little bit. What are the farm community doing yesterday? What did they do yesterday, I ask the Member for Thompson, what did they do when they said we'll have to maintain the same price for most of the Wheat Board grains? Did they stand up and they roar and they say we're going on strike? No, Mr. Speaker, they're committed people, committed food producers, so that man can put metal, or the people in labour can put metal into hopper cars, put metal into machinery, and make the economy go. They didn't stand up and say they needed 15 percent, because that's the inflationary rate. Certainly they need it, but for a period of time they're prepared to maintain the same price. In fact, you'll hear most the farm people say today, we were satisfied with the price and just happy that it didn't go down. Well, it did go down, Mr. Speaker, on two grains and I was interested yesterday to hear the First Minister comment on the fact that he wasn't sure, but he thought his Minister of Agriculture had input into the initial price announcement.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister sitting here, I'm sure didn't even say to the Federal Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, that we should have more money. I would be interested in the communications between the Minister of Agriculture for the Province of Manitoba with the Federal Minister of the Wheat Board.

Mr. Speaker, there were some consultations that took place between our government and the Federal Government in those areas. One, Mr. Speaker, was to encourage the announcement of that payment to come earlier and I am sure the farm community are pleased that announcement was made and made so they could make decisions prior to spring.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister is sitting there, I hope he's listening because I hope that he does have some input into the development of policy at the national level. Mr. Speaker, about two years ago and I say that, the Ministers of Agriculture met at that particular time and I would hope he would continue on with this policy, because he'll get support from the Federal Minister of Agriculture. When it comes to the development of policy for agriculture in this country, the control of the Canadian Wheat Board, that it should answer to the Federal Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker, and it should also have input from the provincial Ministers of Agriculture because of the importance of that particular segment on our farm community. The best way, Mr. Speaker, that can be done is to have direct policy input and that would alleviate and it would help this particular Minister of Agriculture from becoming a Fed-basher, which he doesn't think is proper, but what happens immediately when the Canadian Wheat Board to go change the feed grain policy? He blamed the Wheat Board, Mr. Speaker. It was the Wheat Board that had taken the initiative to change away from the current competitive pricing of feed grain in western Canada and the Minister of Manitoba Agriculture stands up, he's a great big brave man and he goes after the Wheat Board for backing off.

It wasn't the Wheat Board, Mr. Speaker, that backed off. It was the Federal Minister of Agriculture and the Federal Minister responsible for the Wheat Board that backed off, but he didn't say anything to our friend the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, because he

comes from the same union, the Farmers' Union of western Canada, speaking for the left wing. He couldn't give him what for.

No, Mr. Speaker, we do have to have input in a meaningful way from the Minister of Agriculture to what is the responsibility or to what will affect the farm community.

Mr. Speaker, I want to touch again on one of the other areas that is of urgent concern and that of course and we've touched on it earlier, in the difficult times that not only the beef produces are having, all the farmers are having. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, never before have we seen the difficulties in this province that we're seeing today with the extreme high costs of production, particularly energy. Mr. Speaker, we're seeing the lower returns in the livestock industry particularly the beef cattle, we have got I think a good program in place for the dairy industry in this province. I am pleased that we were part of a government that established a new mechanism for the pricing of milk in this province.

Mr. Speaker, you haven't heard the consumers and the dairy producers doing battle over whether the price should go up or down. There's a mechanism in place that allows that to happen. Mr. Speaker, we never hear the Minister saying it's good, bad or indifferent or maybe the Minister of Agriculture's going to change back to the old system. That should be a question, I'll keep that in the back of my mind for some time. Is he going to change back to the Dairy Board where the producers have to go to the public to make a case, or does he think that the mechanism that's in place today is working well? Again another change which I am pleased we have been able to put in place for the dairy industry of this province so that the young children, for the needy people in the City of Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson have a sufficient supply of milk because the dairy producers are able to make a fair and honest return.

Mr. Speaker, I think that's the kind of province we want for the people of Manitoba. Let us just talk briefly about the beef industry. —(Interjection)— I'm happy to have the Minister deal with the dairy industry. I'm sure that he'll end up right in the middle of the butter. Mr. Speaker, we'll wait until he gets into the egg issue before he gets egg on the face.

Mr. Speaker, if he doesn't feel that he's competent however and he and his government want to resign, I'm sure that there are a lot of qualified people here who are quite prepared to face up to the challenges and the opportunities that are in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we want to talk briefly about the beef industry although the Minister has given me his assurance, he's given the people of Manitoba his assurance, that he's coming forward with a program to help the beef industry. Mr. Speaker, it's something like a lot of other election promises. Where is it, Mr. Speaker? We have not seen any indication other than the fact that he fired a producer board and, you know, we've got to look at this. It wasn't a political board. The board that was appointed, Mr. Speaker, came from the Manitoba cattle producers. They have named the people, but maybe because the Minister of Agriculture fought so hard against the establishment of a beef association in this province, maybe he has on the back burner and maybe it's closer to the front burner,

the repealing of the legislation. Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of Agriculture of the province today planning to repeal or to back off on that association? I would think those are the kinds of important policy issues that the people of Manitoba want to know, the farm community, other than just the cancelling of a Crown land sale policy, the stopping of lending money to farmers that already had an interest-relief program and it helped our young people, Mr. Speaker.

He's the backward Minister, Mr. Speaker. He's backing up and it's not a time to back up; it's time to go ahead and do things that are going to help the people of Manitoba. Another election promise that has been broken as far as the beef industry is concerned, Mr. Speaker.

I wonder if you could indicate just how much time I have left because I have quite an area.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member has 15 minutes remaining.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, there's another area that I think is very critical to the people of Manitoba, not just the farm community, but to all the people of Manitoba. What have we seen happen in the past few years in this province, in this country in fact? This, Mr. Speaker, is an issue that I think is going to be re-debated, debated and go down in history books as probably one of the most detrimental things that this country has faced and another reason why we're in the kind of critical situation we're in today with our total economy, not just the Province of Manitoba, not just the country of Canada, but to all of the world. It relates directly to what we talked about earlier, the questions on the hydro, the hydro rate freeze, and how important that was to the people of Manitoba.

During the time, Mr. Speaker, that the OPEC countries were blackmailing the rest of the world — yes, I believe that the OPEC countries were not charging a fair and equitable return for their investment. Mr. Speaker, it had nothing to do with the whole development of a world or the common need to get along and to share and work equitably together. No, Mr. Speaker, they took a hold of the rest of the world and they said, we will make them pay. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe there's any Canadian, any Manitoban, that would suggest that anybody in the farm community should do that. What other more important form of energy, and that's what we're talking about, we're talking about a nonrenewable form of energy versus a renewable and the most important form and that of course, is food, because what would the other fuel mean if we didn't have food? It would mean it could be 10 cents a barrel because there's nobody around to use it.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have to keep everything in its proper perspective. And I think, Mr. Speaker, the OPEC countries of the world blackmailed everyone. What happened, Mr. Speaker, since 1973, and we look back when we started to see the effects of increased energy prices; we started to see inflation take off on all the production equipment; we started seeing the wage demands go up because of the costs of the cars and all those things that people put their priorities on, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, '73 was about the time when we started into this world of inflated prices. And

yes, Mr. Speaker, there were a certain group and everyone was living fairly well on it. And yes, Mr. Speaker, I think those oil prices were the main reason for it. How, Mr. Speaker, and when, do we see some relief to what has happened?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think there are some, maybe not overly encouraging signs taking place, but I think if one were to read the Manitoba Co-operator editorial this week it does touch on a few of the important issues. We are now seeing and we've heard in the news recently that we are in fact in a surplus position today in the world as far as oil is concerned. The oil producers are having to put their commodity on the market the same as the wheat producers are. They're having to take spot prices and there is a crumbling, a breaking down of the mechanism that blackmailed us.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, in Canada we aren't going to be able to enjoy some of those effects of what's happening at the world-market level. You know why, Mr. Speaker? Because of government greed, Mr. Speaker; because they mismanaged national government. Mr. Speaker, we are seeing the tip of the iceberg in Manitoba today, of the same kind of a government, with the same kind of a philosophy — to do what, Mr. Speaker? To load on the backs of the taxpayers, the producers, and everyone in this province — remember this, to load the taxpayers in this province — down with one more layer of energy-producing tax, or mechanism, or structure, or equipment, Mr. Speaker. And that, Mr. Speaker, is a very dangerous tunnel to go down, because what we are seeing happening today at the world level, and I think it's giving a few people a little bit of encouragement, that we're seeing the price of oil start to come lower.

But in Canada, Mr. Speaker, the government at the national level have built on so many taxes, Mr. Speaker, have used the taxpayer through, I would say without choice, without their willingness to pay for those taxes by the very fact that we need the gas and the oils that come out of the pumps that we drive up to. Mr. Speaker, the government will not be able to lower the price of gas in Canada, in Manitoba, because of the taxation policies that are on top of us.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that is a very dangerous, dangerous route to go on, because, Mr. Speaker, you eliminate those people who are buying the fuels, the engines that power and make things go, you're eliminating them because you're breaking them with excess taxes. We, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, will not see the benefits of reducing world oil prices. We will not, Mr. Speaker, see the benefits of reducing world oil prices because we have governments today, provincial and federal, who are using that particular mechanism, or that particular need, or that particular resource, I should say, that is demanded by the public.

And who is hurt the worst, Mr. Speaker? It's the consumer that's hurt the worst; it's not the government that sets it up. You know, it's all this phoney baloney about we're going to make it a Canadian-owned organization — PetroCan, a Canadian-owned organization. It won't be any more Canadian-owned, Mr. Speaker, than the ManOil from across the way. Zurich will own it. Mr. Speaker, what are we talking about with ManOil? We're talking about direct taxation of the people, whether they want to pay or not,

Mr. Speaker, direct taxation; taking the money from the hands of the producers, of the pocketbooks of those people who are needing that resource and doing what, Mr. Speaker? Putting it into a business that they have no ability to run, Mr. Speaker, as a taxpayer, no choice in how it's run or operated.

Mr. Speaker, I think I've used this before but it'll be interesting to see as the mechanism of government gets so involved, and we get so much red tape, so much bureaucracy operating the service stations of PetroCan, and you can't pour gas if you can't speak both languages, Mr. Speaker. We have the bureaucracy that wants to close the shop at five o'clock. At five o'clock in the afternoon if you need your tank full of gas, oil, where are you going to get it, Mr. Speaker? Because, Mr. Speaker, remember this, the very people that are paying the costs and the wages are the taxpayers that are out using private initiative to produce the funds that make the whole system work.

You know, it's very amazing and I want to touch briefly on hydro. I want to touch briefly on hydro because it is an important resource, the most important resource that we have. What did we do when we were in government, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, I thought I heard a member from the opposite say: nothing. Well, the Member for Dauphin better to home to his constituents and ask them directly. And I want it in his next press release when he puts it out, telling them that he's going to put the hydro rates up by double, by triple, that everybody that has now bought an electric furnace for their house, that he's going to be responsible for changing that electric furnace back to prices that should be starting to come down, but because of his philosophy and the philosophy of the national government are taxing those people that have to heat their houses in this country, Mr. Speaker. Let him tell the people of Dauphin, or let the rest of those members tell their constituents it's their policy. It's their policy that unfreezes, or will unfreeze the hydro rates in this province. That, Mr. Speaker, won't wash and we are going to see from this side of the House that it won't wash.

Yes, the people of Manitoba made a decision to elect a government who are so kind and caring. Well, Mr. Speaker, the only way that they can be kind and caring and treat their own people are to tax them and take that money away. Mr. Speaker, time will tell, and it's going to be interesting when the Minister of Finance lays the Budget before the people of the Province of Manitoba. When he says, on one hand we'll give you this, and on this hand we'll take it away from you so we can do it with the other hand. Mr. Speaker, it'll be an interesting speech and I'm sure the Attorney General right now has had a lot of experience with those kinds of systems, so will probably be writing the text for the Minister of Finance. I'm sure that that's the kind of thing that washes very well with him.

