



Second Session — Thirty-Second Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

31-32 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Second Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

Name	Constituency	Party
ADAM, Hon. A.R. (Pete)	Ste. Rose	NDP
ANSTETT, Andy	Springfield	NDP
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BANMAN, Robert (Bob)	La Verendrye	PC
BLAKE, David R. (Dave)	Minnedosa	PC
BROWN, Arnold	Rhineland	PC
BUCKLASCHUK, Hon. John M.	Gimli	NDP
CARROLL, Q.C., Henry N.	Brandon West	IND
CORRIN, Brian	Ellice	NDP
COWAN, Hon. Jay	Churchill	NDP
DESJARDINS, Hon. Laurent	St. Boniface	NDP
DODICK, Doreen	Riel	NDP
DOERN, Russell	Elmwood	NDP
DOLIN, Hon. Mary Beth	Kildonan	NDP
DOWNEY, James E.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert	Emerson	PC
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
EVANS, Hon. Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
EYLER, Phil	River East	NDP
FILMON, Gary	Tuxedo	PC
FOX, Peter	Concordia	NDP
GOURLAY, D.M. (Doug)	Swan River	PC
GRAHAM, Harry	Virден	PC
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry M.	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HEMPHILL, Hon. Maureen	Logan	NDP
HYDE, Lloyd	Portage la Prairie	PC
JOHNSTON, J. Frank	Sturgeon Creek	PC
KOSTYRA, Hon. Eugene	Seven Oaks	NDP
KOVNATS, Abe	Niakwa	PC
LECUYER, Gérard	Radisson	NDP
LYON, Q.C., Hon. Sterling	Charleswood	PC
MACKLING, Q.C., Hon. Al	St. James	NDP
MALINOWSKI, Donald M.	St. Johns	NDP
MANNES, Clayton	Morris	PC
McKENZIE, J. Wally	Roblin-Russell	PC
MERCIER, Q.C., G.W.J. (Gerry)	St. Norbert	PC
NORDMAN, Rurik (Ric)	Assiniboia	PC
OLESON, Charlotte	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald	Pembina	PC
PAWLEY, Q.C., Hon. Howard R.	Selkirk	NDP
PARASIUK, Hon. Wilson	Transcona	NDP
PENNER, Q.C., Hon. Roland	Fort Rouge	NDP
PHILLIPS, Myrna A.	Wolseley	NDP
PLOHMAN, Hon. John	Dauphin	NDP
RANSOM, A. Brian	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Burrows	NDP
SCHROEDER, Hon. Vic	Rossmere	NDP
SCOTT, Don	Inkster	NDP
SHERMAN, L.R. (Bud)	Fort Garry	PC
SMITH, Hon. Muriel	Osborne	NDP
STEEN, Warren	River Heights	PC
STORIE, Hon. Jerry T.	Flin Flon	NDP
URUSKI, Hon. Bill	Interlake	NDP
USKIW, Hon. Samuel	Lac du Bonnet	NDP
WALDING, Hon. D. James	St. Vital	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 13 June, 1983.

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . .

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. J. COWAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the Annual Report of the Workplace Safety and Health Division for the year 1982.

RETURN TO ORDER NO. 13

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to file a Return to an Order of the House, No. 13, dated March 8, 1983, on the motion of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . .

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HON. M.B. DOLIN introduced Bill No. 95, An Act to amend The Pension Benefits Act.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before Oral Question Period, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery. We have 75 students of Grade 5 standing from the Hastings Elementary School under the direction of Mrs. Sigurdson. The school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Riel.

On behalf of all of the members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Unemployment rate

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

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the government, with respect to unemployment statistics, likes to take refuge in comparative statistics. In view of the fact that in Canada as a whole the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased .1 percent from April to May of 1983; the seasonally adjusted rate in Manitoba

increased .7 percent, because the highest seasonally adjusted unemployment increase in Canada tied with Prince Edward Island, can the Minister of Labour explain this discouraging and depressing news to Manitobans?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that if the Minister of Labour, previous to the one immediately previous to me, was sitting in this House, he could explain to his colleague that this is the time of year that unemployment statistics rise. A number of young people who have been in school do come back into the labour force.

We are also finding that the population in Manitoba is increasing, which adds to the labour force, adds to the numbers of people looking for jobs in this province; and while the seasonally adjusted unemployment figures did rise, we find that in fact we have 5,000 more people actually at work in our labour force. So all of these various statistics must be balanced one against the other.

If you have more people returning to Manitoba looking for work; you have students who are looking for work but who, by next month, will be working, then you're going to have a rise in the actual unemployment figures. But if the number of people actually working has also increased then you know that you are doing a job to help the unemployed.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, Manitoba is no different than any other province where there is an increase in the number of people on the job market, but the seasonally adjusted rate in Manitoba is tied for the worst increase across Canada, can the Minister explain the fact that the number of unemployed in Manitoba in May of 1983 remains at 52,000, the same as the month of April of 1983, and that this is the first time - certainly since 1977 and probably going back a lot further - that the actual number of unemployed has not been reduced in those months?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, as I said before, if there are more people coming into the labour force and the number of unemployed remains the same, then actually more people are in fact getting jobs.

I would point out that Manitoba still has the second lowest unemployment rate in Canada.

MR. G. MERCIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, the number of unemployed persons everywhere else has gone down in each province, despite the number of people coming on to the job market and this is something that happens in every province. For the first time, certainly in the last eight years and probably going back a lot further, the number of unemployed has remained the same. Can the Minister explain the reasons why this has occurred for the first time, probably ever, in Manitoba?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't think the honourable member understands that if more people

come into the labour force and the number of unemployed remains the same that obviously people are finding jobs. Perhaps the fact that we have maintained our position as having the second lowest unemployment rate among all the provinces, and the fact that other provinces are beginning to put people to work means that they are looking at Manitoba, who started earlier than the other provinces to do something about this problem, to actually put people back to work.

I think that news reports from across this country indicate very clearly that Manitoba has been in the lead and will remain in the lead in doing something about the unemployed.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour does not understand the trend that is occurring. In view of the fact, in 1977, from April till May, the number of unemployed dropped by 7,000; in 1978, from April to May, it dropped by 2; in 1979, it dropped by 2,000; in 1980, it dropped by 3,000; in 1981, it dropped by 5,000; in 1982, it dropped by 2,000; this year, the number of unemployed has remained constant, can the Minister explain the reason for this disturbing trend in the unemployment statistics?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Because, Mr. Speaker, we are at least a month ahead of the rest of the country. Our number of unemployed dropped last month, as the honourable member knows, by at least 2,000.

Layoffs

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the Minister of Labour and would ask, in view of the record 52,000 unemployed, and the situation which has become apparent to all Manitobans that this particular NDP government is having a dismal failure in attempting to stimulate the Manitoba economy, can she give us the assurance that there are no further large layoffs pending in the province?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the honourable member is probably aware that we do not employ the entire labour force in the Province of Manitoba and therefore do not control all of the hirings, firings and layoffs that go on. I'm sure that he did not mean that question seriously.

However, he also is quite aware, I think, that we are looking at plant layoff situations; we are working with plants to avoid large layoffs; and we have the co-operation of business and of labour in this effort.

MR. R. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, in light of the growing concern by Manitobans about these alarming unemployment figures and in light of this government's intention when it was running to take over the reigns of government and indicated to the people that there were new days ahead, Mr. Speaker, would she inform the House whether or not she has had indications or has had notices from any large employers who have indicated that there will be further layoffs?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I remember being asked this question once before and I believe that my answer was correct then and I'll give it now.

I do not believe that members opposite are suggesting that should I have confidential information from employers, from business people in this province, that I reveal it in this House or anywhere else - which is not to say that I have it - but even if I did, even if I should have that, is he asking that I reveal confidential information from business people, from employers, in this House?

MR. R. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister. All I asked was for her to give me an indication as to whether or not there were more layoffs coming, I did not ask for specific names. But I want to ask the Minister, are there further layoffs pending?

There is a real problem out there. This government had promised to do something about it and what we've seen is a total stagnation of the economy in Manitoba and an absolute failure by this government to create any economic development. Now, are there further layoffs pending and, if so, how many?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, I take that statement of the honourable member as his assurance that he will support whatever plant closure legislation we bring into this House when we bring in our labour law review on Code I.

Companies, expansion of

MR. R. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister of Economic Development and would ask her if she could inform the House whether or not she has had any meetings with any major employers in Manitoba who have indicated to her that they are going to be expanding in neighbouring provinces and not in Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. M. SMITH: Well, Mr. Speaker, to such a general question, I have certainly in the past year spoken to firms that are expanding elsewhere, that are expanding here, that are closing down elsewhere, that are closing down here, that are looking for new opportunities here and any and all combinations of the above. So unless the member opposite has a more specific question, I don't think I can be more specific in my reply.

Crow rate advertising

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Acting Minister of Transport, or the Acting First Minister, or anyone else that wants to take responsibility for this mismanaged government.

The question is, Mr. Speaker, how much money has it cost the taxpayers of Manitoba to put this political ad - not only in all the newspapers in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, but on every radio station in Manitoba - how much money has it cost the taxpayers?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I'll take that as notice.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, when she is taking it as notice, maybe she could possibly find out what the round of hearings that took place two years ago when there were Crow hearings held in Manitoba; what the last round of hearings were we just reported to the House as a legislative committee; as well, could she confirm that this ad and all the ads she's putting out is something like \$150,000 of taxpayers' money to the people of Manitoba?

As well, when she is taking these questions as notice, could she tell us how many phone calls she is getting for these ads or in response to these ads requesting the information or objecting to the kind of politicization with taxpayers' money that the NDP Government have had a continual habit of doing, Mr. Speaker?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I'll take that question also under advisement.

Deer Lodge Hospital - unions

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Labour. I would ask her whether she has an answer now to questions that I asked her and that she took as notice on Friday, May 13th, one month ago today, having to do with the collection of union dues at Deer Lodge Hospital, and whether or not the Public Service Alliance of Canada is certified to represent employees at that hospital, and whether or not Deer Lodge is collecting union dues from employees there on that union's behalf?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, when the question was asked, I believe that the certification was before the Labour Board, the request for certification by the various unions involved. That matter is possibly completed by now, and I will attempt to get an answer for the honourable member by tomorrow.

Drivers' Licences - validity

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week, I asked the Honourable Minister of Transportation a question dealing with the recognition of foreign drivers' licences in the Province of Manitoba. Apparently, it had been brought to my attention that Manitoba was not recognizing certain foreign drivers' licences when other provinces in Canada were.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding that any person from any country who holds a valid driver's licence of that country eligible to drive in Manitoba. I'm not aware of any exclusions to that.

McKenzie Seeds - Provincial Auditor's report

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

It is now 10 days since I brought an apparent case of conflict of interest to the attention of the House and the government involving McKenzie Seeds at Brandon and Mr. Moore, the Chief Executive Officer. Can the Minister of Finance advise the House whether or not he has yet received a report from the Provincial Auditor?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: No, Mr. Speaker, I haven't received a report from the Auditor. In fact, I phoned him, I believe, on Friday or Thursday, we had a brief discussion, and he is going on with the investigation.

I have in fact written a letter to my friend opposite asking him to provide us with any other information that he might have with respect to that entire case in order that we can get one complete investigation, because we would like to have one investigation finalized.

I don't know, I didn't ask exactly when the Auditor would be finished, but he did say the people from his department who had been out there by last Monday morning would like to talk to some of the individuals involved. They haven't had an opportunity to talk with Mr. Boisjoli who is, I understand, on sick leave, and Mr. Moore, who is not in the country, and I'm sure that they will want to talk with other people as well before the report is completed.

Metis land claims

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Northern Affairs.

The government has previously made a commitment to enter into discussions or negotiations with the Metis people of Manitoba respecting land claims. Has the government begun that series of negotiations and has any progress been made?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. J. COWAN: Yes, the Member for Turtle Mountain is correct in regard to a commitment on the part of the Provincial Government to enter into discussions with the Metis people of the province to review their claims in regard to land and other issues in the Province of Manitoba.

The Attorney-General has been the Minister most responsible for undertaking these discussions and I'm certain that he would be able to provide further information to the member as to exactly what the status of those discussions are at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, as the House may know, the Province of Manitoba and the Government of Canada are defendants in an action by the Manitoba Metis Federation, the Native Council of Canada, and the Metis Confederacy arising from provisions of The Manitoba Act, which it is alleged were subsequently in effect abrogated by invalid legislation. The action before the courts really calls for a declaration as to validity. However, what is proposed to take place are non-binding discussions on a without prejudice basis to see in fact what this ultimate claim amounts to, whether there is in fact a provable claim, and if so, what the amount of that claim is with a view, if that is established, to seeing what further negotiations must take place to quantify the claim and arrive at some means of dealing with it, not on a land transfer basis - I don't think that's possible - but on some quid pro quo on some basis of delivering of programs or something of that sort.

In preparation for that, there have been discussions since January of this year leading to a negotiating accord. That negotiating accord has not yet been agreed upon. As soon as it is, it will be tabled in the House.

Absence of Ministers

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Attorney-General in his capacity as House Leader. During question period on Thursday and again today there seems to be a rather large number of Ministers absent, therefore, the Opposition is unable to question them concerning matters related to their departments. Can the Government House Leader assure the House that these Ministers are either absent on government business or on personal business, and are not absent from the House on political tour?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: That question is clearly out of order. It is not open to question the absence of anyone from the House in question period. On principle, I refuse to answer that question.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, the Rules of the House say that it is not proper to refer to the presence or absence of any Minister. On the other hand, it is the responsibility of Ministers of the Crown to appear before the House to answer questions as may be placed to them by the Opposition. This is a general question relating to the absence of a large number of Ministers. Today, I believe, it's six Ministers and there were more absent on Thursday.

HON. R. PENNER: This question come with seeming ill-grace on the part of the Opposition that asked us for, and were granted, an adjournment so they could go to the Conservative Leadership Convention. People who live in political fibreglass houses shouldn't throw sharp-edged stones.

