

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, 29 August, 1986.

Time — 10:00 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER, Hon. M. Phillips: Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . . Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

ORAL QUESTIONS

MTS - PUNR Committee meeting re MTX

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System.

I wonder if he can indicate the exact time on Thursday at which the Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will be sitting to consider the report of MTS-MTX.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for MTS.

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, I'm sure the Honourable Leader of the Opposition appreciates that the House Leader convenes committee meetings on this side and I defer to him.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: As I indicated earlier, it appears the Leader of the Opposition either did not hear me indicate it in the House, or forgot that I did. We would be prepared to call the meeting either at 10:00 a.m. or 8:00 p.m. We are free on both occasions dependent upon the requirements of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, I wonder then if the Government House Leader can confirm with the confirmation of members on this side. We are quite prepared to meet at 10:00 a.m. and if that's acceptable, I wonder if he can confirm whether that will be the time of the meeting.

HON. J. COWAN: That's certainly agreeable.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, in the event that there are more sittings required of the committee, is 8:00 p.m. as well suitable to the government?

HON. J. COWAN: We indicated we would call one meeting that would be at 10:00 a.m. At this point in time, I don't see any requirement for further meetings after that meeting.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, is the indication then that the Government House Leader does not intend to call any further meetings beyond the one meeting?

HON. J. COWAN: Not at all. I indicated very clearly, if the Leader of the Opposition will listen carefully, that at this point in time I don't see any requirement to call further meetings. If following that meeting it was suggested that there was a requirement or, if other arrangements were made to provide for other meetings, then I would be prepared to discuss those options at that time. But at this point in time, we are only committed to that one meeting.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, in view of the fact that members on this side do not believe that one meeting will suffice to go through many items that have not yet been covered with respect to the Annual Report and the affairs of MTS-MTX, will the Government House Leader consider that members on this side of the House are quite prepared to sit next Thursday evening at 8:00 p.m., are quite prepared to sit the following Monday evening at 8:00 p.m., are quite prepared to sit Tuesday morning at 10:00 a.m., following to Tuesday evening at 8:00 p.m., Thursday morning at 10:00 a.m., Thursday evening at 8:00 p.m.?

HON. J. COWAN: I appreciate that the Opposition may believe that there are further meetings required and, in fact, it may be agreeable that further meetings be held. You know, they like to yell from their seat, because we are suggesting right now that we are going to work meeting by meeting, that there's a cover-up in process. That is not the case at all.

What we are going to do is commit ourselves to the meetings that we feel are required. We are going to bear in mind their needs and their concerns, and also bear in mind the fact that the government has to get down to the business of governing. We are not a single-issue party, such as they are over there. There is important work that has to be done. The government cares about the economy of this province. The government cares about jobs for individuals in this province. The government cares about The Family Farm Protection Act; and the government cares about the social services, health and education, and the progress that has to be continued in those areas.

So we will meet to deal with the single issue that has consumed the members opposite on the occasions where we believe it fits in with the overall strategy of this government to make a better province for all Manitobans, and we won't allow ourselves to be sidetracked from that ultimate goal by the single-issue fascination of the members opposite with this particular issue.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: I don't know how they put their foot in it like that, do you, Gary?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

Are honourable members interested in continuing with question period, or would they rather have a discussion?

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, in view of the fact that the Premier has suggested that we don't want to meet on Friday afternoons, would the Government House Leader then want to schedule it for this afternoon?

HON. J. COWAN: On several occasions, we have suggested meetings on Friday afternoon. — (Interjection) — No, I'm sorry. If you check with your Opposition House Leader, you'll find that it has been more than once. On every occasion, Friday afternoons have been turned down. If the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting that . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

Could the Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines please contain himself so we could continue with Oral Question period.

The Honourable Government House Leader, to finish his answer.

HON. J. COWAN: As the Leader of the Opposition is now suggesting that this issue has so consumed his party that they are willing to give up their Friday afternoons, which they were not willing to do before, then we will take that under consideration when scheduling future meetings, if there are future meetings of the committee.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MTS - immunity for employees

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the First Minister.