Mr. Speaker, it's important that the people of the province know that they can get involved in the oil business without doing it through state money, through tax dollars. They, Mr. Speaker, can get into the business of producing oil without the big government doing it. Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid they'll be into it and not only will they be paying for PetroCan when they go up to the service station, they'll be paying for

ManOil, they'll be paying for all those things, that without having a tax system, without having that system in place, the government have the right through their taxation policies to extract the money they need to build the roads and do everything else without adding that other layer of government to peoples' lives. And you know it's going to be interesting to watch that because I happen to have a fairly major interest, not financially, unfortunately, in the area in this province where there has been a lot of oil development. And you hear the Minister of Energy, and I respect him, he sent me a copy of the surface rights, it's very interesting. He sent me a copy, he sent the Member for Virden a copy. Because of government restraint he could only put nine of them on the table and maybe nobody's interested in them. But you know for that great money-generating oil business that he's going to start, and pay for all the social programs that the members opposite want, he's starting out in a pretty slow way, because it doesn't take very much time when you're drilling of oil wells, and tying up of leases, leasing of leases fairly inequitably to use up a lot of money. Or maybe, Mr. Speaker, the government opposite have another idea, another way of extracting away the oil rights, or the mineral rights of the people of this province. It's starting to come out. The Member for River East suggests maybe a mineral acreage tax. You know the old mineral acreage tax, the 10-cent-an-acre business. Now that wasn't to generate any money. Mr. Speaker, that wasn't to generate revenue, that was to extract the mineral rights of the people of the Province of Manitoba, which by the way are 80-percent owned by the people of the Province of Manitoba. Nobody spits on that, Mr. Speaker. Any company that wants to come in can lease any land, there's lots of places to drill for oil. You don't have to go into it as a state operation. Mr. Speaker, the point that has to be made and made very clearly, that if they proceed to again layer the cost of producing or getting in the oil business on top of the PetroCan costs on top of the Petrofina, Mr. Speaker, where are we going to be at as a nation, where are we going to be at as a province, Mr. Speaker, when are we ever going to be able to lift our heads high and say we're proud, private, free, investing individuals who make this thing go? Mr. Speaker, their goal is to drag us all into that state-owned organization, not by choice, but by force through our taxation policies.

I want to put just one thing on the record, and I think it's very important. Our policies as a government, Mr. Speaker, when we were on that side of the House, were to create an environment so that everyone could excel to their maximum, do those things that you would expect to do in a free country. And when it comes, Mr. Speaker, to our energy policy we believe in removing some of the energy taxes off of Canadian-produced alcohol, Mr. Speaker, so that it could be put into the gasolines and extend the fossil fuels that we're going to be and have been short off. But, Mr. Speaker, they don't understand that, they don't understand that you remove taxes so people do things and generate more tax wealth. That's reverse to them. And you hear the first Minister keeps saying, the big problem with our economy, the big problem here in Canada today, isn't Pierre Elliot Trudeau and his screwed-up mind, but is Reaganomics. At the same

time he's trying to sell them hydro, be a nice guy to the United States of America and sell them hydro, and, Mr. Speaker, not tell this House where he's at on the Garrison. Mr. Speaker, it won't wash and we're going to tell the people of Manitoba exactly what they believe in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Lakeside, that the debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Economic Development, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for Flin Flon in the Chair for the Department of Northern Affairs; and the Honourable Member for The Pas in the Chair for the Department of Natural Resources.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY — NATURAL RESOURCES

MR. CHAIRMAN, Harry M. Harapiak (The Pas): We will call the committee to order. We're on Regional Services of Natural Resources, No. 12.(a)(1) Salaries. The Honourable Minister.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Chairman, before we start a detailed review of this section of the department, let me introduce to the members — not too many members here, but the quality are here obviously — Mr. Ernie Pasickla, Regional Director and let me in a few brief words outline basically the activities of this branch.

This section deals with the whole question of administration or enforcement of The Wildlife Act, provisions in respect to regional services in every section of the department's activities. Let me by reading a few of the notes in respect to activities outline the major activities:

Emphasize training and development of administrative personnel to improve performance and response to financial management requirements, placed a greater level of direct accountability for cost control at the regional level, provided a higher level of training, supervision and improved communication in relation to financial management. To improve staff morale, introduced line management liaison committee and a program of field staff participation and contribution recruitment training, development and standards. Continued a program of upgrading field

equipment to improve field efficiency and performance. Introduction of program budgeting cost control analysis at the resource district level. Moved regional headquarters and staff for the Interlake Region to Gimli and the Eastern region to Beausejour from Winnipeg.

Let me just indicate the highlights of various sections. The general overview, Mr. Chairman, of the program is that under this appropriation there is overall support for the Park Ranger and Conservation Officer program, the Field Service Offices within these various regions and special programs and services such as problem wildlife control, forest fire management, the department communication program, firearms safety and guide training, legislation services, safety and security programs. All of these are provided under this Regional Services Program.

The overall program is community-oriented and it is the department's delivery system for resource programs in the field.

That, Mr. Chairman, I think gives the members a kind of quick overview as to what this section is all about.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 12.(a)(1)—pass — the Member for Lakeside.

MR. HARRY ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Chairman, I think it would be correct to say that in some ways we have discussed the affairs of Regional Services in going through the different individual branches. I appreciate the latitude that the Chair has given us and that you have given us, as Minister, to do that. I would like to ask the Minister several questions at this particular time, again recognizing that he may not have had the full opportunity to acquaint himself with the subject matters that I wish to deal with.

The Department of Natural Resources and perhaps this division of Regional Services epitomizes the very extensive reorganization that took place in the department over the past two-and-a-half, three years now I suppose. The delivery system of services by the various divisions within the department have, in my judgment, been more clearly defined. I would be less than candid if I didn't suggest that whenever reorganization takes place, it has attendant with it some difficult moments, some difficult problems relative to staff. Staff like anybody else doesn't always appreciate change particularly if the change is of a very fundamental nature in terms of the status of staff, at least as perceived either in the minds of the staff themselves or to some extent, the public. I refer to the kind of changes that have taken place within the Parks Branch relative to the delivery of service, now by Regional Services as well as in the Engineering Construction Branch, etc. That runs through the whole department and was, of course, the intent of a very substantial reorganization.

I say to you, Mr. Minister, that your department probably underwent a more substantive and major reorganizational change during the past two-and-a-half, three years than any other government departments. Other departments have from time to time been associated with different Ministries, have been halved off or added to depending on the perception of the government of the day as to how they wanted to

handle things, but there was in this case in the Department of Natural Resources, a very major reorganization undertaken.

As I said in the outset, the question may not be fair at this particular time, but it would be I think of interest certainly to members of the Opposition and I suspect to the members of your own department as to whether you have had any opportunity, Mr. Minister, to acquaint yourself with some of those reorganizations and how you feel about the department as it is currently structured?

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Chairman, I have become aware of the fact that major shifts, adjustments and so on were made in this department in the last several years and the honourable member is quite correct in indicating that those changes did not come about without some inconvenience to some members of the staff. I haven't as yet made any qualitative or quantitative assessment as to how those changes will better facilitate delivery of program. I know that it's the desire of government to co-ordinate program and its delivery so that there is efficiency and directness and sometimes these changes are necessary and I quite candidly say that I haven't had an opportunity to really evaluate what these changes — I know that I've met with some people who indicated some unhappiness but the die had been cast so far that very well couldn't return it. But we will be looking at that, and of course, if some of these changes are such that we want to re-evaluate at a later time, of course that's open to us.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, the Department of Regional Services of course is charged with the, perhaps the most onerous responsibility in that department, and that is of course in being in the front lines, if you like, and in instances where necessary apprehend or press for prosecutions of citizens of our province that abuse the laws regarding our resources. I would ask the Minister whether or not he has can supply the committee with some information about perhaps the area that is the most ticklish for the department to handle and that is to press for prosecutions when Treaty Indian people are involved? Are there any pending prosecutions that the department is currently involved in?

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Chairman, I think that I can indicate an affirmative answer to that. I won't go into any detail in respect to those matters because it would be improper for me to do so. Let me just indicate that through my Deputy Minister I have indicated to the staff that certainly we want to enforce our game laws and we want to do that in a responsible and proper manner. We want to encourage within all of the people of Manitoba an understanding and respect for the requirements of game protection and protection of our resources. We want to exercise tact and diplomacy and try, by our example of diplomacy, tact and understanding of people, to gain a greater respect for protection of our resources. Where it is necessary to do so, of course, prosecutions must be pursued but I think we'll win a great deal more support for protection of our resources if we practise tact and diplomacy.

During some of the earlier questions in respect, Mr. Chairman, of other areas have resource management,

wildlife section, I've indicated that our staff is actively engaged in discussions with people who are naturally very concerned about our wildlife resource and particularly with some of our Native people. We believe that emphasis is going to pay off in better understanding. The emphasis that we are placing within the department is prevention against wildlife abuse, rather than enforcement.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, the Estimates indicate no substantial rise in dollars allocated for the division in virtually all regions. It would appear that normal inflationary costs are all that are being added to the Estimates. A short while ago the Manitoba citizens were informed, by one way or another, of what you, sir, described in the House as serious abuses of our wildlife laws that accounted for a substantial amount of illegal trade in wild meats, poaching both in the fishing end of it and in the game end of it. Are there any specific plans?

I appreciate, Mr. Chairman, it would be wrong for you to talk about specific prosecutions or actions that the government is currently engaged in, but how does your Director of Regional Services intend to get at the abuses that were brought to light in the Legislature a week or two ago by yourself, sir?

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Chairman, for the record as the honourable member recalls, I didn't bring these matters to light in the Legislature. They were unfortunately brought to light prematurely by people outside of the Legislature indicating that they had found this information and thought that it was very newsworthy.

The information was in the form of a preliminary investigative report upon which the department was engaged as a basis for further initiatives which hopefully would have had a much more pronounced effect in dealing with some of the unlawful sale of game that is going in the province. The release of this preliminary document that the department had been working on, preliminary report, was most unfortunate because, in effect, it exposed to public review what the department had been doing in a careful way without tipping its hand to the poachers and the illegal game sellers.

We now are faced with the fact that those people who were engaged in these activities know that the department is exercising greater surveillance in respect to it so that, no doubt, will have an effect on our ability to secure more convictions than already have been obtained. One charge was laid in respect to one individual that was observed involved in this activity and the charge was laid. The case was determined by the Courts and a fine imposed. It's an ongoing process. It's been going on, I suppose, in this province since game laws were put in place. There seems to be much more of it, probably as a result of the times in which we live where meat is very expensive and even fish is very expensive. There are a great many more of our citizens unemployed and these combined effects add to the desire and the unfortunate unlawful behaviour.

In respect to how we can cope with it, well there isn't a great many more staff but I'm assured that we have provided a good deal more mobility to staff. We're looking at upgrading of equipment and so on and we're really therefore addressing the problems with a

little bit more efficiency. We are also utilizing inter-regional personnel, that is we're combining personnel from one region perhaps in another region, where we're following up on an investigation. The effect of this, Mr. Chairman, that the department is zeroing in on areas and on problems where there is some significant abuse and through a more intensive effort on the part of staff getting at some of the more serious problems.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lakeside.

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that's an ongoing problem that is not easily solved. I would ask the Minister whether or not the department, particularly in its reorganized status, has any particular plans afoot to redouble its effort to involve the general public in helping them in this solution. And I'm referring specifically to the many game and fish organizations that we have in the province. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that not every member of a game and fish association has the qualifications or could be dubbed if you like, a deputy to the services of this particular branch, but at least I believe at the official level in the context with the organization's executives in the challenging of the associations across Manitoba, and we have many — I think the total membership exceeds 14, 15, 16 thousand. Perhaps the Minister can give me that figure at this particular time. But I know there is a constant need to engage the good will, the support of the very people that are in the field, if you like, in far greater numbers than our enforcement people. Now I certainly include all those that are enjoying our wilds and our nature who are not sportsmen necessarily, but it seems to me that there's a special opportunity or onus to involve through the department making themselves accessible to these organizations, supporting their many functions, and continually taking advantages of education opportunities by way of example, by ways of providing guest speakers, by ways of encouraging in one way or another, and acknowledging assistance when it's in fact provided by the general public through these associations.

The geography of Manitoba is such that it will just not be possible for you, sir, or any government to have officers situated on every section of land or in every area to the point where these offences could be by sheer numbers curtailed. It requires a responsible public attitude towards these resources, and that, to me, seems to be a particular challenge that this portion of your department faces in trying to foster.