The question, no matter how disguised it may be, is a question that is clearly out of order and on principle I will not answer it. I will say this, however, that our record as a government with respect to reaching the people and consulting with the people has been unequalled in recent political history, and it will continue.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Government House Leader could confirm that his party wanted to take June 30th off in order that they could attend the New Democratic Party Convention in Regina, and that the agreement was made that there would be a trade-off between the two conventions and that, furthermore, the agreement of the House, by mutual consent, to be absent and not to have the House sit on a particular day is unrelated to the presence or absence of Ministers while the House is sitting?

HON. R. PENNER: In fact, the proposal that is being discussed with respect to June 30th is not that the House will be closed down, but that in fact we will see what committees can meet on that day while some more or less of our caucus attends the historic 50th Anniversary Convention of the CCF, now the NDP, a great Canadian occasion.

MR. H. ENNS: I believe you, Rolly, if I had to go to an NDP Convention I wouldn't hurry to it either.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. H. ENNS: What next? Brown bag luncheon and doughnuts, you know. It just doesn't match up with what we've been through.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. J. DOWNEY: It's been a long convention, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

Crow rate advertising

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I have a further question to the Minister of Transport. Earlier today I asked some questions of the Acting Government Leader dealing with a political ad that was put in the paper. In view of the fact that there are a lot of calls coming in to us, Mr. Speaker, concerned with the fact that they are using taxpayers' money to provide political propaganda for their own benefit in reaching the people, as the Attorney-General would say, could he get those answers as quickly as possible so that the people of Manitoba can be assured why they are using that money in an unjust way?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I want to, first of all, take note of the fact that one can readily understand

the sort of feeling on the other side having come back from what I consider to be a fairly interesting performance in Eastern Canada over the weekend. No doubt, the members opposite are somewhat buoyed up by that, and that's perfectly understandable.

I would like to tell the Member for Arthur that I would have hoped and I would have thought, given the fact that we had such unanimity in our Committee in Agriculture on that issue, that they would be right behind the advertising campaign that we have now launched as another stage in the development of the Crow debate, and another stage which presents us with an opportunity to further make changes that are beneficial to the Province of Manitoba.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Transport confirm that at no time during the legislative hearings that we heard from the people of Manitoba, the agricultural community, that we should take out major ads to advertise this to the people of Manitoba, and that it was not in the report, Mr. Speaker, and in fact the Opposition objected to any politicization of that report?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I think it's worthy to note that we are not politicizing a report. The report has been submitted to this Assembly and has been accepted unanimously, so I don't know where the politicization takes place. The position of the government now is to launch a government position on the issue, which has nothing to do with the committee. The committee's work is finished, it's complete.

We have appreciated the report that was presented to this Assembly for our consideration. We have considered it as a government, and we are now launching into another phase in our efforts to change the attitude of the Government of Canada with respect to this issue.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I should indicate to the Member for Arthur that I believe the cost of that ad will be somewhere in the order of \$100,000 to \$150,000.00.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Highways then apologize to the people of Manitoba and say that it is not his government's position, but in fact the position of the New Democratic Party that is being put forward in this ad, not the position of the government as was stated in the report that the House received?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I would hope the Member for Arthur would appreciate that the report that this House received was a report of a committee of this Legislature. The government has taken recognition of that report and has decided upon a strategy to further the cause of the people of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister of Transportation indicate from which appropriation of his Estimates the \$150,000 advertising campaign will be funded?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Pembina must know, having been a Minister of the Crown, that when these kinds of unforeseen expenditures do arise that there is provision within the administration to provide for the funding of advertising or whatever unforeseen costs arise from time to time. I would like to tell the Member for Pembina that this particular aspect is going to be shared equally between the Departments of Agriculture and Transport.

Headingley Jail - study re conditions

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Community Services and Corrections. I would ask him whether he can advise the House whether up to this point in time he has received any interim reports from the Garson Committee investigating the adult correctional system?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. L. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, we haven't received any interim reports, as such, except for a comment on the Spruce Woods Rehabilitation Camp.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, is the Minister advising the House that he has received no interim report on the situation at the Headingley Jail as yet, is that correct?

HON. L. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, there is nothing that has come across my desk or to my attention.

Wages - construction industry

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

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Labour. On Wednesday, last week, I asked her a question with respect to increases for construction wages within and outside of Greater Winnipeg, and she indicated that the construction boards have come forward with their recommendations and that is before Cabinet at this point. I later find, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister issued two press releases on June 3rd, the Friday before, where she announced these increases. Could the Minister advise me whether she signed the Cabinet paper with respect to these increases, whether she attended the Cabinet meeting, and why did she tell me on Wednesday this matter was before Cabinet when she had issued press releases four days before?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, there are several boards that recommend to government various aspects of construction wages. There is heavy construction, there is rural construction, there is Winnipeg construction. Some of these have in fact gone through,

**BILL NO. 3 - THE FARM LANDS
OWNERSHIP ACT**

some are in the stage where they will be before Cabinet within another week or two. It is in process at this point.

In fact, I believe it is the heavy construction wages that have gone through. Rural construction went through about the same time. Winnipeg construction rates have not yet been to Cabinet, and the other question the member asked me about the minimum wage, that has not yet been to Cabinet either. So all of this is in process and to give a full answer one would have to have the full range of construction rates because one would not talk about them in isolation - heavy equipment versus non-heavy equipment and the various rural rates as opposed to the city rates and so on.

So as soon as all of this information is completed, I'd be happy to share it with all of the members.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to make a correction in Hansard. Tuesday, May 31, 1983, Page 3274, I was answering questions in committee about court amalgamation and there is a reference at the top of the page to the resident CUPE Judge in Brandon. Regrettably there is no resident CUPE judge in Brandon - that probably is a little while in the coming. The word "CUPE" should read "Puisne." The same mistake is repeated in the fifth line from the bottom, left-hand column, Page 3274, where the Honourable Member for St. Norbert asked: "Will any existing County Court offices be closed?" Answer: "No, they'll become CUPE offices." They will become "Q.B." offices, Court of Queen's Bench. Perhaps the record could read Queen's Bench offices.

MR. SPEAKER: I thank the honourable member for that clarification.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MRS. D. DODICK: I have a committee change on Economic Development. The Member for The Pas substituting for the Member for Transcona; and the Member for Thompson substituting for the Member for Elmwood.

**ADJOURNED DEBATE ON SECOND
READING
- GOVERNMENT BILLS**

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the Adjourned Debate on Second Reading in the following order please, Bills 3, 47 - if you'll just bear with me for a moment - 60, 55, 54 and 24.

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Bill No. 3, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Niakwa.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to take part in the debate on this bill. Being an urban member discussing something that appears to be more important to the rural area, but is not quite so, I'm quite disappointed some of the people that I would like to hear my remarks are not here. I'm not making reference to specific individuals, Mr. Speaker, but I think that it's important that since this subject is up for discussion that the Ministers responsible should be here. If they are away other than on government business I'd be very disappointed, but I don't know at this time, and it's the last of those remarks because I see you're getting ready to call me out of order. So I will make my remarks to the Honourable Minister of Health, who I know also has as much interest in this particular bill as I have.

I noticed, before I get into the discussion on The Farm Lands Ownership Act, something that appeared in the Winnipeg Sun on Sunday, June 12, 1983, and it's headed: "Don't Eat Crow." There was some discussion just previous as to, you know, who's paying for it? But I'm not going to get into that either, Mr. Speaker, but there is a remark in there and I would just like to read it. It says: "Whatever affects our farm industry in the next decade will have serious effects on the entire Manitoba economy." And in addition a little ways further down it says: "When the farmer loses, Manitoba loses."

I believe this to be a release from the Provincial Government, and for them to make a statement like that and then come out with a bill called The Farm Lands Ownership Act, it seems to be completely against all government policy, but I accept it because there has to be some rhyme or reason for them introducing this Act, The Farm Lands Ownership Act.

I'm not going to go into great detail, Mr. Speaker, because a lot has been said on The Farm Lands Ownership Act and most of what I would say would just be a repeat on what has been said before and I would just be repeating some of the things, but I want to go on as opposed to this bill.

I have a great respect, a great respect for the farmers and the farm community of the Province of Manitoba and, in my opinion, having known many farmers - quite a few on my side and the Opposition side, some on the government side and some who aren't the least bit involved in politics - by and large they are great people, the backbone of the Province of Manitoba. I believe that they run a business that must be protected and we must give them the protection and the dignity and the security of being farmers in this province.

What makes this Province of Manitoba so great, and particularly the farm community, is the type of people - the operators of the farm. I believe that this bill lessens the dignity and the security of the farmer in the Province of Manitoba and on that behalf I am speaking out against the bill.

A farmer - and I speak with great dignity when I mention the word "farmer" - spends his whole lifetime, or most of his lifetime working on the farm. He builds up an equity in that farm and he's entitled to the full

benefits of that equity that he builds up in that farm. He should have the security of being able to take that equity in cash from the buyer who will pay him the most money. I believe that he's entitled to a fair remuneration for that farm land - if and when he is ready to sell - when he's getting near his time for retirement.

This bill will have the tendency to reduce the value of the farm properties. It will reduce the amount of potential buyers for that property and thus reducing the actual value of that property. We are, in effect, reducing the amount of people who will be buying properties in Manitoba. If the bill came into effect in 1906, or around that time, I'd probably not be standing up here today speaking against the bill.

Inasmuch as my family came to Canada at that time and they were prepared to go into farming, which they did, I think when they bought the land they weren't really that much involved in the Province of Manitoba. They weren't really that resident; they were here for a very very short time. They did come to Canada on the opportunity that they could buy farm land, and I think if there had been any restrictions, they might not have come. I'm not saying they would not have come, but I said they might not have come.

I think what comes to mind about the dignity of the farmers in the Province of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, I see a scene out of an old movie where the officer in the military is being drummed out of the corps. He is standing up in front of the regiment and he's standing there, the Commanding Officer comes and rips off the insignia on his hat, he rips off the epaulets, and he rips off the buttons on his uniform and this is what's going through my mind when I read this bill. I see this bill taking away the dignity of the farmer in the Province of Manitoba - not that he's being ridiculed by being drummed out of the corps - but his importance in the Province of Manitoba is being lessened because his freedom of choice is being taken away from him.

I believe what the government of the Province of Manitoba is doing today to the farmer of Manitoba is, they're drumming him out of the corps; they're drumming him out of the Province of Manitoba. They're reducing his importance to the people of the Province of Manitoba and I've got to speak up very strongly against such a thing.

I recall five years ago when I purchased some property out at Menisino. It's nice land. It's a nice place for a person to relax a little bit. I really had very little intention of operating the land myself, but by my purchasing the property, I have given the opportunity to a young fellow who is just starting out in business of being a farmer out there, to operate my property. He wouldn't have had that opportunity other than if I had been there and given him that opportunity. Certainly I make a few dollars out of it - and very few dollars as a matter of fact the way the economy is today - but I do give him that opportunity of being able to use the property that I have purchased.

Now if I had been from another province, or from another country, he would still have the opportunity of using that land to his own good, to be able to use it to make some extra money for himself and for the owner and there's no sin in being the owner of land and taking a few dollars off it, because he is certainly making a few dollars himself.

I think what the Minister has done, or what the government has done in introducing this bill is to try and reduce the price of land in the Province of Manitoba and that's a fairly noble idea. I can't see anything wrong with that because what they are really doing, is trying to encourage young people to get into the farm market, and to be able to get into the farm market by purchasing land at a reasonable fair price and again, as I say, it is a noble idea.

I think there are other ways of doing it, rather than restricting the amount of the people that can buy this farm land. I think if they are looking to encourage young people to get into the farm market, rather than putting restrictions on the sale of the land, why don't they do something to encourage these young people by giving them some sort of assistance, either in farm free loans, in interest free loans, to help them get into the business rather than restricting the actual top cost of the prices of the farm land?

I see this bill as a ploy to get votes from some of the farmers in the Province of Manitoba that the New Democratic Party has never been able to get votes from. — (Interjection) — Really, that's what I see this bill doing. It's to get votes from those people who have never supported the NDP party. They are not going to get the support of those people because, in effect, it is embarrassing and they are reducing the dignity of those people.

But again if you look through and you think very seriously about why they are doing it, maybe that's what they are doing, trying to get those votes. But it's a ploy and what will happen, and I'm sure at the eleventh hour, the Minister will say, we need the support of those people that we are trying to reduce their future, their dignity, by reducing the amount of people that can buy their property he's going to withdraw this bill and he's going to try and get their support by withdrawing this bill. I can understand that because the bill really is very restrictive and it's not to the benefit of anybody.

It says here, "Whatever affects our farm industry in the next decade, will have a serious effect on the entire Manitoba economy." They know that. They know this will have a serious effect on the Manitoba economy. I believe that the Minister will be withdrawing this bill - I believe - I can't see it going through. It's just got so many complications.

A MEMBER: Name one.

A MEMBER: They did it before, they'll do it again.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I have another neighbour out at Menisino who's got a few quarter sections of land out there and he's worked all his life.

I believe there have been some offers to purchase his land and I think it's somewhere around the nine quarter sections. He is in a position right now where he can't sell. The people that want to purchase the land are not Manitobans and there is the possibility that they might never come to Manitoba; but I think if they have the opportunity of coming that they will come. But I don't think they have really made any plans.

How much land is involved? How is it being used, this land that everybody's afraid that it will come under the dictates of foreign ownership? How much

land is there? I don't think it's a great amount and how is it going to be used? Is it going to eliminate farm land in the Province of Manitoba? No, there's just no way that it can eliminate farm land in the Province of Manitoba.

It can't be used for high rises. They can't take it out of the province, it's too stationary. It's a fixed asset. It's right there. They can't take it away. It has to be used for something and will be used for farming whether they do it or not; but if they don't, somebody in the Province of Manitoba will and there will be some benefit to some Manitoba farmer and I can't see anything wrong with that, Mr. Speaker.