Given that last Friday, employees of the Manitoba Telephone System interested in a public inquiry and testimony under oath, were described as "hacks" and "flacks" by the Minister of Energy and Mines, and given that yesterday those same employees were described by the Attorney-General in his grievance as liars, can the First Minister indicate to the House what assurance of immunity on having those individuals fired, if they dare to testify against and provide information against . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Attorney-General on a point of order.

HON. R. PENNER: Madam Speaker, I genuinely believe this to be a point of order. The Member for Pembina, in his usual way, has misrepresented completely what I said. What I said, Madam Speaker, was that if anyone tells me that they will tell the truth under oath, but

won't tell the truth when they're not under oath, then I say those persons are liars. That's what I said.

To misrepresent what I said, in the way in which the Member for Pembina does, is so characteristic of the way in which he has conducted, on behalf of his caucus . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

A dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

The Honourable . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Possibly I should rephrase my question to the First Minister, since the non-point of order interrupted the flow of the question.

Madam Speaker, given that last Friday the Minister of Energy and Mines, from his seat, called employees concerned about their jobs and about testifying and providing information which might be damaging to their superiors, those employees were called "hacks" and "flacks" by the Minister of Energy and Mines, and that yesterday the Attorney-General . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Madam Speaker, the Member for Pembina is continuing on the smear campaign that he has been on, and his leader has been on, for months and months. I said that the "hacks" and "flacks" of the Conservative Party are the people who are attempting in the background to build up this case. I never said that those employees were hacks and flacks; I did talk about the hacks and flacks of the Conservative Party and I could talk about those in the Free Press who have been . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

Again, a dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, my question is to the First Minister.

Given that his Energy and Mines Minister, last Friday, made comments alluding to members of the Manitoba Telephone System interested in pursuing the truth, interested in testifying at a public inquiry with job protection, because if that testimony proves damaging to their superiors, they want to make sure their jobs and their careers are not sacrificed; given that last Friday the Minister of Energy and Mines described them as hacks and flacks; given that yesterday the Attorney-General has described them as people who he would consider to be liars, what . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, order please. Order please.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, one cannot continue to sit here and allow the Member for Pembina, as he

has done so often in the past, to put misrepresentations on the record such as he is attempting to do now. Granted, he is a master of smear and innuendo. He has a great deal of experience at it.

However, Madam Speaker, for him to suggest at this point in time that the Attorney-General said things, which the Attorney-General just clarified and said he did not say, is an abuse of his responsibility as a responsible Opposition member - and I use those words advisedly - and cannot be let go unchallenged.

MR. D. ORCHARD: To the same point of order, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

I have one point of order on the floor.

The Honourable Member for Pembina on the point of order.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, to the point of order raised by the Government House Leader.

There is only one group of people who are smearing and there is only one group of people being smeared. That is, Madam Speaker, senior members of the front bench, namely, the Minister of Energy and Mines; namely, the Attorney-General; who are attempting to smear and intimidate MTS employees who wish to tell the truth . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. D. ORCHARD: . . . that's the only people who are smearing and they are smearing innocent employees of the Manitoba Telephone System, and that is the kind of witch hunt . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. D. ORCHARD: . . . these people want to have.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

The Honourable Member for Kildonan on this point of order?

MR. M. DOLIN: This point of order, Madam Speaker.

I would hope in making a decision on the point of order when you review Hansard, that to misrepresent the statements of honourable members and Honourable Ministers, and also as the Member for Pembina has just done to reinforce that, to accuse members of motives of smear and innuendo is unparliamentary. I would suggest it is not, Madam Speaker, a dispute about facts. It is, Madam Speaker, a misrepresentation of statements; it is also an imputation of motives, and I would think the Member for Pembina should be declared out of order and made to apologize for his statements. — (Interjection) —

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

On the point of order, may I remind the honourable member that it is the member's duty to ascertain the truth of any statement before he brings it to the House. Statements he's made have been objected to by two

members, and may I also remind all members that when a member of the House makes a comment, his comment in regard to his own position or his own words must be believed that all members are honourable members. I would ask the Honourable Member for Pembina to refrain now that we have had an explanation from both the members who have made objections, that he would refrain from referring to their position in any other way but in the way they have said their position is.

The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Could I just raise a legitimate point of order? Could you confirm for the members that the time taken up by the invalid points of order that have been raised will not be included in the 40-minute time period allotted for questions?