MR. MACKLING: Well, Mr. Chairman, I certainly concur with the honourable member's concern in respect to the need for wide base of public support in respect to the efforts of the department. And the department is very cognizant of that and regional managers have been instructed and are becoming more involved with communities in which they operate, in which they live. They have been advised to be involved and participate and attend in respect to issues related to the activities of game associations, fire, schools, educational program in respect to natural resource information and so on. There is no question, but all of that helps to develop a proper atmosphere for game protection conservation and general

resource conservation and protection.

In respect to having members of game and fish associations and so on involved in forcing The Wildlife Act; we are not enthusiastic about that because that would involve the potential civil liability to individual members who may be untrained in respect to the specific Act, the regulations and we don't want to encourage people that are not being paid to put themselves out to public liability. The thrust is at more public information and promotion and understanding of our game laws. I might say that even though I haven't been Minister for that long, I have had a meeting with the Manitoba Wildlife Federation. I have met with the wildlife groups from Southeast Manitoba and have already met with a group from the Interlake and all of these people are most concerned about wildlife management. They want to see more wildlife habitat; not less; they want to see Crown lands, not posted against hunting and I have assured them in respect to that question, that it is not the policy of this government to post Crown lands such that individual hunters are going to be barred from using Crown lands for game hunting.

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I would like to just engage the Minister in one more subject for awhile that I think more and more people that have had an opportunity to be involved in anyway, such as I have had in the department recognize that somebody, a government is going to have the courage of their convictions to do something about it. I am referring to the method, the means that are employed in the harvesting of game in an illegal way, jacklighting, of course being perhaps the most popular one. I, myself, am an Interlake resident and it becomes painfully obvious to anybody that it's a very difficult job for the Regional Services Branch to curtail what I think we should be directing a lot of our attention to and that is the illegal outlawing, or making it illegal to take game in a certain way, by all Manitoba citizens. I cannot avoid touching on the Treaty rights of our Native citizens in discussing this matter. Biologists will tell you that all the good biological decisions that are made by the branch as to what type of species can or should be harvested whether it's bucks only and so forth are all for nought when up to 80 or 90 percent of the animals are shot in the dark of night under the beam of a jacklight. Mr. Minister, I believe that the time has come for very serious high level negotiations to talk about the method that is employed in the illegal taking of game. We always get hung up in this country, in this province, and rightfully so, I'm not suggesting otherwise, the specific rights that are granted to our Native community but, Mr. Chairman, the operations of this branch make it extremely difficult for them, on the one hand, to apprehend me or the Member for Arthur if we're employing an illegal method of hunting game and be able to sort that out if I happen to be a Treaty Indian. In fact, the branch often finds itself in a position of being accused of harassment if they pursue that course.

I just think that in the interests of all, the question of how and by what means game is taken in this province surely has to be addressed. It's not a question of who can and when. It's the same as in the fisheries business; we've more or less accepted the fact that there

are, for biological reasons, certain mesh sizes of nets that can be taken and any others whether they are being used and handled by Treaty Indians or whether they're being handled by commercial fishermen or casual domestic permits, are lifted by our enforcement agents and at least they can go on the lake, measure the net, if it's an illegal net, the person is charged or the person is warned. The means of taking the game, in this case, fish, is stopped.

But no such attempt is being made in the area of the other means available to him and there are so many. When those original Treaty rights were grants, we did not have four-wheel drive vehicles that could cross the terrain virtually 365 days of the year. We certainly didn't have airplanes and we didn't have the kind of power that a strong seal beam light can throw through the woods that takes such a heavy toll of our game. I would simply want to indicate to the Honourable Minister that the support of the Legislature would be with him particularly with the opportune timeliness of a legal background.

You have a legal background yourself, sir. You have been a former Attorney-General of this province and I would encourage you to pick up this challenge. I think any Minister, when he assumes the responsibilities for a department, there are always one or two particular subjects that a particular person, a particular Minister, is well suited to resolving and I'm suggesting, Mr. Minister, that you are that person indeed at this particular time.

I'm even forgetting, Mr. Chairman, your rather generous comments about the cattlemen of the province some years ago when we entered into another debate and we were worried about rustling and you suggested that, well, perhaps, in a lenient way the first one should be on the house. —(Interjection)— That's yesteryear, Mr. Minister. We're now dealing with Her Majesty's deer and wildlife which we as a province have undertaken to all our people, but specifically by treaty to the Native people, to so manage that they will always be there in plentiful supply.

I think that's the constitutional item that's always bothered me. We have in those same Treaties that were signed when the resources were transferred to the province in 1930, 1932, we undertook to so manage the resources that we will always guarantee a plentiful supply for our Indian brothers to avail themselves of for the need of food and for the furtherance of their way of life. Mr. Chairman, we may not necessarily be able to hold up to that obligation unless we address ourselves to how game is being hunted in this province.

I think we can separate the two. I think we need not attempt to tackle — as some may well want to do from time to time and say, why should one group in our society have special rights with respect to game than others. Let's not try to rewrite the Constitution; we know how long constitution-making takes in this country. I'm not suggesting that we get into that game, but there seems to me to be an opportunity particularly one with a legal mind such as you have, Mr. Minister, to look at those sections of The Resource Transfer Act and to come up with a resolution or possible changes to the Act that could acknowledge the very serious problems that these methods of hunting are causing and really making it very difficult for

the department to get the kind of respect and support from all of society if there are things going on in our woods that simply breed contempt for the law.

Mr. Chairman, I don't like living with reports that an immediate neighbour of mine manages to take 80 white-tailed deer out in one season and he does it legally. Indeed if one of your officers or if the department tried to stop him, he's liable to press a charge against you for harassment and that's just nonsense. That can't be allowed to carry on. So, Mr. Minister, I leave you with those thoughts.

One final question on a specific item, last year during the wild rice harvest there were a number of mechanical harvesters seized by the department, impounded I believe for a period of time to kind of ride out a situation that had all the potential of some pretty serious conflict. What was the disposition of those seized mechanical harvesters? Were prosecutions laid; were they just held or were they released after the greater part of the harvest?

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Chairman, I'll go from the last item and work backwards. In respect to the matter of the wild rice problem and the mechanical equipment that was involved, I don't care to comment too much on that because I think the matter is still with the Attorney-General's Department and I'll leave it at that.

In respect to the generality of the honourable member's comments, this enforcement of wildlife regulations is an area where tact and diplomacy is required particularly is this so in connection with the alleged offences committed by Native people. I say alleged because Native people have much broader rights in respect to wildlife harvesting than do anyone else and that is by Treaty. The Federal Government is the government that is the only jurisdiction that can in any way effect any change in those historic laws that were granted to our Native people, but let me say that it's my understanding, not recent understanding, but long understanding, that it is not Native people only who are involved in jacklighting. The honourable member referred to unlawful taking of domestic animals, namely livestock. I was not heartened, but dismayed to note, Mr. Chairman, that notwithstanding my departure as Attorney-General, the succeeding Attorney-General and then the Attorney-General of the previous administration was plagued with the same problems. As a matter of fact I think the numbers of animals that were taken unlawfully increased in number rather than decreased in number.

I've never adopted the philosophy that the honourable member suggested. He coined that in the House and used it ad nauseum — one for the road Al, or whatever it was —(Interjection)— it seemed to work well with him; he had a lot of fun out of it and I encourage him to continue to use it if he thinks it's worth anything —(Interjection)— No, I think it was some other factor, Mr. Chairman.

But in respect to that whole area, I'm advised by staff that the number of prosecutions — I hope the honourable member having come in late will not expect me to repeat everything I've said. The number of prosecutions in respect to night hunting are up substantially so there has been much more effective activity on the part of the department. The three prairie provinces, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Mani-

toba, have through officials been holding discussions in respect to how to address this problem. But, I don't want to repeat everything I've said on previous occasions before this committee, because it seems like we have been here and some of these things seem like they're old news now to me.

But the approach that the department has been taking has been dialogued with specific groups and there has been very effective consultation and discussion with Native Indian people at the band level and that is most helpful because there is a growing understanding that this resource, so important to the Native people themselves, can be jeopardized by wanton hunting practices. I think that dialogue that has been initiated will be continued and I'm hopeful that will be very effective and helpful in preserving our wildlife resources.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 12.(a)(1) Salaries — the Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE (Roblin-Russell): Mr. Chairman, just further to the comments of the Honourable Minister, the matter has been widely discussed in my jurisdiction, of course the Duck Mountains in the Riding Mountain Provincial Park is part of the constituency and a lot of dialogue and meeting by various game and fish groups has taken place. In fact the concerns have escalated to such a level that Roblin now has formed a new game and fish association within the last 30 days. It's a new one and it likely came through the influence of Joe Robertson who is well-known all around this room and has taken a very active role in the matters that are before the committee.

I'm wondering, the Minister referred to ongoing discussions that are taking place with other jurisdictions and some of the problems that come to light in the area that I represent, of course, are people that come from out-of-province, from Saskatchewan, that come in and violate the hunting regulations of our province, and I'm wondering, is his staff, or who is to carry on? Should the people at the local level escalate these discussions with other jurisdictions or other groups to try and bring the matter to, or should it be left to the staff and in his department to carry on these ongoing meetings that are taking place?

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Chairman, the honourable member refers to an area where there is cross-border involvement and our staff person, Mr. Robertson, has been working with the local game and fish association there and communications are through him to our sister jurisdiction, their wildlife officers, and progress is being made there in useful dialogue in respect to those problems.

MR. MCKENZIE: Now, the other question that I was asked to raise of the Minister, if he feels that there are changes necessary in the regulations or the legislation, or is the present legislation adequate to meet this challenge?

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Chairman, I think it's premature for me to go into that at any length at this stage.

MR. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Might it

be in order to discuss fire suppression?

MR. MACKLING: Sure.

MR. ORCHARD: Thank you. We had some preliminary discussion on this the other night and it's my understanding that the arrangement has been for at least the last several years that the government Air Division, under the Department of Highways and Transportation, provides the aircraft for the use of Natural Resources Department in their fire suppression efforts and that the Department of Highways and Transportation through the Air Division provides the staffing complements in terms of pilots, maintenance crews and provides additional aircraft on lease and I'd just like to ask the Minister if that arrangement will be altered or will it continue in conjunction with Air Division in the Department of Highways and Transportation?

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Chairman, in respect to the observation the honourable member made, he's quite correct in respect to the development and the techniques for shared services or shared facilities with other jurisdictions and there's no substantial change in procedure. There are some specific improvements that are being made in this section: the helitac bases are increased from two to three in 1982; they were two in 1981 and there are going to be three, or were, I'm sorry, this year; in Bissett, Wekusko and Paint Lake — Paint Lake being the new one; expanded capability at each helitac base — there will be four crews at each base instead of three and there will be helicopter support for servicing; there is acquisition of four lightning strike equipment installations at Thompson, Island Lake, Grand Rapids and Hodgson; expanded the number of firetac crews by six at Cormorant, Cranberry Portage, Nopoming Park, Hadashville, Grand Rapids and Split Lake; improved equipment, the addition of a third CL-215 water bomber and vehicles for firetac crews. We are getting five more vehicles here, apparently.

We are in the Prevention Section adding fire rangers at Swan River, Ashern, Lac du Bonnet, Steinbach, for preventative work. In the last fire period we lost 190,000 hectares by man-caused fires and spent \$1.9 million to suppress those fires. There's a special effort being made to reduce the number of man-caused fires this year. There's an addition of \$4.5 million for the strategic approach to fire suppression and the emphasis on early detection of the fire and then fast attack of that fire.

MR. ORCHARD: Thank you. I thank the Minister for that information. The subject of the CL-215 water bombers came up the other night in the Member for Inkster's dissertation. I think the Minister will find that both the Air Division Department and his staff will agree that's probably the most effective aircraft in fighting forest fires that is available in the world. The Member for Inkster indicated that possibly efforts should be made to put those aircraft in service in the off-season, say from approximately September or October through till March or mid-April. I'd like to tell the Minister that he will, no doubt, find his department as well as particularly the Air Division pursuing that

actively as they have been for about two years now.

During my exposure with Air Division we had an opportunity to lease one of our water bombers to Argentina. Now we were hesitant at that time to undertake that lease arrangement because we felt there weren't the kinds of guarantees that we needed in place to undertake that lease two years ago. I believe it was in the spring of '79, the high fire year — I believe that was '79, was it not? 1979 was the spring of the forest fires? — (Interjection) — '79 was the year when we had all the forest fires, or was it '80? — (Interjection) — '80, okay. It was coming into that spring that our aircraft may well have been in Argentina, and it was a stroke of good fortune that we couldn't make a deal on that; there's always that caution in leasing that kind of equipment out.