I will not be supporting this bill. It is just not to the best interests of all the farmers. Let Manitoba farmers make their own decision without so much government involvement. — (Interjection) — Yes, a little friendly advice. The Minister is not here so he's going to have to read it in Hansard. I only make reference because I want him to read it in Hansard, Mr. Speaker.

I ask him to withdraw the bill and gain some of the support from the farm community that the New Democratic Party has never had. I offer you this in return for withdrawing the bill. It is not to the best interest to the farmer and to the people of the Province of Manitoba. — (Interjection) —

Well, when it's your turn you may get up and speak. Try to understand the problem, Mr. Speaker. I hope that they understand the problem. The problem of the real fine persons that I know, the Manitoba farmer.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. C. SANTOS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to speak in favour of this bill and in so doing would like to dwell on a more basic and fundamental enquiry as to the relationship between human beings and land. I like to focus on the philosophical linkage that exists in the nature of man and in the nature of land.

Let me start from the beginning. In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. — (Interjection) — That was even before the creation of man. What God created first is the earth and it was void and formless. But then he created the springs, and the water, and then he separated the land from the sea.

He said, let the earth bring forth grass, and herbs, and fruit trees, each according to its seed. So we have before even the creation of human beings, we have the land. In all the resources that grow naturally on the land, like the herbs, the plants, the trees, the fruit trees, apples, oranges. — (Interjection) — Yes, that's how important land is. It is prior in time, prior in importance. Then from a portion of this land, the dust of the earth, he created us. So we came in a sense from the land. Therefore, in the very nature of things, in the grand design there is a very natural relationship between human beings and land.

The land on which we are based is part of the very nature of our very existence. Yet you will be amazed how many people in the world today are merely renters. They do not own even any little piece of land. I believe those people who don't have any linkage with the land are those people we call the alienated people. They

are rootless, they haven't any roots at all; no basis on which to develop, progress and plan their goals in life.

Some of us have equity, so-called, in the land. We owe some money in buying the land, we pay the mortgages and yet we still have a little bit of pride in the piece of land that we own for our home. We become a little bit more established and settled, and yet all the time we are fearing that some day we may not be able to pay that indebtedness, those mortgage principles and interest, and some day somebody may take over and foreclose, and we shall again be deprived of the land which is a basis for our feeling of security.

It is because we have designed a system of taxes for the survival of society itself. When we get all we may have saved through a lifetime to own the piece of land where our home is built, and yet when we are no longer able to work and we are not able to meet the taxes on the land, we are in the risk of losing even that very piece of land, even the very home that we have established throughout our life, we may lose it simply because we cannot pay the reality taxes.

That is in the time of our old age and you will be amazed how you feel. Can you imagine how you feel after spending all your lifetime, to sell and build up that home, that piece of land, and then it's taken away from you because you cannot pay your taxes? That's where people get so frustrated and many of our senior citizens are in that category. They want to stay in their old home no matter how humble or small it is as long as they can call it their own because it gives them the peace of mind to be and stay in their own little home and yet they are in very real danger of losing even this very piece of land on which they build their lifetime.

It is because we have changed the nature of the relationship between man and land. I believe that philosophically there is a natural linkage between human beings and land.

There would probably be peace in the world if all the arable lands, the cultivable lands that you can cultivate to raise products, and if you count the number of acres of those good rich soils all across the globe and you count the number of human beings all across the world and you can divide evenly those tracts of land and give to every human being a piece of land which he can call his own to take care of and to cultivate, I think there would be peace in the world.

A MEMBER: What if he doesn't want to?

MR. C. SANTOS: What if he doesn't want to have the land?

A MEMBER: He doesn't want to work.

MR. C. SANTOS: In many of the developing countries today, especially even in the industrialized nations of the world like Europe, we have sometimes prostituted the land in the sense that we build mortar and concrete and structures on those good, arable lands that could have produced food for human beings. We try to develop even the good agricultural lands and build supermarkets and concrete. So what we are creating is a jungle of mortar and a jungle of concrete instead of letting the land produce naturally for the sustenance of mankind.

That reminds me about the system of land-based economy in the early days of God's chosen people. What was the nature of the economic system then, when there were the tribes of Israel, God's chosen people? What was the nature of their economy based on land?

According to the Book of Leviticus, in the early days of God's people and God's nation, they had a land-based economy. Every man will have his own piece of land to cultivate, and it is prohibited for him to alienate that land permanently. In other words, his right to his inheritance and that of his heirs and his family is a right that cannot be alienated. It cannot be sold. He will pass on the property to his heirs and they will cultivate the land.

Now what happened if a man temporarily released his right of control or dominion over the land? Let's say, he leased the land to another individual and thus he surrendered the possession, he surrendered the control, he surrendered the right to cultivate his land for a time being. According to that system that they had then during that time, he may lose control and possession for the time being for that piece of inheritance that was given to him and to his heirs and to his family. Yet, every 50th year, the so-called Jubilee Year under Mosaic law, the right of ownership toward the land of which he had given up possession and control will automatically revert to the rightful owner after the 50th year. It's called the Jubilee Year, and the original owner of the land will still be the owner of the land.

Of course, in the meantime, he may not be cultivating it. He may be a lazy individual. He may be surrendering the right of possession. If he wants, even before the 50th year, he can always redeem the land by paying its indebtedness to his creditor. When he does obtain the money from his relatives or his family or his tribe, it is also the law that he should obtain the money interest-free if it is money intended to be used to redeem the land, so that he can become a landowner again in that land-based economy of Israel.

Every third year according to the law then, the land will have to be cultivated by every owner, but on the seventh year the land should be rested. It will have a seven-year continuous cultivation, and the seventh year they will rest the land. But every third year when they cultivate the land and they raise products and produce, they have a special time every third year and they collect some of this produce, some of these products, and put it in a common fund of goods produced. The intention is to have this to be the source of the sustenance of those who are without inheritance, without land, those who are strangers, those who are fatherless, the poor. They will feed upon the produce every third year, and so they will be filled and be satisfied. That's how they took care of the poor during those days.

Also every landowner is required by the Mosaic law to leave every corner of his field unharvested so that the stranger, the poor, the widow and the weak can also harvest those corners on portions of the land, and they can live thereon.

Also the fruit trees, the hard-to-get fruits, they are to be left unharvested so that the strangers in the land can also have access to those and they may also be filled and be satisfied.

That is much better than some of our systems today where you get unemployment cheques or you get social

allowance cheques and you become slothful and lazy. Even the poor those days would have to go out and gather the grains in the corners of the field, and gather the fruits in the hard-to-reach places before they can have their fill. But now all you have to do is sit at home, wait for your cheque and when your cheques arrives, go to the pub and enjoy life.

I am not saying that the social services are bad. They are good in the sense only when it is directed to those who are the most in need. I have in mind the old people, those who are no longer able to work. They have contributed most of their lifetime in building up the economy of this nation. They are entitled to a share of the resources of this country in the waning days of their lives, and that is the obligation of every one of us. I also have in mind the widow, the poor, the children who are unable to take care of themselves. It is the obligation of society to provide for their sustenance.

But the able-bodied men and women who have the right to take care of themselves and have the strength and the resources and the skill to take care of themselves, morally they are not entitled to any kind of social assistance. I am talking about the abled-bodied ones who are lazy. I'm not talking about those who want to get work and could not find work. Why can they not find work? Because we have departed to this traditional system of land-based economy. It is the industrialization of society that brings ruthlessness and alienation among all the inhabitants of this world. So many people will spend their lifetime building up their assets, then suddenly crisis will strike, they cannot pay, they lose even their very home, their mortgage will be foreclosed and they lose their home.

Personally, I do believe that every human being should have a piece of land that he can cultivate, that he can fall back on when crisis strikes, when there is an emergency. It is immoral for us to put concrete blocks and developments and supermarkets over this rich agricultural land in some portion of our community.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. B. RANSOM: Would the honourable member permit a question, Mr. Speaker?

MR. C. SANTOS: I will permit a question at the end probably when I'm done with my speech, Mr. Speaker.

Right now I am really trying to share with the rest of the members of this Legislature my personal beliefs about our economic system. I'm not speaking out of ideology or anything, this is my personal belief.

I believe that every human being should have a piece of land that he can fall back on and cultivate in times of economic necessity. At least we can raise something, even if he is in debt.

I do believe that all senior citizens of this country should not as a matter of government policy ever be deprived of their ultimate possession, their home, even little home just because they cannot pay their taxes. I want to die in my own little shack, my own little home and when I'm gone that land should pass to anyone who is entitled to it as a matter of right.

So, I think it is very oppressive of our senior citizens for the government to get their little piece of home

simply because they can no longer pay their taxes after they have spent most of their lifetime contributing to our economy and our material and industrial progress.

In other countries, today, they have what they call green revolution. Every piece of land, every piece of ground, they plant little plots of ground so that they can raise vegetables and fruits that the family needs. It's not only in the farm, it's in many of the nations where land is really scarce and people are really in need of produce and products of the land.

Now, what happens when people apply their energy and skill to the land and all the natural growth and produce of the land? We say and we agree that land is primary because it was first created. Then human beings are created out of the dust of the earth and they become infused with the spirit, the life-giving spirit, and they are infused with certain skills and abilities and intelligence and resources. Then human beings apply these skills to the land and all its produce. We begin to harness the nature and all the produce of nature. When we do harness and when we do apply labour, which is what is known as the primary ingredient of production. When we apply labour to the land, we produce capital.

But the trouble is that some people are so imbued with one of the original sins - one of the original sins of human kind is covetousness . . .

A MEMBER: What?

MR. C. SANTOS: Covetousness - greed. So, they are not satisfied with only a piece of land, their duly owned share to sustain themselves and their families, they want more land and in so doing deprive their brothers of their own right to their own respected proportion share of the land. If so, the problem is not because we don't have land, but because there is an equal distribution of land. If every human being who wants to cultivate a piece of garden will have a right to a piece of land, then no longer will he be motivated to spend his time in the pub, he will probably be cultivating and enjoying a portion of his own land because he can call it his own. But because some people are so greedy about land ownership and they want more and more, even beyond what they can cultivate themselves, by definition, they are depriving the rest of human kind of their proportionate moral right to their own piece of land.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. C. SANTOS: And the real cause of some of the political troubles in some of the other countries in the world is because of a greater problem - very few people owning too much land. In Latin America, the elite in society, the big landed elite in Latin America and the rest of the Americas, they own so much land and deprive the masses of their respective right to cultivate their own piece of land. That's the root cause of most political trouble in the world.

So that if we only can implement a very rational, equitable system of land ownership, where everyone has an inherent inalienable right to a piece of land to be called his home, there will be peace in the world.

If there were to become a world government and we will divide all the arable land in the world by the number of people who want to work his own land, his own farm, then there will be less envy among people, there will be less conflict and there will be more of harmony because everyone will be busy cultivating his own piece of land.

A MEMBER: Suppose the population of Canada increased three or four percent?

MR. C. SANTOS: Then the smaller the proportionate portion of each man, but he will still have an inherent right to his own piece of land. — (Interjection) — That's because they are . . . I don't know. But what I'm saying is that in the old days of Israel, a man can alienate his land, but only for a limited period of time, you see. He can lease out his land. He can lose possession and control of the land, but I say, it's the law then, that on the 50th year - on the Jubilee year - the right of ownership reverts to the original owner of the land regardless of whether he can pay for it or not.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. C. SANTOS: Then it will revert to you as your own inheritance, as the son of your father and the grandson of your grandfather. But the important thing to remember is every individual is attached to a piece of land that he calls his own and he is not totally rootless in the sense that he has no place to go back home to. There are so many people now in our organized society who are renting in the highrise apartment, and they do not even own a piece of land, even a four by five square feet of land. — (Interjection) —

Even in the olden days, if a man is suddenly struck with difficulty and trouble, he can sell his labour for seven years to some employer, so he releases land and he has no prospect of recovering the land until the 50th Jubilee year. He may still be poor and may still be in need of sustenance and material things and have none, what a man can do then is he can sell his labour to an employer, but the maximum he can do so is for seven years. He can work for someone for seven years and on the seventh year, his own employer, duty-bound to give him back his freedom and give him whatever is a fresh new start in life, so that he can recover and reestablish himself as a decent human being. — (Interjection) —

So we are free to make a choice, but our freedom should be constrained by the practical necessities of our economic situation. In our modern times nowadays, there are so many so-called middle class, new poor. We always talk about the nouveau riche - the people who suddenly get rich - but we must now be aware of a group of citizens in this country and all the rest of the industrial world, who are called the middle-class poor. — (Interjection) — Who are they? They are those who do not know how to balance their inflow and outflow of resources. They are those who live on credit cards and spend more than they make, more than they earn. They are those who lead a life of affluence - they call it living high- buying things they cannot afford, and suddenly they find themselves in severe financial trouble. — (Interjection)—

So he may be a professor now and yet, because he doesn't know how to spend his own income in a prudent and wise manner, suddenly he finds himself in deep financial trouble and even the very home that he is living in, it can be and often is foreclosed, so he lost his home. So when he lost his home, he lost a portion of his dignity as a self-respecting human being, and it is this kind of people that are the victims of our economic depressions in these current modern times.

— (Interjection) —

Are they in that situation because they are not able to manage their own resources?

A MEMBER: Some of them.

MR. C. SANTOS: Some of them, but some of them are working hard, and yet still could not make both ends meet. Some of them are unfortunate victims of misfortunes, accidents, hailstorm, and yet if it is a basic philosophy that every man should have a portion of land he can go back to all the time, at least he can recoup and recover his self-respect. So it is important that the land resources of this world be as equitably distributed as much as possible, to everyone who wishes to cultivate his own piece of land, and then even if he cannot grow some grains, he can grow some of the basic needs that he can use in the backyard - tomatoes, carrots, a little vegetables, a little lettuce plot in the backyard - if that is a home or a place that you can call your own, you can live your life reasonably well.

It is not because we lack resources. We have the resources. It is because the resources are not equitably and evenly distributed among all the inhabitants and the people of the world, that we have trouble in this world.