I know that the department has been criticized and the government has been criticized for having that kind of a major investment sit idly by all winter, but we pursued an arrangement with Australia the next year. We almost had one arranged with one of the states in Australia to have one of our CL-215s go down there but once again the arrangements, although they were quite favourable, did fall through at the behest of the Australian Government. But I'd like to indicate to the Minister that in 1980 when the threat of fires was very very high, we had a great deal of difficulty mustering enough aircraft to fight those forest fires. I think his department will indicate that and Air Division went through all the hoops to try to get aircraft.

It was very very fortunate that I was able to arrange that spring the purchase of the second 215. It was on a conditional sales contract, I believe, to the Yukon Territories. Canada Air — I believe, we have a good working relationship with Canada Air on the CL-215s. They were able to advance the breaking of that conditional sales contract — I guess would be the best way to put it — and we were able to purchase that on very very short notice and it was the only aircraft available. Quebec had a fleet of 15 that they did not want to send out of the province because the unique problem with the forest fires is that they tend to be not only a regional problem, but often a national problem, and when they are you just cannot get aircraft from other jurisdictions. So, in that regard we then exercised a purchase option for a third aircraft and in exercising that option we did attain for a Winnipeg aerospace firm an offset to manufacture components for the next series of 215s. It was a good offset from our standpoint for our aerospace industry in Manitoba, and it also was a good acquisition that the Minister will have at his department's disposal this spring, because I believe the anticipated delivery date is some time in April of this year.

You know, I would like close this by just by asking the Minister if he would think that three of these heavy water bombers CL-215s are sufficient at the present time or is he entertaining the purchase of additional 215s?

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Chairman, I think that with the addition of that aircraft that we'll probably be in a reasonably good position. With the longstanding arrangements that exist with other jurisdictions, I'm hopeful that we'll be able to deal with any problems on that basis.

In respect to the leasing out of equipment, I think that has to be carefully monitored to determine that we're not getting a short-term gain and then involved in a very substantial wear and tear on the equipment that really isn't worth it. We have to look at that very very carefully, although it looks very attractive to get some immediate revenue while they are sitting around, so to speak. The upgrading of equipment can take place in that downtime and I think we'd have to look at that very carefully before we make a decision to rent out extensively.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I certainly agree and that very revenue versus future expense on maintenance was the reason why we didn't carry out the deal with Argentina. However, the arrangement we did make with Australia was the last I had anything to do with it — very attractive and might be worth pursuing by the Minister if he would so desire. I am pleased, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister feels the acquisition of two additional water bombers by the previous Conservative government will provide adequate forest fire protection. I'm glad to say that we provided that kind of long-term protection for Manitoba's forest industry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour is 4:30, I am interrupting proceedings for Private Members' Hour. We will reconvene again at 8 o'clock.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, prior to adjourning the committee, is there any disposition on the part of the Minister to pass out any more detailed information with respect to Capital programs?

MR. MACKLING: No problem, I have it here. I thought that we would do that at a convenient time. We got through this item, but . . .

MR. DRIEDGER: I think maybe if we could have it now, I think it would escalate things if we could get them.

MR. MACKLING: Sure, I have no problem with it. I thought we would be through this item earlier and I would have given you the material before we broke, but if you want it now. I was rather waiting because when the honourable member was here there were only a couple of members present, and we would have been putting it out without sufficient members being here. If you want to take it now, we can provide it now

SUPPLY - NORTHERN AFFAIRS

MR. CHAIRMAN, Jerry T. Storie (Flin Flon): Committee will come to order.

We're continuing with No. 5, Environmental Management, Resolution No. 118. 5.(a)(1) Salaries.

The Honourable Minister.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Chairperson, I'd like to address these remarks through you specifically to the Opposition critic in respect to the Environmental Management Division. As he knows, there has in the past been an environmental accident report tabled in the House which outlines the environmental accidents over the

past year, and there's also been a section of different departmental annual reports which, in fact, have part of them addressed to Environmental Management Division. This year because of the time constraints, I've not had an opportunity to officially table those two documents, but with the leave of the House or the leave of the Committee I guess, at this juncture, I would ask him if he would want me to informally send him over one copy of each so that he can use them in the development of his questions respecting the Environmental Management Division. If he suggests and the Committee agrees that's a proper procedure, I'd be glad to send him over a copy of each of those two reports.

The other option, of course, is to allow the normal course of actions to unfold and we would table them within a short period of time. However, there's no statutory requirement to table the environmental accident report, so I couldn't indicate when we would have it tabled, but I'd like to facilitate as much as possible his search for information which he feels is of benefit to him as a member of the Opposition and therefore would like to strike this informal agreement with the permission of the House to encourage those comments. I would ask him for his comments on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Tuxedo.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for making that offer. Obviously any information he would like to share with this side of the House will be of benefit to us in formulating our questions and debate on the review of his Estimates, so certainly that would be appreciated if he's prepared to do that now or at some later date, that would be just fine.

MR. COWAN: I think what we will do then, Mr. Chairperson, is send the two documents over to him now in an informal way and I hope that they are of value to him and his colleagues in their questioning.

As well, the Member for Tuxedo asked for some further information on the new testing sites and the existing testing sites for acid precipitation. I understand that we have a map prepared and I am prepared to send him over a copy of that map at this time.

MR. FILMON: I thank the Minister for giving us that information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Emerson

MR. ALBERT DRIEDGER (Emerson): I appreciate the opportunity to be able to enter into the debate on the Estimates here in this department. It is sometimes a little difficult trying to get up and down between the two. The Minister was more capable of doing that at the time when he was a member of the Opposition than possibly myself.

However, I'd like to take this opportunity under the Environmental Management, this section here to bring up certain concerns. I raised the question about that animal removal during the question period some time back and certain limitations of expressing one's total thoughts at that time and gathering all the information that one would like, so I'd like to take this opportunity to bring that issue to the surface again

and maybe ask some questions of the Minister regarding his position on that. At that time, he indicated he would be studying the issue and looking at the possibility of what could be done.

I expressed some concern at that time that possibly we didn't have that much time really, if we were going to try and help bail out the four operators that are basically involved in the Dead Farm Animal Removal Service. I would like to, at this time before I make further comments, maybe ask the Minister once more and Committee here, as to where he's at with that, whether it is being pursued and what time frame are we looking at in terms of possibly working something out for these operators because, as I understand it, by the end of the month some of them will be making some dramatic decisions and I think these will have quite a bearing on what's going to be happening.

MR. COWAN: The member will recall that question was first addressed to the Minister of Agriculture and it was appropriately done so. I answered in the Minister for Agriculture's absence to provide some information to the member in respect to a specific question as there is an interdepartmental committee which does address this issue, so I'm prepared to discuss it in some generalities at this particular time. However, I would suggest to the Member for Emerson that it is my understanding that the agricultural Estimates are up next in the Chamber as soon as we're completed with our Estimates here, and that he could probably get greater detail from the lead Minister, but I'm prepared to provide him with a general outline at this time. It will be in fact that, only a general description.

It is my understanding that there was a Federal-Provincial meat hygiene meeting held on October 27, 1981 in Ottawa where contact was made with the chairperson of that committee to clarify the federal position and ask that the federal position in respect to dead animal control be brought forward in a specific and detailed way. During that meeting this issue was discussed and the Director General of Meat Hygiene for the Federal Government suggested that enabling legislation and subsequent draft regulations were incorporated under The Animal Contagious Diseases Act. Legal problems are foreseen in applying these proposed controls to the area of human food protection.

The manpower and related inspection costs for a comprehensive national program are prohibitive at this time according to the Federal Government and they are suggesting that if the program was initiated, monies to run that program would have to come from the Human Food Inspection Activities Branch. So federal control of interprovincial movement of dead meat or activities within the specific provinces at this point is a question that is still open to review.

There have been proposed regulations prepared for provincial adoption and liaison between the provinces is to be left to the provinces to set out and to put into effect. So it's suggested that the Provincial Government will have a great deal of responsibility in this respect.

It is my understanding that there is an interdepartmental committee on dead animal carcass disposal and that they have been reviewing the regulations and the procedures which are in place at this time. They

are still reviewing that and of course my staff are part of that review.

The difficulty we are having to address at this time, of course, is that during the winter months there is difficulty in disposing of dead carcasses due to ground conditions, frozen ground conditions to be specific, so we go through this exercise I believe, in almost every instance around this time of year.

I'm informed that the circumstances which confront us this year are not as widespread or extensive as circumstances which have confronted us in previous years, however I don't want to diminish the problem by saying that. I just want to try to provide the Member for Emerson with an overview and some historical context as well.

The Committee is continuing their consideration in the need to establish some form of provincial control of dead meat materials. It's generally agreed that any control should embody the following principles the first being, that rendering and canning should be permitted under very specific regulations; that incineration should be permitted under controlled conditions; that burial should be permitted, again under very controlled conditions; that we should prohibit commercial boning unless the operation included a cooking process to ensure than any negative effects of the dead meat were not entering the food chain; an extension of a dead animal pick-up program by rendering plants and their agents, as it is their responsibility in many instances to provide that service. Of course, overall, our concern and our consideration must be with the prevention of the spread of animal disease.

To that end we are continuing our meetings; we are attempting to come forward with a program that will in fact address the concerns of the Member for Emerson. It is not a new problem and does not mean that we should not act quickly on it; it just means that it has been around for quite some time and there have been continued concerns respecting the disposal of dead animals in Manitoba since 1950 — I'm certain that they even precede that specific date if one were to go back into the records — but that's where our records start.

So we take the Member for Emerson's comments into consideration and account and the interdepartmental committee, at least my staff on the interdepartmental committee, have been informed of my comments and will be informed of these comments as well and they are proceeding with developing that sort of comprehensive program.

I would only suggest that the Minister for Agriculture could probably give a more complete and detailed overview on the entire problem. But I did want to address the specific questions of the Member for Emerson.

MR. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister. I appreciate the fact that some of his people are possibly serving on that committee. Himself, of course, his views are going to be a major concern in their deliberations as to how this is handled. He's talking of the general overall type of situation across the country federally and the provincial responsibilities and rightfully so as these concerns have been there for some time.

Why I raised the question specifically at this time was because of the extreme situation that is developing at the present time with these operators saying that they will stop providing this kind of service at the end of this month at a time when during the course of the winter in cases as he mentioned where animals have not been able to have been picked up, we have a situation developing now with the nice weather where if this service is not going to be provided there's going to be a lot of screaming going on. Actually, Mr. Chairman, I think aside from the overall general picture, this thing can be resolved a lot faster than that in the interim.

I believe possibly an interim program could be initiated to some degree for assistance. Governments, when we look at the monies in the Estimates for the various things certainly the compensation factor to these four operators is very negligible. It's a minor thing in the interim until a general overall policy can be developed to resolve the issue. In the meantime I can guarantee the Minister, he might think that it's possibly within the jurisdiction of the Minister of Agriculture, but if these animals are going to start rotting out there and infecting some of the streams and what have you, it's very much going to be his problem after that, not just the Minister of Agriculture.

The concern I'd like to express to him and some caution possibly, that if the interdepartmental committee is studying the overall impact of this and what should be done, I'd like to just caution that if we're talking of legislation or things of this nature that should be brought to bare on this matter, if the Minister is considering that possibly the farmers should be responsible for the removal in some of these cases, cost factorwise or otherwise, there are going to be some dramatic problems with that.

First of all, you have to accept the fact that the farmer has already experienced the financial loss of animal, or animals and you know with that bitter taste in his mouth he's supposed to — when we talk of excavation or burying these animals — the cost factor involved of having a machine in many cases to do that, a backhoe or a cat or something of that nature to do a proper job. The incineration is another aspect that creates a certain amount of problems for some people. So I think it is very easy to continue the ongoing program where we have people that provide this kind of service but if we are going to be looking back to somehow making the farmer responsible financially for this, then we are going to have big problems with this.

I want to caution the Minister on that aspect of it because it would be my impression to some degree that members opposite basically, looking at some of the Estimates, especially in the Estimates of Natural Resources, Agricultural Estimates, that there haven't been major increases in there. I don't think even increases to the fact of the cost of living or the natural increases in wages. So it seems that the priorities of the members opposite are not necessarily rural oriented and I want to caution you that you keep this in mind.

These people have grave concerns out there too, and I'm talking in a more general sense, that you do not just get all caught up with the workplace and safety aspects of the city, that the people in the rural

area have concerns as well; that you do not overlook this. I appreciate the fact that these matters cannot be resolved possibly overnight in terms of general policy, but it's so easy to say, yes we're studying it. We've heard a lot of that from the members opposite lately, we'll study everything. In the meantime the situation is extreme. As I indicated, the Minister will become aware of the extremes once the warm weather continues and these fellows quit operating.

I hope really with a little bit of a compensation factor negotiations with these four operators, I think possibly the program can continue until a proper policy has been developed by the government.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to express a few other concerns that I have at the present time and one is the use of chemicals — the chemical disposal sites. I brought this to the Minister's attention in my Throne Speech at that time.

The chemical disposal sites are being viewed or anticipated across the line, our neighbours to the south, and the Minister indicated that they were on top of it; they were keeping an eye on things. I hope it is not just sweet talk, that on a tough issue of this nature the Minister is prepared to go out there and take a very serious position with that. I know that the people along the rivers that are flowing into Canada are very concerned. The municipalities I believe have raised concerns, individuals have raised concerns, in fact in the southeast area, in my area there was a group that was formed that is working on this aspect of it. I don't know whether they have been in touch with the Minister expressing their concerns about some of the disposal sites in that area.

The Minister is possibly aware that one of the reasons why the sites have been chosen in the northern part of Minnesota and North Dakota is because of the isolation factor. The population is not that extreme as it is possibly further down south. But the fact that there is less people there and the situation is isolated does not necessarily solve any problem. It creates a problem when it comes downstream, the possible pollution factor of that.

I would just encourage the Minister that he be on top of this thing all the way down the line and communicate with the people and the municipalities especially with the LGD of Stuartburn and the LGD of Piney, any of the municipalities that are involved and have expressed concerns. Some of them don't really know how to attack the problem but they'll certainly give all the support that is required to the Minister in terms of forwarding or expressing your concerns.

The other thing I want to caution the Minister on, they sometimes say you can't have it both ways and I certainly don't necessarily want to have it both ways, but personally I have sometimes felt a little critical of the Minister when he was the Member of the Opposition, his concern about all the environmental aspects, workplace and safety, I sometimes thought he came down a little heavy on it but supposedly maybe not.

I would like to caution though in the area of chemical use for farmers. It seems that we have cases and I would just like to refer to a specific instance. The municipalities in the southeast are faced with a weed problem, bladder campion is the name of the weed. Under The Noxious Weed Act, municipalities have responsibility to enact certain things to control this

kind of weed up to the point where they can take and close down gravel pits or isolate farm properties till the weed is under control.

In my particular case, we have two gravel pits that have been found to contain bladder campion so departmental people have been involved in trying to study how to control this weed. There is a way to control it with chemical but because of the possible environmental impact, it is not being allowed to be used. The alternative is to take and sanitize or treat the gravel up to a certain level at the cost of approximately \$1,000 an acre which would then be charged to the gravel pit operators. I will tell you something, the government or whoever will be around, they'll be owning that property before the gravel operators are going to be starting to spend that kind of monies on it.

So when we talk of the use of chemicals for example, especially with limited use, I think with some of these were sometimes over concerned about the impact of some of these chemicals and there is a need for that. This country has been developed to a large degree, the kind of production that we get out of the farm communities very often has been because of the proper use of chemicals, fertilizers, control of weeds with chemicals and I would just caution the Minister not to come down too heavy on the side of the environment in that respect and allow a certain amount of commonsense to prevail in terms of usage of some of these things because the concern is there. Sometimes the farm people hard pressed as they are in the cost squeeze, feel that everybody is out to get them so I would hope that the Minister will use discretion in terms of allowing chemicals that are a necessity.

I think the Minister himself, when he was Member of the Opposition was sitting here and we were talking about the spray for brush control, 245T or something like that. Am I right on that? A big production about these things, because of the environmental impact on it. There comes a point where I think these things can be just taken a little bit too far. Sometimes there is good use that comes out of these things and as I have indicated before the fact that we have wisely used chemicals, fertilizers, have brought this country to be one of the richest producing countries in the world, in spite of the fact that the farmers are in dire straits right now and need consideration and compassion from the union. —(Interjection)— pardon me? In dire straits, yes. Well, not necessarily under the conditions the way this government is coming up with a program, you'd have to be dead before you get any assistance in terms of financial relief, I suppose but that was a shot.

Anyway, as I've indicated, I wanted to put some of these comments forward and we'll be watching very closely which direction the Minister is going to be going in these respects. If we feel that he is creating hardship on the people in the rural area, who I think he better start having a little better feeling for, we're all concerned about the North but I'll tell you something, there is a lot of us concerned about the people that are the productive people, agriculturally wise in Manitoba, the tax paying people that have been paying for a long time, so we don't have too much of a shift taking place from these people to get other areas developed and subsidized.

MR. COWAN: I thank the Member for Emerson for his comments and I am certain we are going to disagree from time to time over certain specifics, maybe even over generalities. However, I do look forward to him providing to me exactly the types of comments which he has provided to me today to assure that we are taking into consideration the effects of the programs which we put in place and that we are trying to build programs which minimize for all individuals, whether they be in Northern Manitoba, Southern Manitoba or the City of Winnipeg or any other large urban city, any negative impacts of those programs.

He suggested that there is a group formed in his own constituency in respect to the Kitson County Waste Disposal Site or the Minnesota Waste Management Plant, I don't know as if I've had representation from that group as yet. I have had representation from the R.M. of Montcalm if that's the group he is referring to specifically, and I have had representation from the Roseau River Indian Reserve I believe, if that's the group he is referring to specifically.

However, if I've not had representation from the group which he is referring to specifically, can he please provide me with their name and I'll get in touch with them, or conversely so he can provide them with my invitation through him to get in touch with me? I'd be very pleased to sit down and discuss this with them.

I had indicated to the member that I would be providing more information to him as it became available and I only apologize that I haven't been able to put this in writing to him due to my Estimates coming forward very quickly. However, I would like to put it into the record and perhaps that will suffice for his purposes at the present time. I have given him my general commitment to continue to provide new information as it does become available to the department.

I also want to encourage him to work with the department as he sees fit to obtain that information of a public nature which he feels may be of some benefit to him because they are the front line people in respect to the day to day activities and the day to day analysis of those activities. I can provide him of course with the general overview and do attempt to keep as informed as possible on the subject. But he may from time to time prefer to go directly to them and I encourage that as long as it's information of public nature which is of some benefit to him.

But to provide him with the update at this point, public hearings are still under way in the State of Minnesota with respect to the siting of their landfill sites and their chemical processing facilities. These public hearings, of course, are being conducted to look at specific possible candidate sites. They have been designed to allow for full public participation in this process of siting of their hazardous waste management facilities, extremely important process and I can't support it too much in these Chambers. The public who are going to be affected by these landfill sites, by these hazardous waste management plans, by chemical processing plants, must be an integral part of the entire review. They are the ones that are going to have to suffer the consequences if, in fact, we make mistakes and we will try not to make mistakes. However, history proves to us that even given the best intentions and the best technical advice which we

have at our disposal, mistakes have from time to time been made.

So, we try to minimize that by involving as many parties as possible in the decision-making process. That includes involving the scientists, that includes involving the proponents of such projects, and that specifically must always include involving the opponents of any such process. The way by which the State of Minnesota has gone about their procedure in this respect is commendable. They are allowing for these public hearings and they are encouraging participation at these public hearings. We will be faced with much the same task as the Member for Tuxedo knows, when we start to develop our own hazardous waste management system in this province — not an easy chore, by any stretch of the imagination. We must encourage that participation. We must allow for meaningful participation and that may mean different types of support, different types of encouragements, and we must in fact ensure that people not only have the opportunity to make their voices heard, but that their voices, indeed, are listened to and heard by those people who face those very tough decisions.

To get back to the specific subject which we're discussing now, and that's the possible location of a landfill site in northern Minnesota which would be of some concern to the Province of Manitoba in general and in specific to the members of the constituency for which the Member for Emerson represents. We are now at the stage of public hearings. The Province of Manitoba through the Environmental Management Division is monitoring those public hearings. The Province of Manitoba has made contact with Mr. Robert Dunn who is the chairperson of the State of Minnesota Hazardous Waste Management Board, and have initiated what I believe to be a meaningful working relationship. We have regular exchange of information, we have set up the mechanisms for discussions and we are using those mechanisms.

The situation as it stands now is that there are nine candidate sites for landfill disposal identified in the Red River Drainage Basin, one of which is located in Kitson County adjacent to the Manitoba border. Those are landfill sites as opposed to chemical processing plants, but we should be concerned and we are concerned about landfill sites as well as the chemical processing plants. It is my understanding, and I can double check and correct the record if necessary, that they have narrowed the sites down and the one in Kitson County has been ruled out. The one in Beltrama County has also been ruled out, which leaves seven candidate areas still in the Red River drainage area, so we are concerned about those seven and we are still monitoring what is happening in the public hearings.

My understanding of the situation is they are going to attempt to narrow that down to six sites, at which time they will initiate formal public assessment hearings on those six sites. At that time, the Province of Manitoba will be continuing its monitoring, continuing its dialogue, continuing its review of those particular sites. So, that is where the situation stands at the present time. I hope that information is of some benefit to the Member for Emerson and through him to those groups in his constituency which have expressed very legitimate concerns.

I can confirm to him now that we have informally been advised by the Minnesota Hazardous Waste Management Board that the proposed North Kitson County waste disposal site has been deleted from further consideration. That's an informal announcement on their part and I certainly hope I have not pre-empted them. However, I think that information is good news to the Member for Emerson and I wanted to provide it to him at this time.

In respect to his other concerns, which are very important concerns as well, we will be listening to him. We will be listening to the groups which he represents both through him and directly. We have tried to make certain that when we make decisions which may, in fact, affect different groups, we have allowed for the greatest participation in that decision by those groups. When I say participation in those decisions, I mean of course information-sharing with their government so that their government is advised of their concerns and benefits by their expertise and their experience.

We won't always agree as this government didn't always agree with those groups coming forward to them, but we are going to listen to them and we are going to listen to them in a meaningful way. I can only inform him that the problem with dead carcasses which is fast approaching us, is one that has been ongoing for a number of years. His government did have a number of years to deal with the problem in the way in which he suggested it should be dealt with at this time. They did not do that and I certainly want to go back through the record to advise myself of the reasons for their hesitancy to proceed with the very type of plan which he has put forward here today. I'm not saying we're rejecting it out of hand. I just want to be made aware of their concerns in respect to that program as well; so we can discuss that either further today or at a later date if the member so wishes or both, I guess, could be the case. But I do suggest that he address those questions as well to the Minister of Agriculture who is the lead Minister in this regard and so much better informed on this subject than am I.

MR. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have basically one question, but before I get to the question I'd like to correct the impression that the Minister is trying to leave that the previous administration did nothing about dead animal removal.

At that time, there was a program in place and these people were removing the dead animals. The situation is developing now where they're running into financial difficulty, not because of any government, but because of the value of the product going down. I just want to clear that up on the record that the previous administration had no problem with it at that time because the program was working or the service was being provided.

The question that I want to ask is, the Minister made reference to the hearings that would be held on the stateside when they had brought the site designation down to six sites. The question that I have is, is the Minister going to make a commitment that his government is going to make representation at these hearings or is it just going to be monitoring them, because the Minister indicated that you'd be checking and monitoring and looking at it? I want to know

whether the Minister is intending to make representation and present briefs at that time.

MR. COWAN: That, of course, will depend on whether or not one of those sites or more of those sites are in the Red River Watershed Area. If the sites are of concern to us, then of course we will be making representation and providing the State of Minnesota Hazardous Waste Management Board with the value of our expertise and our experience as well as a specific description of our concern. So I can give the Member for Emerson that assurance, and perhaps if that does come to pass, he would be kind enough to provide us with some statement of his concerns and we can incorporate that into our brief. If he does not intend to make representation before those hearing himself, which he may well intend to do.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to participate in the examination of the Estimates for this particular division. And I must say that, at the outset, leaving loyal, dedicated, hard working personnel out of it, and I do that, Mr. Chairman, I must say that in my own experience the Environmental Management division is not my favourite division in the Public Service of Manitoba. I say that, because I come off four years experience as Minister of Health, in which I found great, gaping holes and problems in terms of liaison between Health and Environmental Managements, in terms of mutual involvement in initiatives, and indeed, in fact, even in terms of mutual agreement where initiatives were concerned.