Aside from the private land, I personally believe that there should be what we call "communal land."

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. C. SANTOS: Now, before you judge, let me describe what I mean by commonly and shared grounds. I believe that all citizens should have a right of access to the beaches around the lakes. No one should have private property at beaches, because that is an inheritance of every citizen, of every resident, he has a right to enjoy a portion of the beach in any lake. So I'm talking about the beach land, the property of the lakes. — (Interjection) —

I also believe that no one should own any of the riverbanks. Everyone should be able to enjoy the use of all the riverbanks and all the fruit trees that could possibly grow around the riverbanks, everyone should have access to those. The fruits - they grow naturally - some of the fruit trees don't need any tending. The less you meddle with nature, the greater nature will be grateful to you. — (Interjection) — So we should also allocate a portion of our wilderness where everybody can have a share in the enjoyment of those lands, because they will be open to the public.

So I said, the publicly-owned land should include all beaches, all riverbanks, all wilderness portions that we have dedicated to it, so that all the citizens can have equal access and equal rights to the use of those commonly-shared lands, which I call communal land.

— (Interjection) — Yes. I don't know about southern Manitoba. All I know about southern Manitoba is that they have the richer portion of Manitoba, the rich agricultural lands. Along with such rich portions of land, I say morally they have the obligation to share it, the riches of their soil to the other less fortunate parts of Manitoba.

So you should open your fields, at least the corners of your fields so that the poor can reap and harvest in the corners of your field. You should also open the hard to reach places in your orchards, so that they can gather the fruits and have their fill.

Now we think that owning wealth makes us great as human beings. That is not always so, because it is written, the more property you own, the more sorrow you have. Why is this so? Because you have to think of preserving your property. Somebody may invade and trespass and steal some of your wealth, and you worry about it all the time, day and night. You have taxes to pay and obligations to perform with respect to your possessions. So you devote most of your living hours of your life thinking about your possessions, the one who is oriented to owning more and more of material possessions in life. But I say that the best form of wealth that one can ever have is land, because with money it can be stolen, but land stays there and nobody can run away with it.

So, Mr. Speaker, if we are to be truly wealthy, we must have a little piece of land and be contented with it that can sustain ourselves and our family. Then we can also have, above all forms of wealth, we must be rich in doing good to other people, particularly the helpless, the victim of circumstances, the poor, the widow, the strangers in the land, in our midst. We help them and then we become rich in the non-tangible, non-material wealth that lasts forever.

So some philosopher had said, "I can only pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do or any kindness that I can show, let me do it now for I shall not pass this way again."

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Member for Swan River, that debate be adjourned.

MR. D. GOURLAY: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I have already spoken on this bill.

MR. D. BLAKE: Just on that point of order, Mr. Speaker, I have used the Member for Swan River a couple of times before and he had spoken and nobody made any fuss about it.

A MEMBER: You are supposed to use them, no abuse them.

MR. D. BLAKE: I will use the Member for Turtle Mountain then, if that would be more acceptable.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 47 - THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs, Bill No. 47. The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to make some comments on this bill. Actually, I'm sorry I have to make comments on this bill. I wish this bill wasn't even here. I would like to explain that comment to some degree.

I feel a little badly that the Minister of Municipal Affairs isn't here today. He's out gathering information, I understand, and I wish he would have done that before he ever presented this bill, because if he had done that, I think he would have found out the concern that the municipal people have with this Conflict of Interest Bill for municipal people.

What bothers me is, I think, this Minister is totally out of touch with the needs and the desires and requirements of the municipal people. I just happened to meet - in the last few days some of the Ministers have been touring the province and I think they are getting a bit of an earful as to exactly what people out there are feeling.

I met with some municipal people yesterday after the great event that took place in the east, and talked with them about the tour that had taken place in St. Pierre. One thing they said, the sooner the Premier gets rid of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the sooner we'll all be happy, because obviously this man has got no contact with them at all.

We have had a concern, and I'd just like to tie in the MARC Report. For years now, we've been messing around with the problems with the assessment. The Report has come in. We have had hearings. Municipal people have been crying to this Minister, begging him, move on it. We have heard cases just the other day again, even in Winnipeg, with the freezing of the assessment indefinitely, the problems that it is creating. Instead of addressing those kinds of problems, he comes up with a bill of this nature called The Municipal Council Conflict of Interest Act.

In introducing it, I was trying to read the notes or the comments that the Minister made in introducing it. He says, "Over a period of years, it has become apparent that a number of practical difficulties were causing some concern for elected members of municipal councils." Then I read on and I was trying to figure out exactly who has been pushing for this. Then he makes reference back to the Law Reform Commission and that the recommendations of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities and the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities indicated support for the principle contained in the spirit of that agreement.

Taking that without the involvement of the municipal people to really explain what was in the Law Reform Commission, the Minister has gone ahead and drafted a bill similar to the one that we have in front of us for the members of the Legislative Assembly. I find there is a difference between the one that affects the members of the Legislative Assembly - we'll hopefully be speaking on that as well - and the one that affects the municipal people.

I had the fortune to be Reeve of the R.M. of Hanover for five years. It was a very active council. It was the

second-highest populated municipality in Manitoba at that time, and I had the opportunity to work with various kinds of council members dealing with many problems. At that time, certain changes were taking place, were made in The Municipal Act. One was the indemnity aspect of it.

Up until that time a municipal councillor after he was elected, he got paid on the basis of the hours that he put in and the mileage that he travelled just basically to cover expenses. Then the Act was changed and it allowed the municipal councillors to get a monthly indemnity, and provision that if there were special delegations or things that they had to go to, that council could then decide and vote themselves extra money.

I thought it was a positive step in the right direction, because problems were developing with this business of trying to put in hours and keeping a chit list of all the miles that you drive and the hours that you put in. But, basically, when you consider the responsibility of the municipal people in terms of the problems that they get faced with - everything - it's the grassroots government that we have. That's where it all starts, your road problems; your drainage problems; your welfare problems. Everything that's related to the agricultural community, starts from there, from the rural area, all through the councillors, and the indemnities that they receive are very fractional. It is not an appealing position to be in. The people that are in that position, basically, are very dedicated people and the majority of them are very honourable and what this Minister is doing with this kind of legislation is putting everybody suspect to some degree.

It is difficult enough right now to get people to run for office in municipalities. In many cases they have to be appointed even in the southeast region where there is possibly more keenness about it, depending on the problems. Municipal councillors have to be appointed because nobody wants to run for the position. What this bill will do, it's going to knock off a whole bunch of people that are still prepared to take of their own time and serve.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs has no idea. You would think that being the Minister of Municipal Affairs, he could anticipate some of the problems that the people have - none whatsoever. He's charging full speed ahead like they do with all their legislation. Almost 100 bills, a lot of it controversial, they forge ahead. They have this ideological direction that they go and they can't change it. I think the Minister will probably be getting the message as he's out there touring these days. I know that he will.

The other thing that I would like have liked to see him do, really, if he was going to be an honourable individual, he should have waited until the municipal hearings that are coming up - the regional meetings are starting in June now - he should have waited and fielded these questions to the municipal people.

I had the occasion to attend a municipal seminar in Brandon, earlier in winter. We were out there and the Minister of Municipal Affairs at that time wasn't that pleased that we were there, I guess, and he raised the intent of maybe bringing in legislation. The reaction was very very negative. He should have read it at that time, he knew that, but he had made up his mind, he was going ahead. That's the direction I'm going. Well, we see now, legislation is here.

The basic purpose of the bill is to set out - these are the Minister's remarks - to set out the allowable

limits of financial relationship between municipal councillors and the municipalities by requiring councillors to disclose their financial interests and liabilities in matters arising during the course of official business.

I'd just like to raise a few examples. For example, in the communities, the smaller rural areas, you have the business of gas. You maybe have one operator that is selling gas, is selling it to the municipality, decides to run for office, or maybe gets appointed if nobody is running. Now that man cannot sell the fuel there anymore.

Why is it so important to disclose your assets? We have one of the best safety mechanisms in place right now which is elections, and if people would find out that there is conflict of interest, that they're abusing the privilege as a councillor, then within three years elections come up and that is what it's all about, the democratic system. What we're doing, we're gradually destroying it with stupid legislation of this nature and creating all kinds of real problems for the municipal people in municipalities out there. If you'd ever get out there and check you'd find out what the people feel like, and he should be doing that as I indicated before at the municipal regional meetings. But he wants to forge ahead for this bill, but I am positive we will not have passed this bill before those meetings have taken place. There is a bad feeling out there and instead of messing around with Mickey Mouse stuff like this, if he had gone out there and worked on the assessment problems, which are real problems, we would maybe be getting somewhere.

Coming back to the importance of disclosing assets. Why is it important to tell everybody what you own? I think that is my private right. If I own land, if I own a house in town, if I am a shareholder in a company, why should that have to be disclosed? I'm not ashamed of owning those things, but what happens with this bill, it starts leaving the impression that if you own something, you are suspect all ready of conflict of interest and it's wrong.

We're trying to develop the same thing in the legislative bill that we have before us here for the members of the Legislature. We're trying to give the impression that if somebody owns something, he's either got it through wrongful ways or he shouldn't have it. After listening to the speech from the member for Burrows there, I can see the kind of ideological thinking - everybody should share a little bit, you know. We should all have 6 acres of land and raise a few potatoes and fruit trees. That concept scares me but that is what it's all about, in a sense. Why should we have to disclose the assets?

What if a man and wife do not agree? Nowadays that happens, percentages are pretty high. She does not want to have that portion disclosed. That discounts the individual from running for office. He can't run. And you're going to be cutting down on so many people.

It is a matter of pride with me to own property and the people that elect me, for example, to the Legislature here or that elect their councillor, they don't elect me on the basis of what I necessarily have; they elect me on the basis of what I can do to deliver services to them as a councillor or as an MLA. So, what is this big deal about disclosure?

Just the thinking behind it, it is the concept that it is wrong to own things. You know, we made fun of it

when the Member for Burrows spoke about the sharing aspect of it because I'd like to share some of my colleagues' assets. But where do we finally stop with this kind of thinking?

It will create problems, I tell you right now. I wish the Minister was here; I'd tell him it's going to create a lot of problems because if we pass this bill that he will be appointing many many councillors after the next election, because many people have indicated councillors right now. I have sent out copies of this bill to the municipal people, they say, I don't need that kind of bull. For the little money that is involved in it, for the headaches to serve the province, I'm going to take and have everybody come up there and say, oh, listen, Doug, you know, you own this much land, or you have assets here, you're a company shareholder here. That idea is not acceptable at this stage of the game. It certainly isn't with the majority of the people. But the promotion seems to be both in the one that we have before us for the members of the Assembly as well as the municipal people, the concept seems to be developing that people that have anything should not be running for office. They should not be running for office because there could be conflict. That's the impression that is gradually left. And they say, who needs it.

The other thing is, I doubt whether the bill is even proper. You know, I do have a right to my privacy, do I not? I think every member has, and I should have the right to own the things I want without having to go and show everybody here what I own. The municipal people are the same way. Why should they disclose it? When it comes to the conflict aspect of it, the councils are the best judges. When you have six councillors sitting there and a reeve and a secretary, I daresay there is no problem of a conflict of interest because I've checked it every time and I've sat through many of these cases.

I wish the Minister of Municipal Affairs would give us documentation. Sure, there have been one or two isolated cases, I don't know how many. Tell us how many cases there are. Let us see what the problems are before we go with this kind of legislation, because the impact of this bill is going to be dramatic.

This fall, the municipal elections are taking place and there are going to be a lot of reliable, qualified people that will not be running for office because of this, because the pay basically isn't worth very much and they don't need that kind of intrusion in their private lives.

I would hope that if the Minister has attended the regional meetings that he will finally get the message and that he will withdraw this bill.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, P. EYLER: The Honourable Member for Swan River.

MR. D. GOURLAY: I move, seconded by the Member for Virden, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

**BILL NO. 60 - AN ACT TO AMEND
THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC ACT (2)**

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 60, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Transportation, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I fortunately don't have too much to say on this bill. I'm having a little difficulty with my voice today. I suppose it was all the cheering I did when we elected a new national leader on Saturday night that will sweep the country and probably do some further damage to deteriorate that 16 percent that the party opposite nationally seemed to have sunken to.

Mr. Speaker, I must say I don't want to speak too lengthily on this bill because many of my colleagues have put forth the position which I hold. But I will say at the outset, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the bill. I have no hesitation in supporting portions of it. The child restraint portion of it, I don't think there's anyone can object to that.

MR. G. LECUYER: Tell us why you won't.

MR. D. BLAKE: The Member for - wherever - Radisson says tell us why you're not going to vote for it. Well, it's because I believe it's my choice to buckle up my seat belt. If I don't choose to do it, that's my affair.

But, Mr. Speaker, I don't think on some of the medical advice that you hear - it's very difficult to refute the advice that some of the people in the medical profession have presented to us - I don't there's any question about it. But it comes down to one more intrusion of government in the private lives of the citizens and I don't happen to believe in that, Mr. Speaker.

On helmets, if I were a motorcyclist, a biker, I think I would probably want to wear a helmet, although I doubt if that would help very much if you get into an accident on a motorcycle at the speeds they can travel nowadays. I know that it is going to be violently opposed by the bikers, because they've got a pretty strong case when it comes to restrictive vision and hearing, and various other problems that the helmets create for bikers. I have never been on a motorcycle in my life, so I really can't comment on that aspect of it.

Mr. Speaker, I have reservations about the compulsory act of seat belt legislation whether it is going to help reduce our accident rate or save lives. There's evidence on both sides that is about equal, I think.