One of the first things that I would be advocating and have advocated for some time, perhaps not publicly, is that the Environmental Management Division should be part of the Department of Health. It should be a division of the Department of Health. I don't offer that from any desire to build up the size of the area of responsibility for administration that falls to the Minister of Health, whoever he or she may be, but simply from the point of view of logic and reason. There's no question in this day and age, Mr. Chairman, that many of the major issues and challenges in the health field are Public Health issues, and many of them are basically environmental issues. Unless and until there is a very close liaison between the Public Health side of the Health Department, and the Environmental Management side of the Department of Northern Affairs Environment and Workplace Safety and Health, there will be continual frustration and failure and disappointment to move on, and resolve the difficulties that arise naturally and endemically in the Public Health and Environmental sector, as a consequence of the industrial and technological day and age in which we live, and also as a consequence of the ever-widening concern for, and interest in, Environmental and Public Health matters that the public of our society has.

I found, Sir, in many specific instances there were positions that were articulated by the Environmental Management Division that had not been properly liaised with health. There may indeed have been positions articulated by the Health Department that has not been properly liaised within Environment. I'm not suggesting fault was all on one side, and I'm not looking for a scapegoat. The difficulty, Sir, is in the divided structure and in the consequent division of responsi-

bilities between these two very important government offices, Health and Environmental Management. Some years ago Environmental Management was part of the Department of Health. Under the Schreyer administration there was a separation of those two responsibilities. There were two or three functions and roles that had always been included in the Health Department's responsibilities that were separated out from Health and moved into other departments, environmental Management being one of them, and I believe, if I'm not mistaken, Workplace Safety and Health being another. Certainly there was more than one, there were at least two, and one of them was Environmental Management.

Now I know that the whole science and scope of Environmental Management has expanded enormously in recent years, and it's a much bigger function, and a much bigger area of responsibility than was the case 10, or perhaps even 5 years ago. Certainly a much bigger subject area and science than was the case 15 and 20 years ago. But notwithstanding that, Mr. Chairman, I think a very strong case can be made for examining the viability and the reasonability of reintegrating Environmental Management and Health because of the mutual objectives, the mutual challenges, the mutual problems that those two offices of government face. I found to my dismay that there were many occasions when we wanted information available through the Environmental Management Branch, that simply was not available at the time that we felt we needed it. I found that liaison between the Environmental Management Division here in Manitoba, and their counterparts at the federal level in Ottawa left, from our perspective at least, in the Health Department a great deal to be desired.

In short, Sir, I found the structure somewhat disappointing. That's why I say that it doesn't enjoy a great deal of popularity in my sentiments, but it's due not to the good efforts or offices of persons involved, it's due to the division of the two offices of responsibility, a division which I think is illogical and should be reviewed and re-examined. I would want to ask the Minister among other things, whether any consideration is being given by him and his colleagues, to reintegrating Environment and Health. I would want to ask him what is being undertaken in the Environmental Management Division with respect to strengthening liaison with the Department of Health, if there are no plans to reintegrate the two offices. I would want to ask him what changes in terms of personnel and personnel assignments are being contemplated, or indeed, have been completed that will reinforce that very necessary open-door, two-way continuing communication and liaison with Health that is vital, if a number of Environmental and Public Health problems are going to be moved on, and are going to be resolved in a sensible and rational way.

There are a number of other questions that I would have of the Minister, Mr. Chairman, and I must say at this juncture that because of a prior commitment it's not possible for me to be present at the Committee sitting this evening. And I don't know at what juncture in the examination of his Estimates the Minister may want to deal with this whole question of Environment responsibility in the Public Health field and responsibility to work very closely with the Health Department.

I know a number of my colleagues have additional topics of discussion under this particular appropriation which they want to conduct with the Minister and continue with the Minister. They and the Minister will probably be some time exploring those questions, but I do want to place this position on the record at this juncture so that the Minister knows that I want to deal with this whole question at some stage of this examination of his Estimates.

If it's not possible to do it under Environmental Management, I would then want to do it when we're dealing with the final item of the Estimates for this department, the Minister's Salary. I want to ask him about the role, for example, of the Environmental Management Division vis-a-vis obtaining current up-to-date and swift information from Ottawa and indeed from Washington when necessary to meet public health threats in this province. I refer specifically to the experience that the former government had this past summer when we faced a clear Public Health emergency with the threat of encephalitis being carried by a very high culex tarsalis mosquito infestation. I want to ask him about the work that the Environmental Management Division has conducted, if any and to what extent, since the chemical insecticide spraying operation with the chemical Bagon was carried out during the summer to meet that threat; what kind of monitoring and evaluation has the Environmental Management Division carried out with respect to the evaluation of any impact or fallout from that spraying operation on wildlife and waterfowl and marine life in the province is concerned? These are all things that the former government addressed at the time of the declaration of the public health emergency. They are all things that I as Minister acknowledged were part and parcel of the potential downside, the potential difficulty of moving in the way that we felt we had to move, Mr. Chairman, and I am not anxious to re-debate the spraying issue or the Bagon issue with respect to the encephalitis threat last summer.

In fact, I must say that I appreciate the position that the Honourable Minister took and his colleagues took when they were in Opposition at the time throughout that public health emergency. They were not vocally or publicly critical of the decision that the government took or the decision that I took. I assume that means that they recognized we faced a very difficult decision and made that decision in what we considered to be the most honest and conscientious interests of the public of Manitoba. That was the atmosphere in which that decision was made and I frankly appreciate the tacit concurrence of the Opposition of the day, now the government, in that decision.

I'm not suggesting, Mr. Chairman, that I want to re-debate that question which was a subject of some considerable public debate at the time, but I am suggesting that we did acknowledge that we were taking a step that had to be weighed on the basis of advantage versus disadvantage. We certainly do recognize and did recognize that when one is injecting a chemical ingredient into the atmosphere, in this case a pesticide, that one is to a certain extent risking the unknown. We attempted to obtain the most knowledgeable and comprehensive scientific documentation we could for the use of that pesticide and also for the particular application in which it was laid down,

but nonetheless we acknowledged and I still acknowledge that to a certain extent, one is treading into the unknown. Nobody takes that kind of decision lightly. It was a decision that had to be taken because the need for using it in the public health emergency circumstances outweighed the other factors, but we said at that time, we want to measure the downsides.

It's up to the Environmental Management Division to make sure that we've got a complete reading when this is all over as to what deleterious effects there may have been on wildlife, marine life, waterfowl, etc., so that we can have the data base available to us or to any future government for the development and formulation of positions to be applied in the future should a similar emergency occur again. I don't know what kind of success the Environmental Management Division has had in pursuing those objectives, but those certainly are very clear objectives of our government and I would expect they would be objectives too, of the new government and thus far, and it's now some six months since the conclusion of that emergency, I've not been acquainted with any results of any such studies, Mr. Chairman.

I don't want to foreclose the Minister from immediate response to this and I know there's only another minute-and-a-half left on the clock, so I'm going to sit down. I just wanted to tell him, Mr. Chairman, that I want to talk about these things and he may just want to take them as notice now and agree with me to discuss them during this consideration of these Estimates at a later time this week.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Chairperson, I certainly want to be brief and give my answer to the Minister as quickly as I can. I apologize to the Hansard staff for that.

I appreciate the concerns that the previous Minister of Health has put to the record and am prepared to discuss them. Many of them are general in nature and I think that we can most appropriately discuss them under the Minister's Salary if he is, in fact, prevented from being here during the line-by-line portions of the Estimates where we would be discussing them. However, if he's here and we're still discussing this as I imagine we will be on Wednesday or Thursday, then I'd be prepared to discuss them at that point as well. The overture which I'm making to the member is I'm prepared to discuss them at his convenience as long as I'm still in Estimates. I would hate to have to come back outside of Estimates to discuss them in a public way, although we could do that during question period as well.

I have taken note of many of his questions and will provide him with the detailed answers at that time if that's acceptable to him. I think it would be somewhat useless to get into that debate right now with only 30 seconds left, but I want to assure him that I will be providing that information to him as he is available to receive it, and if we have to set up special arrangements, then we'll certainly do that as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before proceeding, I guess it's 4:30 p.m., time for Private Members' Hour, so I'm interrupting the proceedings and will return at 8:00 p.m.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time being 4:30,

it's time for Private Members' Hour.

On the proposed Resolution of the Honourable Member for Tuxedo and the amendment thereto by the Honourable Member for River East.

The Honourable Minister of Education has three minutes remaining.

HON. MAUREEN HEMPHILL (Logan): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank both the Member for Tuxedo and the Member for Kirkfield Park, Mr. Speaker, for indicating an interest, a concern, an understanding and a willingness to look for ways that we can work together to deal with this critical issue that's facing communities from one end of our province to the other, and to do it in a way that recognizes both the school board responsibilities, Mr. Speaker, and the rights and the feelings and the concerns of parents. We do know what the problem is, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned yesterday, we have all the information that we need on declining enrolment, and it is because school divisions also have that information on school size, on declining enrolments and on expansion of bilingual programs, that they are making the decisions that they are making today.

I said yesterday that we are and have already passed through the peak years of the decline in '78-'79, but what I also want to tell you is that I believe it is clear that we are in the middle of what will turn out to be the crunch year for consolidation and school closure. This is it. This is the crunch year, and we either work together to solve those problems, to make sure that the decisions that are made, look at the quality of education and the quality of life for our neighbourhoods, Mr. Speaker. We have to make sure that they are both taken into consideration.

I've communicated a comprehensive approach that includes educational finance, looking at funding in the review that's being undertaken, in looking at the role of the department to give support and help, in looking at policies to allow parents to have their voice heard on this important matter. And I want to say that I'm looking forward to support and help from the members opposite and all the members of this Chamber, to help us with the programs and the policies that we are going to bring into place to deal with this critical issue. I urge all the members of this chamber to support the amended resolution and I thank you for your interest and support.

MR. MANNES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, how much time to I have?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member has the same time as everybody else on Private Members' Hour, 20 minutes.

MR. MANNES: Thank you. I'd like to cover the areas of small schools, and local autonomy, and levy authority, and pending assessment review, and declining enrolment, and quality of education, and I don't think I can do that in 20 minutes. But I plan to cover the waterfront as has the Minister yesterday and somewhat today. Listening to the Minister as I have, I realize that the Minister and this government face a dilemma, and I guess a lot of people do in this whole education area, but I can see a particular dilemma

arising and I'd like to refer to some of the quotes that were made by the Minister yesterday and I quote, and she says, "There's more to the issue than money, and how decisions are made and who will make them is the number one issue and we are moving on all fronts, and schools are important to the stability of the neighbourhood and the Department of Education will force," and I didn't know we'd hear that word out of the government of today, "school boards to take into account factors other than cost and declining enrolment and the feeling of parents." These are all laudable comments and I agree with them all; I have to say that right from the start.

But later on when we discuss in more details education financing, and of course, in the cost decisions arising from that, I'm sure we'll soon see that that particular area of financing is in conflict with some of the points and some of the quotes that I have just read. My main concern is whether the Minister and the government and the government of the day are really living in the real world, or if they're living in a glass bowl, after I've heard all the statements that have been made.

I'd like to start off by discussing small schools and giving you some of my experiences with them, and I think reference was made to 100-plus small schools and I don't know how many high schools, I forgot. But, I'd like to tell you that where I come from and where I went to school and where my children go to school — it's a two-room school, 35-40 children, grades 1 to 6 — and much to my dismay I've just found out recently that children's grades 4-6, some of them take the same social study tests and that causes concern. The other concerns of course, that we do not have gyms that I'd consider proper, and some of our science labs are lacking. But there's a trade-off, to which the Minister has made reference. We find that our parents are very much involved; we have volunteers that come into our school. They are parent volunteers; they're allowed to do some reading with the children. They offer administrative support to the teachers, recreation support, and they have a real presence in the everyday education of the community. No event that goes on in that particular school is too small to be of interest to the community as a whole, and everybody is basically aware of it. That's the return, that's the offset to some of the tremendous responsibilities that are placed on those two teachers that administer over those six grades and some of the responsibilities on ourselves as parents to, indeed, make ourselves aware as to what is going on at any particular time.