I went west last fall, Mr. Speaker, on a hunting expedition. We travelled through Saskatchewan. My hunting partner is an advocate of seat belts and urged me to buckle up my seat belt. After some considerable discussion on the pros and cons of it we got to the Saskatchewan border and he convinced me that it was going to cost me \$27.50 or something if I didn't put my seat belt on. So I buckled up wanting to save my funds for other expenses that I may incur during the journey. We hadn't travelled 50 miles, I don't think, into Saskatchewan. We came up over a rise in the ground, and lo and behold on No. 1 Highway there were three cruiser cars and five RCMP officers stopping every vehicle that came down the highway. He came over to our vehicle and he said, we're just checking seat belts this morning, Sir. I said, "Well, how do you like that,

here we are from Manitoba and both of us all buttoned up tight as a bunny." He said, "It's a little unusual, carry on, have a good trip."

So that reinforced my argument to my friend, who was insisting keeping his seat belt done up, that there were robbers, there were murderers, and rapists, and pillagers running loose in the land, and here we had five highly paid RCMP officers tied up checking me to see if I had my seat belt buckled up. They should of been out trying to catch the guys that's robbed my jewelry store a couple of years before. If they had to have their seat belts buckled up, or if they had been drinking a bottle of beer, they'd of had them cold but they — (Interjection) — That is one of my reasons, Mr. Speaker. I think we're going to detract from our criminal investigations to tie up great numbers of the force by checking a piece of legislation that's going to be very, very difficult to enforce. That's one of their concerns, of course, that we legislators enact pieces of legislation that it's very difficult for them to enforce. We just make their job a little more difficult.

We have heard many, many other speakers, Mr. Speaker, that have gone on the same theme about the proving that it does save lives. I know hospital costs are soaring and you have the argument that if you want to reduce them, well then we have to have this legislation to try and prevent some of the more serious injuries and things of that nature.

I know, I have an across the street neighbor, the son of our doctor, who is a paraplegic, Mr. Speaker. It could be said, I suppose, if he'd had his seat belt on that he might not have been thrown out of the car and might not be a paraplegic. I know what that costs to keep them after they've been seriously injured like that or to provide care for them. But there's nothing to say that had we had this legislation that he would have done his seat belt up in any event.

That becomes some of the reason that I feel that it should be a matter of choice whether you do your seat belt up or not. I know there are quite a number of people in the country now that automatically get in the car and buckle up their seat belts. That would become a greater percentage, I think, with some other type of legislation other than the compulsory aspect, where they're going to stopped on the road by RCMP and fined for not having their seat belts done up.

But, Mr. Speaker, my main reason for opposing it is that I have taken the trouble on every weekend, and other times when I'm in my constituency to check with the local people, those in the coffee shops or elsewhere and ask them how do you want me to vote on seat belt legislation. A very, very large percentage say, "I want you to vote against it." Probably 85 percent and there have been a number of polls done and I know when we were — (Interjection) — Well I know, the Member for Radisson said this is not a popularity contest. I know if he had his way, and if he were in charge, Mr. Speaker, what kind of a hammer he would use. He would make Hitler look like a Sunday School teacher if he had the authority.

But, Mr. Speaker, the polls that have been taken in my area show an overwhelming rejection of compulsory seat belt legislation. One of them is as high as 86 percent and they range from 64 to the seventies. My particular area is 72 percent opposed to it and that is one of the reasons that leads me to believe that I should respect the wishes of my constituents, Mr. Speaker, and oppose the legislation. I'm not like members opposite that go blindly ahead and do what they think is good for people,

not what the people . . . — (Interjection) — In spite of all their protestations and their great extolation of how they consult with people, sure, they go and consult with them and then they do whatever they want to anyway, or what they think people should have. I don't believe that's the way I want to operate and it's not the way that I'm going to be voting on the bill, Mr. Speaker.

But besides that, the legislation is going to be very very difficult to enforce. The Minister knows, I am sure, while we were on the hearings in Dauphin on the Crow, there were two elderly gentlemen sitting at the table when we walked in in the morning and just through conversation, I said, "Now here's the Minister, what do you think of seat belts?" and both of them very strongly said, "Oppose it," and I turned to the Minister and I said, "There's some of the grass roots speaking now, Mr. Minister."

So if you were to do a referendum, or whatever, I'm sure it would come back with an overwhelming vote to reject it and that is not going to phase the Minister, I don't think he's going to withdraw the bill, but I will have the satisfaction of knowing that I respected the wishes of my constituents and voted against it. I know when the fines start rolling in, that they're going to be calling my office and say, "What on earth did you let this legislation pass for?" And I'll say, "Well, here's the record. I did my best but the Minister was determined at the urging of his colleagues and others . . ." — (Interjection) — Yes, and I will ask him to send a letter to the Minister if he feels strongly enough about it, and maybe if enough letters roll in — (Interjection) — it is possible to roll back some of these laws.

There are cases in the states, and our neighbours across the border to the south, there are states that have repealed the seat belt legislation. The statistics on accidents, there hasn't been any drastic change - probably the reduction in speed - and a number of people that are maybe travelling a little less now in spite of the fuel cost, have done a great deal to reduce the accident percentage. It's a good indication, Mr. Speaker, that with the amount of traffic that we had on the roads, there was bound to be a lot of traffic accidents, and as I say and I mentioned earlier, I know what the costs of these are.

But all of these statistics have been heard before, Mr. Speaker, and there's not much point in belabouring and I know there may be some other speakers, but when we get the bill in committee, I know the Minister is going to have a considerable number of representations that are going to share my views to a large extent, and he will have naturally a lot of other views that point out the cost to the medical profession, or hospital costs, and it's going to be a little difficult maybe to object to it, because the taxpayer is footing the health costs of this province and they're soaring at a fairly substantial rate. We're spending something like \$1 billion now, in about six or eight years from now it'll be \$2 billion and I don't know how much the taxpayer is going to be able to afford.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to put some of my views on the record and indicate the feeling that I am getting from my constituents, because there is no question in my area that the larger percentage of voters oppose it. They are good, law-abiding citizens and if the legislation passes they will probably be good citizens

and buckle up as best they can, but we all know in the farming community where they're going a few miles and from one field to another, they're not going to be maybe thinking about it too much; they're thinking about their crops or their harvest and they might have a mile or two to go on the highway from one field to another, and if they get stopped and they get pinched, they're going to be very very upset about it. We're just going to remind them that it was this government that brought that legislation in that's causing them some of their discomfort and some of their heartache.

So with those few words, Mr. Speaker, I will let the bill pass into committee, or whoever else wants to speak on it may take the adjournment.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Housing.

HON. J. STORIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had hoped when the Member for Minnedosa had stood up that we would hear something new by way of reasoning from the members opposite. That had been my hope, Mr. Speaker, but unfortunately the contribution of the Member for Minnedosa is along much the same lines as other members and, I suppose, with respect to his comments to the Member for Radisson, we could suggest that his contribution makes Dumbo the Elephant look like an intellectual.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to make a number of . . .

A MEMBER: What did you say?

HON. J. STORIE: I apologize Dave, it was unnecessary.

Mr. Speaker, the whole issue of seat belts I think has been presented rather well in the press of late. Mr. Speaker, the Member for Roblin-Russell had indicated that he wanted to see the evidence; that the evidence didn't exist. Well, Mr. Speaker, we have a headline from the Free Press, "Motor Vehicle Greatest Hazard to Canadian Children" a recent one. We have another one from the Free Press, "Ignoring Seat Belts Can Impose a Tragic Toll." It goes on to list the statistics, the impressive statistics, which argue against the imposition of seat control. Mr. Speaker, there was a third one. The Canadian Multi-Disciplinary Road Safety Conference held in Winnipeg recently indicated that they could cut the number of deaths in Manitoba by one-third.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think this is important legislation and members opposite say it's another attempt by this government to impose its will on the electorate, and oppose its will on the people of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, it's to be recognized that this is certainly not the first province to bring in legislation of this kind and it is long overdue in my opinion.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose the real question is, does a responsible government knowingly fail to introduce a piece of legislation, or take a specific action, when it knows conclusively and absolutely, that making that effort, taking that step, is going to save lives? As I have indicated, Mr. Speaker, - the Canadian Multi-Disciplinary Road Safety Conference - experts at that conference indicated that we could be lessening our fatality by one-third if we introduced safety legislation.

Does a responsible government that knows it can save 75 lives, stand back and say, no, no, there's an

issue of freedom of choice, we can't touch that; we're going to abdicate our responsibility; we're going to not acknowledge the fact that we'd be not only saving lives but saving millions of dollars by way of health care costs? Are we going to ignore the potential for the saving of lives and the costs and not institute a change, when we know for a fact that we're going to be saving lives? — (Interjection) —

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Turtle Mountain wants to know whether we should be instituting something to prevent smoking. Well, the Member for Turtle Mountain will be aware that City Council, the City of Winnipeg, is actively looking at the banning of smoking in public places. Mr. Speaker, I would certainly support the City Council's efforts in doing that.

Mr. Speaker, the article that I was quoting from the Free Press has suggested that anyone who looks at the record, anyone who looks at the fact, cannot fail to be impressed by the necessity for seat belt legislation. Mr. Speaker, this particular writer suggests that he would be happy to forego the freedom of choice if only one person would be spared the tragedy of spending the rest of his or her life in a wheel chair. He says, "There is irrefutable evidence that many will suffer this fate in the future, unless the Provincial Government goes ahead with its plans to make seat belts compulsory. For a concerned society, the choice is clear. Suffer a little discomfort and save many lives, possibly your own."

Mr. Speaker, there is no way that a legislator who looks at this from a question of health and safety, there is no question that person must support this legislation. That's why I find the arguments that have been presented from all of the members opposite on this issue rather frivolous and spurious in many respects, because I don't think it deals fundamentally with the issue.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the saving of lives, of our own perhaps, but more importantly the lives of our children, the lives of those we love. To disregard that in favour of some rhetoric that they choose, freedom of choice, I think, is demeaning to members who use that language. I think in some sense it is inconsistent. It is illogical and hypocritical, Mr. Speaker, in some respects. That particular argument seems to be hypocritical.

I suppose the question, Mr. Speaker, is whether members opposite are prepared to abandon the rhetoric of free choice when clearly that is not the issue; whether they are prepared to stand and support this legislation because it saves lives, because it is in the best interests of particularly our children. Mr. Speaker, almost without exception, members opposite have acknowledged that child restraints are a good idea. Mr. Speaker, there is a glaring inconsistency in the arguments they present with respect to freedom of choice on that issue alone. Mr. Speaker, we are legislating parents to restrain their children. Is that not an issue of freedom of choice? Is that not an issue of free choice? We're legislating poor parents to tie in their children, to put their children in seat belts. Is that not an issue of free choice? Are we not legislating the behaviour of individual free citizens?

Mr. Speaker, members opposite have supported that. Mr. Speaker, they have supported it. Do you know why they supported it? Well, no one can be against children. I have to ask the question, are they against the saving

of lives then? They're certainly for supporting the saving of children's lives, but not the supporting of lives in general, not to discuss the issue of cost on top of that; cost to the individual in terms of the trauma that he suffered because of his injuries; cost to society because we all support the injuries that are caused by accidents, the ones that are avoidable, the injuries that do not need to happen if one is safely belted in. Mr. Speaker, their arguments are illogical; they are inconsistent. In many respects, they're very self-serving.

A MEMBER: Yes, that's right, he hit it right on the nose.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Speaker, let's use an analogy. Let's use a parallel situation. Suppose we had in the Province of Manitoba a situation where we knew that the eating of some off-the-shelf analgesic or painkiller was going to kill 75 people over the next year. If we knew that was going to happen, would we be a responsible government by saying, well, we know that's going to happen, but let's let everybody have the freedom of choice. We don't want to impose any choice on the people. Mr. Speaker, clearly there is a chance that's going to happen. If this government knew, a government knew that was going to be a possibility, that we were playing Russian roulette with the lives of the citizens of the province, would we stand back and say, well, look, the people have a right to take a chance. They have the right to choose whether they're going to buy this particular product. Is that a realistic approach? Is that an approach that is consistent with responsible government?

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Minnedosa suggests that because he has had some constituents who have suggested they're not in favour of seat belts, that then he's opposed to it. No regard for the question of whether it's right, whether there are other arguments that can be made to his constituents to convince them. Mr. Speaker, if his constituents oppose the increasing of taxes as most people would, then does that mean that there would be no increases in taxes to provide services that are necessary or any other thing? Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that members opposite indeed would run a government that way. Mr. Speaker, I know that many of their colleagues would object to a government run by a referendum of that sort.

Mr. Speaker, when I reviewed the speeches of members opposite, and I reviewed them quite thoroughly, I found that basically there were five separate arguments that members opposite posed in opposition to this piece of legislation. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a few minutes to present my particular arguments in opposition to those concerns that were expressed.

The first issue that they raised, of course, and the one that is touted most often is the one of freedom of choice. The second issue which is even more spurious, which is even more illogical, is the question of whether safety belts in fact create trauma, and in fact are the cause of deaths. The third argument is the suggestion that the real problem is alcohol. The fourth suggestion mentioned by a couple of members opposite is that road repairs and road safety, mechanical safety of vehicles, was a significant factor and we should be

doing something along those lines. Finally, the argument which was again mentioned by the Member for Minnedosa, and that is that this law is going to be costly to enforce. Those are the five arguments that are used by members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I think when we analyze those remarks carefully we're going to find that there is very little substance to any of them and they don't pose a particularly significant threat to the argument for the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I might say that of all the people that spoke in opposition to this bill, the individual that I find it most surprising and, I think, saddening that spoke in opposition to this bill was the former Minister of Health, the Member for Fort Garry. Mr. Speaker, of all of the members opposite, I think it is clear that he must be aware of the irony of his present position on the introduction of safety legislation. He, more than any other member, must be aware of the cost to this province and to individuals of not introducing safety legislation.

Mr. Speaker, he acknowledges, along with members opposite because who can be against children, that yes indeed we should have restraints and that's one of the good pieces of this particular safety package. But, Mr. Speaker, he gets to the nub of his argument and for a former Minister of Health to rely on this kind of argument is surprising. He concludes by saying, I'm quoting on Page 2828 of May 17th Hansard, "That's my difficulty with this legislation. I do not warm enthusiastically to a government requirement that mandates the use of motorcycles helmets or for that matter that mandates the use of seat belts in automobiles on a compulsory basis. I believe that that is an unwelcome and unnecessary invasion of privacy and freedom of choice, and I regret very much the continuing drift in society and the continuing tendency by this government to reduce the range of individual choices available to men and women."