And of course some of the other returns as fathers and grandfathers, we've introduced hockey playing at noon hour in a local rink. The people volunteer their time and we see our kids grow up, not only from before 8:30 in the morning and after 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon, but also during the day. And of course, the Christmas concerts, and on, and on, and on, and anybody that has a rural background knows exactly of what I'm speaking.

But, and there's always a "but" to these sort of discussions. We always question, behind all the good things that the small schools have to offer we are always wondering whether the quality of education is being sacrificed, and we're always wondering if there

are any economies at all in consolidation, either minor or massive. The main point, of course, is our school is the focal point of our community and any attempts to close it or even to discuss the future of it leads to very emotional outbreaks, and ones which I know other schools have come across lately.

I'd like to say that nobody has fought harder to maintain the small-school tradition; I can't think of anybody that believes in the community and the school working together more than I do, but again, those haunting doubts of the quality of education.

So I begin by stating my understanding of the terms and the Member for Tuxedo said, emotional issues neighbour versus neighbour, whatever we do we shouldn't attempt to see those surface. The Minister again makes reference more to the issue than just money and the Member for Kirkfield Park says that the small local school is the focus of the neighbourhood and we all agree.

No member can represent a rural riding fully unless he or she understands the history of rural education and why annual school board meetings are always well attended because the issues of consolidation, the issues of costs and the quality of education have existed for 50 years in the country and I believe are just beginning to surface in large measures in the larger centre of Winnipeg.

What is this dilemma that I really believe the government is going to be facing? Certainly, it's cost related. Everything today and every action has a cost to it and in the real world of public policy, whether it's in democratic Canada or in communist Russia, the bottom line is and only is cost. In spite of the platitudes, the ideals, the criteria, the rational informed decisions, the priorities, the reforms, the regulations, the procedures, etc., etc., etc., still the bottom line is cost and I guess this is why I think it is. The remarks I'm going to make on education financing, of course, I want to take back into a rural perspective because I really don't have a full understanding of city financing of education.

I'd like to make reference to a MAST costing study and I don't know if you want me to lay a copy, which I don't have, on the table, but I will be glad to afterwards. On page 18, the table indicates that the total revenue cost per pupil, the provincial average in 1981 was \$2,746 compared to \$760 million in 1971 or 3.63 times higher and I suppose that's not all that startling.

But what also has happened is that in 1982 I imagine this number would be over \$3,000 and of course, all public and private costs have increased, we're well aware of that. But I'm wondering if the relatively buoyant economic decade of the Seventies that allowed these types of increases and expenditures, we know it doesn't exist today, but I'm wondering what our government and what all of us are doing to recognize that fact. Are we just going to continue to say to ourselves, well, regardless of what's happening in the real world we still have to do certain things? I guess I'm challenging in a way, that statement.

How have conditions changed radically? I used some figures in the House today and I'd like to again bring them forward because I received them from our local school board and I received them from our local municipality. In 1981-82, our school district eligible enrolment was some 1514, that's Morris MacDonald

by the way if anybody's interested, if they wish to challenge some of these statements.

Pupil expenditure was \$3,210 per pupil and again some people may feel that the question I posed to the First Minister today regarding the dropping values of grain prices was a loaded question, but it's one of very real concern because the value to my farm and to all farms in the area of that announcement that was made by the Federal Minister yesterday represents somewhere in the area of a \$3,600 drop in income. Yet, offsetting the cost side, of course, and it's not an offset, it's an augmentation, was an added tax load of \$482, again that same number that I presented today, or a total education tax bill on a section of land of \$2,488 and I don't know if a section of land means much. Certainly it does to the members on this side of the House, an increase of 24 percent as I again indicate and I hate talking in percentage terms. I've heard enough of that in this House already and I consider it basically meaningless.

But I'm wondering where it's going to lead. Project that out for the next five years and what point do you come to? Well, I did. I compounded it ahead forward and it comes to right now, if we're paying \$3.90 an acre — that's just education tax — in five years that total will be \$12.00 an acre and of course that represents two-thirds of the livelihood off that particular piece of land, so we ask where it's going to lead.

These facts alone can lead to interesting debate in three areas and the first area, the Minister yesterday was critical of the P.C. administrative finance plan for the public schools and with due respect to my colleagues, maybe there is reason, I don't know. All I know is I've got it in front of me and it says:

One, the government provides through direct and indirect support approximately 80 percent of school board expenditures for each of the next three years and all the points are listed there. I don't see anything particularly disturbing about that.

But in going to page 28 — so I have the criticism by the Minister of this particular document — then I go to page 28 again on this MAST costing study and the heading is and if I can quote, "Local Ratepayer Costs, Property Tax for Education," and its comments. It says and I quote, "That portion of education costs which is borne by property tax has decreased to 48.2 percent in 1981 from 55.8 percent in 1980. Translated into dollars per pupil, this is a decrease to \$1,322 in 1981 from \$1,362 in 1980."

I have this dilemma. I see where the government, not only the government previous, I read this news service dated March 19th and the bottom paragraph says, "The total provincial contribution towards the cost of education has increased to 54.4 percent, an increase of just over 1 percent from last year," and I have to accept that, I have no way of disputing it.

But in 1981 the provincial government was prepared to pick up an additional 7 percent; this government appears, at least to indicate, they're going to be picking up another 1 percent and yet I'm picking up an extra 25 percent. So, we're all picking it up but if the Provincial Government is picking up more, to my benefit as a taxpayer, as a ratepayer, how come I'm picking up more?

Our particular school division pays more than average, and I understand there's an averaging technique

which is fine, we pay some 51 percent and we have the highest education support levy per pupil in the Group 1 series of times and I suppose that's fine, we're deemed to be a wealthier area. What is obvious is that the ratepayer cost per pupil is as a percent of the total cost will be increasing very quickly over the years to come and that's why I made the comments earlier as to where we can see that in five years our cost will be upwards of \$12 an acre; and unless the Minister, or indeed this government, see some major evolution in grain prices over the next while, farms are going to fail. Of course I make the comment on farms but I am talking general business because they are all the same.

I believe the backlash is starting right now. I talked to the Mayor of a local area and he insists that the School Boards will have to do their own levying, changes. You talk about the emotional debate, a mayor and reeve saying they no longer want to levy on behalf of the boards. Well, it started that already. I've heard charges the School Boards are not fiscally responsible, they don't know what they're doing and legislation has to come in to prevent the levying by municipal groups. The countercharges have already started; parents say that they want quality but yet they afford no input into change and into this whole problem; and if change is proposed they scream.

So, I'm really wondering where this emotional debate that we don't want to exist, I'm saying it's just really beginning. Rural councils can not continue to levy without some idea from someone as to where all this costing will lead. In my area the farm economy is too poor, as exists now and as is projected to exist for the next two or three years; fixed costs, these burdens of taxation, are made with no reference whatsoever to return. Again, I had written in here, that's where the difference in the Crow rate is but time limits me again for jumping into this.

The second interesting point of debate, equity, can be defined easily but no word is subject to so many varying interpretations. That's a real double-edged sword as the Member for River East may find. He talks about equity in the city, well, I wonder what equity there is when in 1987, if my projections come into being, where I'll be paying \$8,000 on that farm just to education tax. So the economic freedom that I've mentioned previously in my maiden speech, when I talk about that, that's what I mean, economic freedom because unless farming improves drastically, in an economic sense, my way of life will fall into jeopardy; again, as will many businesses. That's the problem with fixed taxation with no reference to levels of income.

The third interesting point of debate, education, at what cost? We all heard the term education, an investment in our future and everyone of us believes it. Where do we, all citizens, say that we can no longer afford to increase spending on education at a rate above our ability to produce wealth. I believe that the debate is started in the rural areas and I think it has started everywhere and that as legislators we are going to take an issue on it and we are not going to be able to talk in niceties and ideals; I think the day is over.

So, the issue is critical, let's work together, let's attempt to find the solution but let's not be afraid to

make tough decisions; the times demand them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Dauphin.

MR. JOHN PLOHMAN (Dauphin): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to make a short statement on this very important matter today. Mr. Speaker, I feel very close to this — (Interjection) — Yes, the Honourable Member for Pembina, since I have a vested interest, I'm glad to hear that he likes my vest.

I feel very close to the situation of declining enrolments because as a teacher in Dauphin over the last 8-and-a-half years, I've experienced, I believe firsthand, the problems associated with declining enrolments, both as a teacher, and for those members who mentioned that parents should have an extra say in education, as a parent. The Member for Kirkfield Park said yesterday, she mentioned that there was a need for parents to be involved in the problems of declining enrolment, and particularly in school closings. I agree 100 percent with this approach, I think it is very important that parents are involved closely and the whole community is involved closely in any decisions that are made in education. But I detected a certain tendency to downplay the involvement of teachers in any solution to this problem. Teachers are very concerned - and I say this sincerely - they are concerned in a very real way with the problems associated with declining enrolments.

Educators, that's a good word, not just school closings are they concerned with, but these are a consequence obviously of declining enrolments, but also the quality of education and I think most of all that is the greatest problem that is a consequence of declining enrolments, the very real problem. The quality of education that our children are receiving in the public school system, that is the problem that is a direct consequence of declining enrolments. The teachers are involved on a day-to-day basis and can see very clearly any deterioration of educational quality for our children. They experience it firsthand; they experience it when they see their classes are crowded with students, Mr. Speaker, of varying abilities, wide range of abilities because the School Board has had to cut back in the number of teachers and classrooms and so these students are crowded together in one room; they see it when their students do not have access to the help they need from resource teachers and when they do not have access to the programs that they need to adequately prepare themselves for the world in which they are going to live; they see it when the equipment that they have to work with, that the students have to work with, that the teachers work with is insufficient and outdated.

What has often happened, and I have to emphasize that declining enrolment, contrary to what the Honourable Member for Tuxedo stressed here in the House yesterday, declining enrolment has been a very serious and significant problem for years now. Certainly it was a serious problem all during the four years that the honourable members were in the government, the honourable members opposite. But they ignored the opportunity to do something at that time, Mr. Speaker. They ignored that opportunity and they, in the Honourable Member for Pembina's words, simply put as only the Honourable Member for Pem-

bina can put it, they blew it. They did nothing.

Then after three years of government they could see the writing on the wall, Mr. Speaker, just like they could see the writing on the wall in agriculture, and you know we hear the Honourable Member for Arthur, the former Minister of Agriculture, preach and wax, whoop and holler about agriculture and about what we're doing for the farmers while he stood back, while he was the Minister, while he had an opportunity which he blew and he ignored it. He ignored the farmers for four years and did nothing and now he's waxing and hollering about our action on farmers.

Well this happened in education too, Mr. Speaker, this happened in education, they did nothing. After three years they ignored the advice of parents, teachers, trustees, and the children in the schools and they finally brought in a program that was ill conceived, poorly planned, and the hasty program in 1981, designed to win votes. But it backfired, precisely because it was ill conceived and poorly planned and because it failed to take into consideration the real problems in education, Mr. Speaker. Those of divisions with low property tax base, and those that have been operating efficiently with a low cost per pupil. These divisions were hit the hardest, these were the divisions that were penalized under the Education Support Program brought in under the former government, Mr. Speaker.

So they slapped the Member for Dauphin at that time, his constituency, the Dauphin-Ochre School Division, with a 24 percent increase in education taxes in 1981, that's what they did for Dauphin and they talk about the benefits of the Education Support Program. Well I'm sure they can ask the former Member for Dauphin what he thought about that program.

As well, the opposition well in government failed to take into account the problems associated with declining enrolments, that of the problem of deterioration and the quality of education for our children. School boards during the period of this regressive Conservative Government from 1977 to 1981 were forced to cut back on programs in many cases, Mr. Speaker, valuable programs such as second language programs, strings and music programs, and resource programs, programs that are accepted as commonplace in many divisions but are virtually unattainable in some rural divisions with a low property tax base. As long as education is financed solely by property tax, as it was under the former government, we will have gross inequities of educational opportunities in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Those areas of the province with a low property tax base will suffer as they have in the past. Many of our children are doing without access to these programs that I mentioned just a moment ago. Doing without them because that party opposite when in government, failed to act, that from a party that claims to represent rural Manitoba. That is a farce.