Mr. Speaker, we have a former Minister of Health saying that legislation which is going to save lives, reduce health costs, is an unnecessary infringement on individual rights. Mr. Speaker, I think those kinds of sentiments are more rationally expressed by children - I'm not sure who.

Mr. Speaker, the freedom of choice argument is really bogus argument. It's patently ridiculous in a world where we recognize, where we accept, where we support law and order, where we support those regulations that governments make from time to time to ensure our safety and the orderly working of our society.

Mr. Speaker, there are laws and regulations which govern what we can do in the workplace, laws which govern the wearing of safety helmets, wearing of hard hats. We have fire safety regulations which impose certain conditions on landlords, on individuals, people who own and provide access to the public in buildings. We have regulations which govern the speeds at which we can travel on our highways and our streets. We have regulations which control the flow of traffic. We have regulations which control our vehicles in their registration, in their maintenance. We have rules that control the use of drugs and non-prescription medicines.

Mr. Speaker, our society from time to time has imposed those rules which it believes to be reasonable

and rational and in the best interests of all members of society, and, Mr. Speaker, I believe that Gallup polls will confirm that the majority of Manitobans, the majority of Canadians have long since recognized the necessity, the imperative for safety belts and for safety legislation. Governments clearly can and do regulate human behaviour to ensure that its citizens are safe and to protect the lives of its citizens and its children, in particular.

Mr. Speaker, a related issue, and one which is mentioned by members opposite to the freedom of choice issue, a related issue, is the one of inconvenience suggesting that seat belts are inconvenient and that's why we should oppose them - like, who wants to get into their car and take the 10 or 15 seconds required to buckle up.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I just went through a list of regulations that impose certain behaviour on individuals so that they conform with the safety standards that are set up in our workplace, in our daily lives, on our highways and so forth. Clearly, there are some regulations which pose an inconvenience, the wearing of eye protection in certain situations, hearing protection when you're running a jack hammer. Traffic lights impose an inconvenience. Child-proof caps present an inconvenience. Speed limits in many circumstances present an inconvenience. We recognize that these are inconveniences; we recognize that they're an imposition in some sense. But the real test is, does this make sense? Mr. Speaker, anyone who has viewed the evidence, with all due respect to members opposite, cannot come away with the conclusion that the saving of lives in this very innocuous manner does not make sense.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose another example that one could use about the issue of seat belts and the question of whether governments have the right to impose the wearing of seat belts, could be the question of whether governments have a right to require that individuals stop at stop signs. I think there is a parallel there. Mr. Speaker, if you ask someone, if you asked one of your constituents whether, in fact, they stopped at stop signs, I would venture to guess that 99 percent of them would say, well, of course. If you asked them, is that an inconvenience? They would say, yes, it sure as heck is. Lots of times I go to that stop sign, I can see both ways, but I still stop at that stop sign. Well, Mr. Speaker, the imposition of stop signs was safety legislation. Stop signs were imposed, (a) to protect people who were driving vehicles; and (b) to regulate the flow of traffic. But it's safety legislation. No one objects to stopping at stop signs. Everyone recognizes that it is safety legislation. Everyone recognizes that it's one of those inconveniences which are for our own good.

Mr. Speaker, there is another argument that goes, that seat belts are dangerous, that, in fact, they cause injuries and, in fact, may cause death. Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all, most of the arguments that relate to the dangers of wearing seat belts are anecdotal in form. In other words, it's some individual saying, well, I know that somebody drowned in a car accident and they were wearing their seat belt.

Mr. Speaker, a report in the paper from Dr. Penner, who is the pathologist and Chairman of the Manitoba Traffic Safety Committee, the article says, over the years Dr. Penner says he has heard many stories of people

allegedly getting killed because they wore seat belts. He has tried to track down dozens of these claims, but never found any proof.

Mr. Speaker, no one can deny that people get killed wearing seat belts. Obviously, at a particular velocity there is no salvation, seat belt or no, there is no salvation. The question is not whether people are killed in seat belts; the question is, is there evidence to suggest that the wearing of seat belts lessens the likelihood of death or serious injury, and the answer is, yes, it does.

Mr. Speaker, I could stand up and I could give you anecdote to prove to you that we should eliminate speed limits and stop signs. Mr. Speaker, I personally know of an individual who was driving in his car, drove up to a stop sign, was at that point waiting at the stop sign, was creamed by someone going 60 miles an hour who didn't see the stop sign. Therefore, I conclude, as members opposite illogically do, that stop signs kill, because if the individual had been travelling and not stopped at the stop sign, then he would have been safe. So stop signs obviously kill, so let's remove stop signs. It's a spurious argument, it is not one which is really acceptable or understandable for members opposite - Tory logic. Mr. Speaker, it is a spurious argument; it is a ridiculous argument.

We could use the same argument about speed limits. Mr. Speaker, I have heard people say, in fact, a close friend of mine said that he didn't understand why we had speed limits on the highway. Because, he said, at one point he was driving and he was attempting to pass, and he had to go over the speed limit to get by this vehicle, so of course he sped up to 90 miles an hour and he said, see, if you didn't have speed limits, you'd save lots of lives.

Mr. Speaker, that's the kind of argument we're getting against seat belts, suggesting that because someone rolled into a ditch and went into 10 feet of water and drowned and was wearing a seat belt - that that's an argument against seat belts is illogical and clearly not consistent with rational argument.

Mr. Speaker, the dangers of wearing seat belts far outweigh the benefits. The suggestion that people are killed wearing seat belts, as I've said Dr. Penner says that in his attempts to chase down the claims that people have been killed by seat belts, he is unable to find a single incidence where he has been able to conclude conclusively that seat belts were in fact the cause of death and that if the individual hadn't been wearing one he would not have died.

Mr. Speaker, we have the arguments that people are thrown clear and that's a blessing, that the individuals would rather not be tied in because they can always be saved when they're thrown clear of the vehicle. Dr. Penner answers this claim by noting that in 1980, of 127 fatal rural accidents in Manitoba, 64 people were thrown out by the impact, and of these 51 were killed. Mr. Speaker, the evidence is overwhelming that it is much safer to be inside the steel frame of the body of the car than it is to be thrown out.

So, Mr. Speaker, some the arguments that suggest that the wearing of seat belts themselves pose a danger, I don't think stand up to the test.

Mr. Speaker, in another article discussing the merits of wearing a seat belt, it is pointed out that out of 101 accidents that were studied from, I believe, 1975 to 1982 it showed that out of 101 accident victims only

six were wearing seat belts. Of those six that were wearing seat belts, Mr. Speaker, none of those people were impaired seriously, three recovered quickly, and the other three returned to health and were able to walk. The 30 of those people that weren't wearing seat belts suffered permanent paralysis in varying degrees. So, Mr. Speaker, that's another argument that I think we should shelve. The argument that the wearing of seat belts is itself a danger.

Mr. Speaker, the third argument that was presented by members opposite in their speeches is that alcohol was the real problem, that what this government should be doing was taking the impaired drivers off the road. Now, Mr. Speaker, I have no argument with that logic. Mr. Speaker, that is a legitimate suggestion.

Mr. Speaker, the fallacy in the argument or the inconsistency is that the suggestion of the removal of drunks from the road is somehow connected to the wearing of seat belts, because those things are not tied together. Mr. Speaker, alcohol causes, no doubt, many accidents. But, Mr. Speaker, the question is, if the victims or those drunken drivers themselves were wearing seat belts could we save lives?

Mr. Speaker, this government has done more to remove drunk drivers from the road than any other government. Mr. Speaker, we have toughened the penalty. We believe that that's a problem, but to suggest that that's an argument in opposition to the imposition of seat belt legislation is nonsense. It's a separate issue and one which the government is trying to deal with. Members opposite cannot use the argument that alcohol is the real problem to undermine the demerits of the arguments for seat belt legislation. It doesn't work.

The fourth argument that I'd like to deal with is the suggestion that we should never mind with this legislation we're trying to impose on people and we should get down to the real nuts and bolts of the problem and that is the condition of the roads and the safety of vehicles.

Mr. Speaker, it's typical of members . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Speaker, members opposite yell across, hypocrite, hypocrite. The Member for Lakeside hisses his disappointment.

Mr. Speaker, there is all kinds of evidence which will tell any thinking person that accidents, by and large, are caused by human error and not mechanical failure, not flaws in the roads, but human error. Mr. Speaker, so that argument is illogical as well.

Mr. Speaker, if we followed the logic of members opposite; if in fact the roads are deteriorating to the extent that they suggest; if in fact mechanical failures are such a problem, then it makes the wearing of seat belts more imperative, how can we not require people to wear seat belts? It's not logical as very few of their arguments are, it's not logical.

In the first place, Mr. Speaker, I don't accept the suggestion that Manitoba roads are in that serious a condition. In the second, it is quite incorrect to suggest that there's going to be any major saving of lives by

improving either vehicle safety or the condition of the roads in some areas. Mr. Speaker, that's the fourth argument that I think does not hold water at all.

The fifth argument, and again one we heard from the Member for Minnedosa and a number of other members, is the suggestion that this legislation is going to impose a great burden on the law enforcement officers of the province, that what we should be doing is removing this legislation in favour of something, in favour of increased police forces - who knows what else? - but the suggestion that somehow this is going to impose a burden on policemen taking them away from investigation and the prevention of more serious crimes.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation is going to be difficult to enforce. There is no question that it's difficult to enforce. There are hundreds of pieces of legislation which are difficult to enforce, but to suggest that because a police officer, in the course of his duties, when he stops a vehicle for an inspection or for any other infraction that's visible, to suggest that it's going to take him an undue amount of time to check and see whether the seat belt is done up, to suggest that while he's passing vehicles he can visually inspect an automobile that is passing him to see if the individual is wearing a seat belt is nonsense.

Mr. Speaker, it requires no time to do a visual check of an individual and see whether he's wearing a seat belt as the car passes, as it is to do a visual check to see if he's got a license plate, to see if there are any obvious defects that violate The Highway Traffic Act - a light out, a tail light or whatever it is. It doesn't take any more time.

Mr. Speaker, I agree 100 percent with the Member for Minnedosa when he says that his constituents are law abiding, as mine are. Mr. Speaker, what Manitobans require, as has been demonstrated in other provinces, is a nudge. If the law is there, the seat belts will be used; if the law is there, Manitobans will find, as other provinces found, that our fatalities decrease and that we will have more Manitobans walking and talking about their accidents and less of them taking up space in the morgue.

MR. D. ORCHARD: How come you guys didn't support Conrad for Mayor?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Speaker, I think I have dealt with the five arguments. I think I've dealt with the freedom of choice.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Keep your mind on the subject, Donnie. Your mind wanders. Your mind wanders, Donnie. Keep your mind on the subject. It's seat belts now, keep thinking about seat belts.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to see that some members are obviously thinking about what I've said.

Mr. Speaker, the five arguments that they've used, freedom of choice, the dangers of wearing seat belts, the real problem is alcohol, the road and mechanical safety issue, and the costs of enforcing this legislation,

I think I've dealt with those, and I think that there is very little merit to those arguments.

In summing up, Mr. Speaker, I think that the Member for Fort Garry has called us cowardly for introducing this package of legislation. — (Interjection) — Mr. Speaker, I object to the Member for Fort Garry's comments. Mr. Speaker, I think the members' opposite arguments are both nonsensical; their position on this legislation is gutless. Mr. Speaker, for the former Minister of Health to oppose this legislation on an argument as spurious as the freedom of choice, I think, does a disservice to logical argument in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation does not violate any fundamental principle. This legislation is consistent with a government who wants to take a responsible position; a government who has recognized the implications of not introducing safety legislation that is comprehensive. Mr. Speaker, this legislation, contrary to what members opposite are suggesting, is going to be very saleable. We will find that Manitobans, as we know they will, will support this legislation by wearing their seat belts and, Mr. Speaker, the end result will be over a four or five-year period, hundreds of people walking the streets of Manitoba contributing to our economy rather than costing us millions of dollars by way of hospital costs and associated rehabilitation costs that go along with serious and severe trauma caused by accidents.

Mr. Speaker, we can do nothing more than support this legislation. I would recommend that members opposite rethink . . .

A MEMBER: And not be cowardly. Stand up and be counted.

HON. J. STORIE: . . . rethink their arguments against this legislation. Mr. Speaker, they have called for a free vote and I challenge members opposite to stand up and vote with their heads, rather than with their . . .

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, it will be my intention to speak on this bill and I want to indicate to honourable members that I am prepared to be lobbied between now and 8 o'clock when I will have to declare myself on this matter one way or another. I certainly listened with interest to the last speaker, as I listen with interest to all speakers on an important piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to deal with the bill at some length and indicate to you my reasons why I will be taking a particular position, or at least I felt that I want to take a particular position, but I was so moved by the last speaker that I want to indicate to you, Sir, and to him, that I can be reached between now and 8 o'clock. I could be persuaded. It happened to me just a little while ago, Mr. Speaker, in a distant eastern city. I was gotten to, Mr. Speaker, you might say, and I must also say, I didn't mind. — (Interjection) —

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, with those opening remarks, perhaps there would be a disposition on the

part of the House to call it 4:30 or approaching Private Members' Hour, and I will save my remarks on the contents of this bill dealing with seat belts, dealing with helmets, dealing with child restraints, till when next the House meets to discuss bills. It is my understanding that we will be discussing bills at 8 o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House to call it 4:30? (Agreed). If that is the case, the Honourable Member for Lakeside will have 38 minutes when we next reach this bill.

The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

HANSARD CLARIFICATION

MR. B. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw to the attention of Hansard staff that in the proceedings of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources on Tuesday, June 7th, that on Page 123, almost the entire left-hand column is a repetition of information or of the transcript that appears one and two pages previous to that.

MR. SPEAKER: I thank the honourable member for that information. The time being 4:30, Private Members' Hour.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: The first item on the agenda for Monday afternoon is Proposed Resolutions of private members.

RES. NO. 11 - UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

MR. SPEAKER: On the Proposed Resolution of the Honourable Member for Thompson, Resolution No. 11. The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources has 16 minutes remaining.

The Honourable Minister of Cultural Affairs.

HON. E. KOSTYRA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak on this resolution. — (Interjection) — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am indeed pleased to enter the debate on this very important resolution, and I hear a comment from the Member for Pembina from his seat about the fact that somehow I have a profile that somehow suits the debating of this resolution. I don't know if that is some reference to how my profile may somewhat be similar to the profile of the Minister of Health. But someone just recently said that he appears lighter than I and there's probably some truth to that, because I know that he is attempting to control his weight.

In fact, a bit earlier during the debate on the previous bill that we were debating, which I think is quite appropriate that we are having the debate on this resolution following the debate on that bill and I'll draw the members' attention to some salient facts, but during the debate on that bill the Member for Turtle Mountain from his seat raised the question as to whether or not we were going to do something about smoking and about obesity. When he raised the latter point, he was

looking directly at me. I want to assure the member that I am attempting to control my own situation and my own health and I did stop smoking since last September and it was with a great deal of effort. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, when I was able to control that, somehow my weight became somewhat uncontrollable and I gained considerable weight, but let me assure you that I'm trying to get my weight under control.

There is only one other aspect of my health that I would appreciate the assistance of members opposite, and that's dealing with stress. I am finding that in this job on the front benches there is a great deal of stress, and some of it - I won't blame all of it - but some of it is because of the actions of members opposite. I would invite them and ask them to help me with that part of the problems with my health, especially the Member for Pembina. I think he could do a lot to alleviate the stress that is in this House from time to time.

Mr. Speaker, I first of all want to congratulate the Member for Thompson for introducing this very important resolution at a time when Medicare, when the health system is under attack for a variety of reasons and in a variety of areas throughout Canada. I believe that it's very important that we in this Assembly, members from both sides, address this very important resolution, because Medicare, the comprehensive health care system we have in this country, is under attack.

I'd like for a moment to talk about what has been taking place in this province with respect to the universal health care system that we have and I would suggest that we all treasure. You know, in many provinces right now - and I'll speak a bit further on this later - we're seeing situations where there are severe cutbacks in the amount of funds that are available for the health care system. We certainly see that at the federal level that's causing all of us a great deal of concern. We see some provinces introducing deterrent fees that affect the universal access to the health care system and we're seeing various other situations developing in many provinces throughout Canada, which I think are undermining the health care system that we have in this country, Mr. Speaker.

Let's look at what has taken place in this province under this government, under the fine leadership of this Minister of Health. We've seen in the last two Budgets that have been established, been brought down in this province and the Estimates, continual increases, net increases in the amount of funds that are made available for the health care system in this province. So we're seeing a situation in this province, which is somewhat different from what is taking place in other provinces where you're seeing a reduction, a slowing down in the amount of funds that are made available for the health care system. This government hasn't cut back on health care expenditures in this province.

We do realize that there are serious problems with respect to the cutbacks by the Federal Government that will total some \$700 million in the next number of years, cutbacks which are affecting this province's ability to cope with the increases that are taking place in the health care system, the increased costs. But we are attempting, through other ways, to help control and help level off the increases and some of them are pretty bold steps, Mr. Speaker, steps that my colleague, the

Member who was speaking previously on the bill dealing with the safety package, indicated - taking pretty bold steps. This government is taking pretty bold steps to ensure that we maintain and safeguard the health care system of this province. One of the steps, as was indicated by the debate on the previous bill, is the safety package.

It's a proven fact, Mr. Speaker, that in every other province that has such legislation there is a reduction in the amount of costs that are attributable to car accidents, to motor vehicle accidents, with the introduction of that kind of legislation. It takes some strong will, Mr. Speaker, in order to bring about those kind of changes, but it's the kind of strong will that this government is showing, the kind of leadership that this government is showing in order to safeguard the Medicare system, the health care system in this province. That does take some degree of will on the government and it's much easier to duck those kind of issues than to take them head on. It may have been easier to go the route of other provinces where they're ignoring those kind of situations and seeing drastic cutbacks in the health care system and changing the universal accessibility to health care.

The Minister of Health is taking other action that is attempting to safeguard the health care system. He is rationalizing a number of services in the health care system. One of them, much publicized, with respect to obstetric services at a number of community hospitals in the City of Winnipeg. That was a tough decision, Mr. Speaker, a decision that I share, that I support, one that impacts, in some way, on the residents of the constituency that I have the honour and privilege of representing in this House. But it's a decision, Mr. Speaker, that I understand, that I appreciate is needed in order to rationalize health care delivery, to ensure that we do not have under-utilized expensive procedures taking place at some hospitals when they can be rationalized in order to save money, to save money that can be used for other purposes to safeguard the health care system. I think that kind of decision, the decision with respect to the introduction of the safety package, shows this government's intention, this government's position, in taking strong action to ensure that we do safeguard the Medicare system in the Province of Manitoba.

We also have the announcements by the Minister of Health indicating that there are going to be further thrusts and movement in the whole area of preventative health care, which I think is very important, if we are really going to deal with some of the root causes of the illness and the injury that face many people and that cause, in part, the strain on our health care system.

I mentioned earlier my concern with the action of the Federal Government in cutting back on the amount of transfer payments that are made available for health care in the country, in particular, to the province. I indicated we're seeing a reduction of some \$700 million over the next number of years, or over the next five years. We do, however, see some bold actions being contemplated at the federal level, wherein the Federal Government is looking at a new Canada Health Act.

Some time ago, the Federal Minister talked about ensuring, through that legislation, that there would be no deterrent fees allowed in the country with respect to health care. She also talked about banning extra

billing, which we all know is somewhat of a problem in the health care system, and we certainly support and applaud her for those moves, even though lately in a further draft I've seen of The Canada Health Act she somehow moved off of those principles. But I think in some ways the Federal Minister and the Federal Government are talking out of both sides of their mouth.

They're talking about having stronger legislative safeguards to ensure universal accessibility and maintaining the Medicare system. On the other hand, we see the Federal Government cutting back on the dollars that are available for health care in this country, and I think that all of us should be raising and continuing our pressure on the Federal Government to support them in their moves with respect to strengthening The Canada Health Act and bringing in the new legislation, but also making it very clear to the Federal Government that we do not accept their cutbacks in the areas of financial assistance to the provinces, and indeed that they should be increasing their support, if they are indeed serious about taking both steps with respect to The Canada Health Act, they should back that up with the financial resources.

Recently, I had the pleasure and the opportunity of meeting with local representations of the Canada Health Coalition and I know that they met with some members of the Opposition. I was quite interested in the brief that was presented to us by the Canada Health Coalition, one that they were making directly to the Federal Government. I would just like to spend a moment, Mr. Speaker, to talk about some of the issues and the points that are raised in the brief of the Canada Health Coalition.

Before doing that, I think it would be worthwhile just to explain to members who may not be aware of exactly what the Canadian Health Coalition is. It's a coalition of concerned organizations, individuals from coast to coast and in Canada, that are concerned about the state of the health care system and Medicare in this country. In fact, there was an initial or original conference held in November, 1979, which started the ball rolling for the coalition. Just as an aside, Mr. Speaker, I had the honour of attending that conference when I was employed in a different capacity than I am now. I was quite surprised at that time when there were representatives from all kinds of organizations and all kinds of groups that were concerned about the health care system of Canada that came together at this national conference in November, 1979. I think it would be worthwhile just to inform members as to some of the groups that are supporting the aims and position of the Canada Health Coalition.

We have many church groups including the Anglican Church of Canada, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the United Church. We have Canadian Teachers Federation and the Canadian Federation of Students. We have many health organizations, including the Community Health Associations, the Development Foundation of Canada, the Medical Reform Group out of Ontario, the Patient Rights Association, and the Catholic Health Association of Canada, which a number of Manitoba hospitals are members of, Mr. Speaker. We also have a number of organized labour groups including the Canadian Labour Congress and many of its affiliate organizations. The representatives of our Native groups, the Inuit Tapirisat, the National Indian

Brotherhood and the National Council. We also have the national representatives of the seniors in Canada, the National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation and many other organizations, such as the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, the Vanier Institute, Carleton University, Canadian Council on Social Development, and the list goes on and on.

I took those few minutes, Mr. Speaker, just to ensure that members understand the broad nature of support that goes into the Canada Health Coalition.

I would just like to outline some of the points that they've raised to the Federal Government directly and to this Provincial Government and to members of the loyal Opposition. I'm sure they are raising similar concerns to other governments and other provinces in Canada. Their position with respect to The Canada Health Act and Medicare and the health care system in general are as follows:

They have taken a strong position that any kind of premiums ought to be eliminated. Well, Mr. Speaker, in this province, as you are aware, there are no health care premiums. Health care premiums were eliminated when the NDP first came into power in this province, even though some of the provinces that are richer in terms of overall resources, we still see Medicare premiums in place. I refer to, of course, Alberta and Ontario. So they have taken a strong position with respect to the elimination of premiums.

They have also taken a strong position on preventative health care programs, another area that this government is moving on.

They have also taken a strong position that any deterrent fees, user fees ought to be abolished. Again in this province, this government has never instituted any user fees, any deterrent fees, but that is happening in some jurisdictions in this country, Mr. Speaker. In particular, I speak of the situation most recently in the Province of Alberta with respect to deterrent fees, which is a direct threat on Medicare and one that I would hope is stopped in Alberta and is not allowed to get into other areas of this country.

I can assure you that as long as I am a member of this Legislative Assembly that I will fight to ensure that at no time would there ever be the introduction of deterrent fees in the Province of Manitoba, because deterrent fees are a direct threat on Medicare and a direct threat on the universal accessibility of the health care system, particularly to those of low income, because a fee that has been proposed in the Province of Alberta of a \$10 admission charge or a \$10 emergency or out-patient charge would not be difficult for you or I to pay, Mr. Speaker. We have the financial resources to pay that, but we are fortunate in respect of having incomes that are above average for people living in the Province of Manitoba. There are many people on low incomes or on marginal incomes that could not afford to pay those kind of fees.

I think that is something that all of us should deplore. We should deplore the action of other governments where they bring about those kinds of situations. We should support the position of the Federal Government with respect to The Canada Health Act wherein they want to ensure that as part of The Canada Health Act that deterrent fees are not allowed, because deterrent fees are a direct surcharge on the low income, the poor people of this country. I think that is something that

we ought not to tolerate, and one that I would hope that all members of this Assembly would support, because that's certainly what is contained in this resolution that we are debating, Mr. Speaker.

In the "THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED," it talks about our commitment to a universal health care system that is accessible to all Canadians, regardless of income. You cannot have a total system that is accessible to all Canadians if you have deterrent fees, because that stops some individuals, some people that cannot afford it, stops them from utilizing the health care system.

We moved with the bringing about of Medicare, of hospitalization, to allow for a total system that was accessible to all, not only to the rich as was the case before. All citizens, all people of this country and of this province have the right to good health, Mr. Speaker, and they also have the right to a good health care system. You cannot have that kind of situation if you allow for the growth of deterrent fees.

I note, Mr. Speaker, my time is running out and there are many other areas that I wanted to speak about on this important issue, but I urge all members to support this resolution, to speak as one voice to deplore the actions of deterrent fees, of extra billing, and to ensure that we all collectively work to ensure that we have a health care system in this country, in this province, that is accessible to all regardless of income.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to speak to this resolution and to say at the outset, Sir, that no one can argue with the general sentiments of the resolution that is being debated.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, speaking for myself and for my party, I can say that we are committed to preservation of a universal health care system that, as the resolution says, is accessible to all Canadians regardless of income. We believe, as the resolution states, that the system itself is threatened today by federal cutbacks and transfer payments to the provinces, and that threat exists to much more than the integrity of the system. The threat exists to the actual mechanics and the actual structure of the system itself.

As a consequence, it is important that we all be on the alert, recognize the danger and undertake together to strive to reinforce the great universal health care system that Canadians have built and that is indeed one of the outstanding institutions of our society and our way of life, and is the envy of most other societies in this world. But we will not, Mr. Speaker, be able to maintain this great institution, this great system simply by wishing it to be maintained, or simply by rhetoric, or simply by resolutions of the kind before us on the Order Paper, not that I denigrate the existence of that resolution. On the Order Paper, as I've said, it's worthwhile in that it brings to a focus for examination, discussion and debate this crucial Canadian social and economic issue which to some degree, unfortunately, is ignored by many circles and many quarters in this country and ignoring it is something that Canadians will do at their peril.

The system is in trouble and unless there is a recognition of that and a clear recognition of that and

a determination on the part of Canadians, Manitobans and all Canadians, to address those troubles, identify and recognize them, see them for what they are and move to eliminate them, it will continue to be in deeper and deeper trouble. We, as a society, and as an economy, will continue to be in deeper and deeper trouble as we try to shore up an institution that begins for a number of reasons to falter.

But, Sir, we must move beyond simply the rhetorical recognition of the problem and the exercise of debate and discussion of the problem that is afforded by resolutions of this kind. That is what I mean when I say that although the resolution brings into focus, for the opportunity of discussion, the challenge that is ahead of us, it does not, by itself, ensure that we are going to be able to save this system and even those measures that are discussed and delineated in the resolution do not by themselves, should they be the recipients of total commitment from everyone in this Chamber, guarantee that the system can be preserved. Rhetoric and resolutions and debate and recognition for purposes of discussion are not going to save it, nor will we be able to maintain the system, Sir, by the mere introduction of such measures as compulsory automobile seat belts or motorcycle helmets or devices of that kind.

The system can be saved, but only if some strong steps are taken. The problems of Medicare, as I have said before, will not be resolved by simple measures and will not be resolved simply by an expression of will and willingness on the part of people to discuss the issue. Some very strong, hard, firm, tough steps, some very strong, hard, firm, tough spoonfuls of medicine are going to have to be taken by the people of Manitoba and the people of Canada generally, to reinforce and keep in place this great institution that we have built.