Now we see the greatest posthumous about-face ever witnessed in this House. We hear the members opposite suddenly express concern for schools and communities experiencing declining enrolments. We hear them as expressing this. It is post death-bed confession. It's amazing. But that's fine, that's fine, Mr. Speaker, we accept that. We accept it, we can

understand that the members opposite and the Member for Arthur, now wants to make amends so that he can hopefully be at rest with himself, with his conscience and with the people that he represents. Yes, the members on this side of the House realize that any study of education finance must include the effects of declining enrolment, Mr. Speaker.

The answer to all of the problems is an equitable means of financing education in the province that maintains and enriches the quality of education in this province in all areas of this province. This government intends to take action to address these problems, Mr. Speaker, and it is encouraging to see the members opposite finally coming to realize that education must be addressed, after sitting back and watching for four years, Mr. Speaker, because of a total lack of a will to act and a total lack of imagination on their part.

If we must close our schools, we must close them creatively and with compassion, with total community involvement and we must maintain and enrich the quality of education for our children. We must not go backwards. Yes, parents, trustees, children and teachers all must have a say, a voice in education and in the decisions that are made, Mr. Speaker. The urgency is certainly there because of past inaction by the former government. Under the New Democrats in government, it will be done. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MR. WARREN STEEN (River Heights): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I enjoyed those few comments from the Honourable Member for Dauphin. He takes a slightly different approach to this subject, Sir, than the Minister of Education who concluded her remarks today by hoping and asking the members from both sides of the House to join in with her and assist her and her department in her portfolio in wrestling with this common problem which, as she mentioned in her remarks yesterday, has been with us for the last half dozen years.

The Honourable Member for Tuxedo, Sir, I think deserves to be congratulated for placing this Resolution before the House so that members from both sides of the House can voice their opinions on a subject that is close to all of us, and that is the area of education and where education is going in this day and age. And, in his Resolution, Mr. Speaker, he refers to declining school enrolments and he talks about future planning for education, both at the board level and at the Department of Education level as enrolments are declining. And he talks, also, in his Resolution, Sir, that the province has to assist and work along with the Boards. His motion was amended and the mover of the amendment says that the government has a one year review on education financing and that, perhaps, if his Resolution is referred to that Review Committee on Education Financing that the problem will be looked after. But the Minister of Education did make the remarks yesterday in her speech that back in 1978 the then Minister of Education had a review of declining enrolments done at that time; she said that it was a very full and complete report and it does outline the problem completely.

I, also, have, Mr. Speaker, a report that has been

done by the Winnipeg School Division referring to the south Winnipeg review which I'm sure the Minister has read from cover to cover and it's a report that's of particular interest to me because it is the school division that encompasses my constituency. The declining enrolment for the inner city area of greater Winnipeg, Sir, is a major problem and as you move out to the outskirts or to the suburban areas, the problem today isn't as great as it is in the inner city, but will soon be a great problem in the suburban areas as time goes on.

The Minister made reference yesterday to the declining enrolments and the numbers that have been dropping, and I believe that the Minister mentioned we have some 17,000 less students and over the past number of years, there's been 100 school closings within the province. In this particular report that's been issued by the School Division of Winnipeg, for example, in the constituency of Osborne, the Ashland School which has received a fair amount of publicity, Sir, in 1970 for example, there were 146 students in that school and today it's almost been cut in half, down to 75 students. Brock Corydon School in the River Heights constituency where my daughter attends, has had a slight increase in population and that is strictly due to special programs with the French immersion placed in that particular school for that area. But every other school in south Winnipeg, Earl Grey for example, Sir, in the last ten years has dropped from 708 students to 370, more than cut in half. The Fort Rouge School in the constituency of Fort Rouge has dropped from 193 to 135. A major high school in south Winnipeg, Sir, which was at one time the largest high school in the province which is Grant Park, back in 1970 housed 1,709 students, an extremely large high school. Today, it's just over 1,000 students, so it's obvious that you have a large vacuum of vacant classrooms spaces within that school — and the list goes on and on.

The only schools that we have seen any increase in enrolment is because of some special programs that have been moved to those particular schools that are within this particular division, and that being Kelvin High School where the decrease has been kept to a minimum because of new programs, and the River Heights Junior High where the decrease has been kept to a minimum because of some new programs. The Minister made reference yesterday to the declining enrolments is a major problem. The small school is a major problem and the bilingual programs that are in place now.

The rising costs are certainly a major concern to all members of the Legislature, Mr. Speaker, and the community's concerns and the changing needs are a concern to all members of this House and to all parents that reside within any school division. What we've got to do is consider alternate uses of schools. In the Grosvenor School in the Crescentwood area for example, Sir, of the 13 classrooms that school is physically capable of handling, only 6 of them are in use. The other seven rooms are used for specialty purposes such as a day-care center within the school, a music room, and other similar uses. As schools go to more sophisticated programming in the junior highs and the high schools, band and music programs are an enriched program which is becoming very popular

and these classrooms that are vacant are being used in a number of schools for such special programs, Mr. Speaker.

In the rural areas of Manitoba and I've been into a number of smaller communities where schools have been closed down; fortunately, in a number of cases the school buildings, the facilities, are still good physical structures and they've been turned over for community use. In many cases, arenas and curling rinks have been added to these older school buildings which become the clubhouse or the community center for the villages and the communities. This is perhaps an alternate use that we in the urban area of greater Winnipeg can perhaps give some thought to for our schools in the future that aren't needed to be used as schools is to look for alternate purposes for these buildings and perhaps community use is the right direction to be going.

I believe that the Minister made reference to open space and in schools that have been built in the last 10 or 15 years in many cases, Sir, have got much larger playground areas and sports fields than schools that were built some 50 years ago. Perhaps in the future as these schools are closed down from time to time, the adjacent sports fields that go along with the school facility can be taken into account as to whether we close school A or we close school B, and not just the movement of students, it's the other uses that these facilities are put to be the community. But the new programs that have been mentioned by many speakers prior to me, Sir, such as French immersion and other language programs particularly in north Winnipeg that have been introduced in years past; business education in the high schools is a growing program particularly at the Kelvin High School in my particular area; special education, another good example would be, Sir, the Grant Park High School where they have a number of physically handicapped students who attend that school.

When I was a city councillor, we were challenged as councillors by a group of wheelchair youngsters and students from Grant Park High School to a game of football and we had to get in wheelchairs and play in the Tech Voc gym against the physically handicapped students that do attend Grant Park High School. There are some 20 or 30 of them that are in that particular school and they get along best by being students alongside one another. I'm glad to see, as I made mention earlier, Mr. Speaker, that the Grant Park School is down some 700 students in the past 10 years, that facility is being used for some of these youngsters with special needs. As I've made reference earlier to the special uses within the classrooms like the music programs and a number of schools in the River Heights area that have vacant classrooms, a particular classroom in a few cases, Mr. Speaker, has been used by the University of Manitoba who have a number of their faculty members and employees of the university that do reside in the southwest part of the city and these vacant classrooms are being put to use by the university people as day care centers for children of faculty and service personnel from the University of Manitoba.

There are other uses for these schools, Mr. Speaker, and there are problems with the smaller school, and like hospitals or most public institutions, there is a

size for the facility, numbers of people using the facility, that is too small to make it viable and then you can have too many people using a facility and it's becoming nonviable on the other end of the spectrum. Certainly there are some advantages with the smaller schools where we get participation from all of the students more readily than we do in the larger schools. We have more personal contact between student and teacher in the smaller schools and certainly, I know, in the Brock-Corydon School, where my daughter attends, I'm simply amazed that the principal of that school can call virtually every student by name and knows so many of the parents by name. When you walk into the school he just rattles the names of the parents off on parent-teacher days. Having smaller schools and having that kind of relationship is an excellent idea, Mr. Speaker, but again, and I'm sure that the Minister and all Members of the Legislature are always aware of that almighty buck — what can we afford in the way of a luxury?

The larger schools also offer, Mr. Speaker, some great advantages, particularly, in the area of curriculum. If you want to offer a number of options to the students the larger the school the easier it is to increase the available options within the curriculum. And the larger schools, again, like Churchill High School and Kelvin, can have a big and proper gymnasium where the athletic programs can be conducted within a facility that houses excellent recreation and sports facilities. As the Member, Mr. Speaker, for Lakeside says, he's referring to Churchill High School and the excellent football team that they have and I think there he has a bit of a bias similar to the Member for Dauphin, has the bias towards the teaching profession.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the Minister of Education made reference to the \$70 million Educational Support Program that was introduced by the Minister of Education a year ago and was to be continued on for three years. I believe, if I'm correct, she made reference to the fact that it didn't help the schools one bit with their decreasing enrolment. Well, it was my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that that money was distributed through the school divisions and that it was up to the divisions to spend those dollars as they saw fit and the former Minister of Education didn't tell them that they had to spend it on Program A versus Program B. It was to assist them with their general expenditures, hopefully, and the result was accomplished that the mill rate and the school tax rate would not be increased. I believe the Member for Tuxedo has stated that approximately five school divisions showed an increase, and otherwise all school divisions in Manitoba either held their own or had a decrease. I know in the Winnipeg School Division, my school taxes on my home were decreased last year as a result of this enriched financial program.

Perhaps that, to the Member for Dauphin, that's the difference between his side of the House and our side. When we give a grant to a school division or to the City of Winnipeg, we give it without strings or riders attached to it and we say to school trustees, look, you were elected to do a job of administering and setting policy within that school division and carrying out the Department of Education's educational standards, you make the decision as to how that division should

be run; that's why you were elected to be a trustee in that division. That's why we agree that City Councillors in the City of Winnipeg are elected to run the City of Winnipeg and that the Conservative Government was the type of a government that gave grants without conditional riders. We don't believe we should be interfering in municipal politics any more than we have to; we shouldn't be interfering in the day-to-day affairs of any school division. Maybe this government and this Minister wishes to tell the school divisions just how to run their affairs by giving them increased or financial assistance or attaching riders to all money grants given to school divisions.

If this Minister of Education feels that she can run the school divisions within the province as well as being Minister of Education then she's got to be superwoman, because I don't think there are enough hours in the day to run the various school divisions and run that department.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I say that the program that was initiated by the former Minister of Education of the \$70 million was an excellent program and we weren't meddling into the affairs of the local school divisions. If the closing of any schools in the future, by any division, that decision is going to have to be made by that particular division, but as the Minister said in her closing remarks, is that surely she, as Minister, along with the support of all members of this Legislature, can assist these various school divisions in making this very difficult decision, of which schools are closed, by offering our support and standing behind these various School Boards as they wrestle with this very thorny problem. I can tell you it is a difficult problem. There are eight elementary schools in my constituency and if you came along and asked me which one of the eight you should close I wouldn't want to have to make that decision. But the decision is going to have to be made by the school trustees of the Winnipeg School Division and the parents in the River Heights constituency are going to have to face the music one of these days, that one of those eight elementary schools are going to have to be closed; they just can't be kept open, we can't afford it. The tax base isn't there for us to afford it and that decision is going to have to be made and we're going to have to stand behind the school trustees and back them up and their administrators.

I can tell the Minister of Education that if she supports the school divisions in these difficult decisions that she will get my support and she will get the support of the members of this side of the House because it is not an easy problem to contend with. The cost of keeping these schools functioning when they're running at about 50 percent of the use-factor of the available space is a very expensive proposition. The teacher ratios in Manitoba today are as low as they've ever been; the new programming for students is better today than it's ever been; the special programming for students, whether they be handicapped or the students that can accelerate in various programs, are better today than they have ever been. We have one problem, we have far less students using these facilities than we had 10 years ago or 20 years ago. The problem, Sir, boils down to one thing, and that is, that there are going to be more school closings. The Minister made reference to 100 such schools that have

closed over the past few years; there's going to be more of them in the future and it can be, perhaps, an unpleasant decision to make by school divisions but we, as legislators and members of the Legislature here, are going to have to stand behind our elected trustees and back them up with this difficult decision. I would hope that the interference from the Provincial Government with these school divisions would be limited.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, I intend to participate in the debate but my watch says 5:30 and I wonder if the Speaker would declare it as such.

MR. SPEAKER: If it has the agreement of the House that the time is 5:30, with the understanding that members will reconvene at 8:00 p.m. in committee, the House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow afternoon. (Wednesday)