There are many things that require to be done and they go far beyond mere safety measures. They go into the very realm of reform and overhaul in a very complete way of the hospital component of our health care system, reform and overhaul of the hospital system in this country. This is a subject to which I have addressed myself before, both inside and outside this Chamber, both in written and in spoken form, and I have not deviated, Sir, in my commitment to the requirement that I have delineated here and elsewhere for such reform. I have not deviated in my determination and in my conviction that the need for that reform and overhaul has got to be recognized and recognized soon, and it has got to be undertaken soon, or Medicare and our universal health care system will disintegrate.

Among the many things that need to be done are steps which I intend to discuss briefly in the few minutes available to me, but none of them is more important than overhaul and reform of the entrenched and established hospital component as it exists and has existed in this country since universal hospitalization was introduced in 1958. Universal hospitalization was provided by legislation in 1958; universal medical services or Medicare by legislation in 1968. Although Medicare has attendant upon it many problems today, it's my view that the majority of those problems stem from the manner in which the universal hospitalization system introduced by the legislation of 1958 has become crystalized and frozen in the mode of the 1950s,

that time and events and economic circumstances have long since passed by.

What has been missing to date, Sir, in terms of addressing that problem, has been the cohesion necessary across the health care spectrum and across the political spectrum and across society, and the will on the part of all those with a sincere interest in the health care system to take those tough, and in many cases, traumatic steps.

The fundamental requirement that we face in terms of the preservation of our universal health care system in Canada today is, as I have said before and I will continue to say and will continue to work towards, Mr. Speaker, is the need to shift that system from a conventional posture, from a conventional mode and model and one that has become in the views of many persons and in many respects obsolete, to a contemporary model, to a pragmatic model, that will be equipped to respond to today's realities and today's challenges.

We have to change the system to deal with the 1980s and the 1990s, especially the 1990s. We have to refine and strengthen and reform the system to cope with those years ahead, those years going into the 21st century, not to continue to perpetuate the typical and conventional reactions to health problems that have symbolized much of the health care philosophy in Canada since the mid-1950s.

What I'm saying, in effect, Sir, is that we have to shift the system from a repair system and a curative system, to one that practises good health and promotes good health, that prevents medical and health problems from occurring and that, when it is dealing with medical and health challenges, deals with them in a way that recognizes today's physical, social and economic realities. Unless there are strong contrary indications at the local level, that means, in my view, a very very keen and realistic rationalization of programs in our hospitals, and a very keen and realistic rationalization of beds and bed designations. I believe, as I've said before, that active treatment beds must be reduced in number, and that action must be accompanied by increases in our chronic care facilities, our long term extended care beds, nursing home beds, and the like.

Also accompanying that action must be increases and improvements in our home care systems. There must be more emphasis on preventive medicine programs and lifestyle improvement programs. There must be . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That's safety belt, Bud.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Well, the Minister of Health says that's safety belt and that well may be, but that is only one small minuscule item in the spectrum and range of measures that have to be undertaken to reform the hospital system and get it on a modern footing, one that we can afford and one that will cope with the realities of the day and the health care challenges of the next two decades.

I have spoken in the past about the serious problem of duplication of high cost technical equipment, of high cost glamour programs and the competition that exists between hospitals and other health facilities in the same localities for status and recognition in the pecking order.

That was alright perhaps when money was in substantial supply, when money was available to fund expansions and to fund experiments, but in today's existing economic realities those are luxuries that we cannot afford, Sir. Through their existence they threaten the continuation of the basic programming that is necessary in the system generally. So there must be very close and careful watchdogging of competition between hospitals, and health facilities, and the danger and possibility of that duplication of high cost spending.

I believe that enrolments at the nation's medical schools must be scrutinized very carefully and probably scaled down. I know that a number of governments across the country, provincial governments across the country, and deans and administrations of medical schools are looking at this possibility. On the other hand, we have in at least one province in Canada, the Province of British Columbia, a move in the opposite direction, an increase of a substantial amount in the number of seats and spaces in its medical school, that despite the fact that British Columbia has a higher doctor to population ratio than any other jurisdiction in Canada, and one of the highest, if not the highest in the industrialized world. So these are some of the steps that must be undertaken if we're going to put the system in shape, and put the system in a position that we can afford to maintain through the years ahead.

I say this, Sir, because the hospital system, the hospital component of our health care system, is responsible for the expenditure of 60 percent of our Health Care Budget in this province and in this country. Sixty cents of every dollar raised and spent, from provincial taxpayers, by provincial governments across this country goes on the hospital component. As a consequence, you have the medical side, the medical services side of the spectrum crimped for funds, and you have money in very short supply for that wide range of other health activities and health programs that we should be reinforcing and expanding.

Of the provincial Budget, in whatever province you want to take and want to consider across this country, you're looking at approximately a 30 to 33 percent commitment to health care and the health care system. No Health Minister is going to achieve an increase in the budgetary allotment; it's unrealistic to expect that he or she will. If support for medicare and medical services is to be improved and expanded; if the fee schedule is to be improved and modernized; if support for personal care programs, for dental programs, for preventative medicine programs, for geriatric programs; for mental health programs is to be found, it is not going to be found through expansion of the Health Ministers share of the Provincial Budget. It is simply unrealistic to expect that Minister is going to get more than the 30 to 33 percent share of the budget he already gets.

Where is it going to come from then, Mr. Speaker? It is going to have to come from within that health care budget as it exists at the present time. The one place where it can be found is in the hospital component. Eighteen cents out of the 30 or 33 goes on the hospital component; six cents goes on medical care; six cents is available for all the other services that have to be provided. Out of that 18 cents there must be found some money to improve the services in the other areas of the health care spectrum to which I have referred.

I believe that out of that 18 cents it can be found, but only if the hospital system is vigorously scrutinized and then reformed, and modernized, and moved into a mold and a mode that meets today's realities. If those things aren't done, Mr. Speaker, I fear for the survival of the great system which this resolution addresses.

I have to say that, in my view, individual provinces are going to have to make these decisions and do these things for themselves, because health care is a provincial responsibility and I have no quarrel with those provinces who make specific provincial decisions in this area. My quarrel in fact in the past has largely been with Federal Ministers who have made judgments and issued declamatory suggestions, in some cases amounting to declamatory threats, when they have no front line responsibilities in the field of health care themselves.

Federal Ministers from a health care perspective in this country really operate in something of an abstract area, in something of an abstract vacuum. They do not have to deal with the individual challenges that have to be addressed on the front lines of medicine with their medical and health care personnel on a day-by-day basis, and as a consequence, Sir, they often in my view, or sometimes in my view, bring a rather unrealistic approach to health care programming.

Provincial administrations as a consequence are going to have to take these bold steps and make these decisions for themselves, because the true initiative and the realistic action can only be taken by those people who face the real pragmatic problems, and those are the provincial health ministers themselves.

So, I look for imaginative and bold action to be taken at the provincial level, including, of course, the provincial level here in Manitoba in that hospital component of the health care system, to save universal health care in Canada. There will have to be some hard decisions made and there will be difficulty, from a political and social nature, where a number of them are concerned.

But that, Sir, is the reality of the day and that is the only hope for achieving the objective to which this resolution addresses itself. It's not good enough simply to talk about committing ourselves to certain principles. We have got to reform and overhaul the hospital system in order to do it.

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

The Honourable Member for River East.

MR. P. EYLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Don.

I appreciated the remarks made by the Member for Fort Garry. I heard his words emphasizing prevention rather than consumption in medicine, in hospital services, the medical field, and I agree with him wholeheartedly in that area. I think perhaps the reason why he has taken that approach is because he was once the Minister of Health in the Province of Manitoba. I don't think that the other Health Ministers in Canada would be as committed to that sort of an approach as he would. I believe that they wouldn't pay lip service to it, but probably they wouldn't feel it as keenly as we do in Manitoba, since we here pay virtually the whole shot for medical care through the government.

I believe when you look throughout Canada, you see that what's happening is a split between government and the consumer for the cost of health care. For example, in Alberta where they've just raised the hospital user fees to \$20 a day, the health insurance program costs a family \$336 a year; and in B.C. the government charges \$384 a year for health insurance; in Ontario, families pay \$648 a year for health insurance. So what we have is an insurance plan and it's interesting that whenever people talk about the high taxes in Manitoba they never consider the fact that maybe \$648 of that could be attributed to health insurance. When you compare the taxes in Manitoba with the taxes in Ontario, naturally Ontario comes out lower, but that's more or less here nor there. It's just merely an accounting matter that is disputed between political parties at the moment.

But the fact is, in Ontario, or in these other provinces where they have billing by the province for health insurance, the fact is, the government is splitting the cost of health care with the consumer and when this happens, I believe that the government isn't as concerned about the costs as it would be in Manitoba, where we pay the whole shot. Ontario or B.C. or Alberta can easily say we're going to freeze hospital costs, medical costs this year and then they raise the insurance cost to the consumer and that's one way of avoiding facing the problem of making the choice between consumption and prevention.

It's somewhat like the energy crisis we had a few years ago when the price of energy went sky-high and the costs were felt by the individual consumer and most people started substituting insulation for energy in their homes. In other words, they were substituting prevention for consumption. That's something we have to face in health care as well, and I suppose as consumers, we often don't realize the costs which are mounting so rapidly in health care. But because it's a government here which shoulders virtually the whole cost, it is the government's responsibility to see that the health care system is reformed, as the Member for Fort Garry has said. I wish he had had more time, because I would have liked to have heard some of his proposals for reforming the hospital system, which he has keyed in on as one of the main problem areas.

I believe that there is room for reform in the hospitals, but I also think that there is room in the other areas, for instance, in the areas of doctors and the number of doctors we've got in this province - the Member for Fort Garry suggested we should be cutting down on medical school enrolment - and that's important because right now we have 50 percent more general practitioners in Manitoba than we had 10 or 12 years ago and yet I don't know that the health care has improved by 50 percent in the last 10 or 12 years.

You would think that using free market economics that the supply of doctors would lead to a decline in the prices that they would charge - competition - but that's not been the case either. The MMA bargains as a monopoly bargaining unit. They use their particular expertise to convince people that they need to see the doctor more often and I think that the number of doctors themselves are one of the major problems we've got to face in bringing the costs of health care under control.

We simply have to recognize the fact that we have too many doctors and perhaps maybe we should impose

a free market system on them and bargain a lot harder in keeping the MMA fees under control - zero percent or a negative 5, whatever - if you want to really believe in the free market system, let them accept the consequences of oversaturating the supply of doctors.

So that's one area where I think we have to key in on the fact and recognize that the MMA is a monopoly situation and we can't allow them to charge monopoly fees if we, as a government, are responsible for shouldering the costs of health care in this province.

In the area of prevention, I believe that we have to make a lot further advances than we are doing right now. It's a matter of changing lifestyles rather than preventing accidents, preventing illnesses. We have to change the basic lifestyles that we live, because so much of the diseases which we suffer from today are really lifestyle related, whether it be drinking or smoking, this sort of thing.

When we talk about smoking, it's so often brought up as, why don't we ban smoking instead of seat belts - it causes just as many accidents - and I believe that these are areas where we have to use peer-group pressure, social pressures, whatever, and personally when people do ask me if they can smoke up, I think that we should say, no, and use peer-group pressure to discourage people from leading lifestyles which are really detrimental to us as well as to them. We have to pay the costs of the people who get the lung cancer, so I think we have the right to exercise our options to say, no, when people ask if they can light up a cigarette. I know I've asked the Member for Elmwood to leave the caucus room when he smokes a big fat cigar and he has done so. So the peer-group pressure does work and I think that's one approach that we should be taking in this area.

Doctors, of course, are useful but there's also another area which we have to emphasize and that is the other health care professionals, such as public health nurses, or various occupational therapists, physiotherapists, whatever the related professions are to medicine; because doctors, although they would like to think they have a monopoly on health care, are not the only people who are qualified to practise in all of the various areas in the health care field.

I would note that in California they're aggressively undertaking school clinics, where people from low income families, the children from low income families can receive free medical services in the schools and this is cutting down drastically on the use by these people of out-patient and emergency ward services in the hospitals, so it has a great effect if you hit the lifestyle and the prevention aspects of medical care early in the school system.

I know that in Manitoba here, we're considering pilot projects for drug abuse, alcohol abuse and this sort of programming in the elementary schools and that's one area where we have to take a much firmer initiative; because I feel that if we don't hit people early enough with the no smoking, the effects of drinking, or the effects of drugs, that we really are going to have increased burden on the health care system in the future.

So those are basically just a few remarks I wanted to make on this. I fully support the resolution of the Member for Thompson, and I have appreciated the remarks made by the Member for Fort Garry. I think

that perhaps he is more perceptive than he knows because I think that he is more progressive than the rest of the Health Ministers of Conservative parties in Canada. Probably that's because he was put in the situation by this party where he had to face the facts and it's to his credit that he is able to come to this sort of view and to push it as strongly as he has been pushing it, because I think otherwise we would be hearing from Conservatives the old easy solution of health insurance or deterrent fees. I don't really want to get into the arguments of keeping people out of the health care system because I'm sure that the Member for Fort Garry is sincere when he believes in universal medical care.

I would just like to say that I support this resolution and I can hear that the Member for Fort Garry supports the resolution and I'm glad to hear that, because I think it's important that we do bring something like this out into the clear air and discuss it.

I see the Member for Pembina is waiting with baited breath to speak after me, so I'll let him lay his paper down and speak now for his contribution.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to start off on this unless people would prefer to call it 5:30 and start fresh on another day.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House to call it 5:30? (Agreed)

That being the case, I'm leaving the Chair to return at 8 o'clock. When we next reach this resolution, the Honourable Minister will have 20 minutes remaining.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MRS. D. DODICK: Mr. Speaker, I have a committee change in Economic Development. The Member for Burrows will substitute for the Member for The Pas.