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

When calculating the time for question period, all interruptions on any procedural matters are accumulated and added onto the end of question period as a normal course of events.

The Honourable Member for Pembina with a question to the First Minister again?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, my question is to the First Minister.

Given comments by his senior front bench members, namely, the Minister of Energy and Mines last Friday, yesterday from the Attorney-General, which are designed to assure that employees wishing to seek the truth in the Manitoba Telephone System and MTX affair are intimidated and are not providing that kind of information . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: Madam Speaker, I'm sure you will agree - I hope you do - that to accuse an honourable member of this House of a motive, to impugn a motive is out of order, and I ask for an apology and I ask for a withdrawal.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines on the point of order?

HON. V. SCHROEDER: On the same point of order, Madam Speaker, I ask for the identical remedy asked for by the Attorney-General.

MADAM SPEAKER: On the point of order, I only three minutes ago cautioned the Honourable Member for Pembina that every member must accept the words of another honourable member as being their position. May I remind the honourable member of Beauchesne 316(e), that a Member must not impute bad motives or motives different from those acknowledged to a Member.

The Honourable Member for Pembina wishes to withdraw his remarks?

MR. D. ORCHARD: No, I wish to pose a question to the First Minister, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: We are on a point of order. Order please.

The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. A. MACKLING: On the point of order, Madam Speaker, the Honourable Member for Pembina used these words "designed to intimidate." He juxtaposed other words between them but he's accusing Ministers of the Crown of using words designed to intimidate employees of MTX-MTS. That's what he put on the record and that's what is heard in this Chamber. That is imputing motives. That is clearly out of order. He must withdraw.

MADAM SPEAKER: I thank the honourable member for his advice but I had already asked the Honourable Member for Pembina to withdraw his remarks.

The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, exactly what remark did I make that requires withdrawing? I want to have that clarified, Madam Speaker.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: If I can be of assistance, the particular words that I asked be withdrawn are "designed to intimidate." Those are the words. Madam Speaker, I've done everything I can to make sure that everyone understands if they come before a parliamentary or legislative committee to have complete immunity they have nothing to fear. I have never done anything designed to intimidate. My character has been called into question. I asked, on a point of order, that that remark be withdrawn, and I believe you have ruled that it should be.

MADAM SPEAKER: I wonder if that clarifies the situation for the Honourable Member for Pembina. — (Interjection) — Order please, order please. The objectionable words are "designed to intimidate." Could the Honourable Member for Pembina please withdraw those words?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, at your request, I will withdraw the words "designed to intimidate."

May I ask a question of the First Minister now?

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes, you may.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, given the comments of his front bench people that would tend to make MTS employees less than open to coming forward with their story, how can the First Minister assure those employees, as he did some two weeks ago, that if they provide the truth to either a legislative committee or to Coopers and Lybrand that their jobs will not be jeopardized if that truth reflects negatively on their managers, their bosses, and the senior executives of MTS?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, there has been only one instance, to my knowledge, where it has been proposed that employees of the Manitoba Telephone System be stripped of a basic right, and that was by the Leader of the Opposition when he proposed that statements which were being used in a public inquiry or a judicial inquiry could be used in later proceedings involving those employees, the stripping of basic rights by the employees and other witnesses to inquiries proposed by the Leader of the Opposition. It has been only the Leader of the Opposition that has proposed the stripping of any basic rights from any employees and that they truthfully and accurately record it.

Madam Speaker, we have said on many occasions, we continue to say so, and to confirm that no employee has anything to fear from this side insofar as fully cooperating with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, with Coopers and Lybrand, none whatsoever, legislative committee; in the same way as employees and others cooperated in the kickbacks in the Department of Highways, which commenced during the term of the Member for Pembina while he was Minister of Highways, right in the heart of his constituency in Carman, Manitoba, and he didn't know anything about it.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina with a supplementary.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, you might offer me some advice on the First Minister's last comments about kickbacks in the Department of Highways. Was he implying that I had knowledge of that? Is that what the First Minister is implying?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

Is the honourable member . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: No, I just want to make sure, Madam Speaker, the rules are fairly applied to both sides of the House, because after all, you know, the Attorney-General took offence.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. I do hope the honourable member is not reflecting on the Chair. The honourable member has been recognized to ask a question.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, given the reply by the First Minister that members of the Manitoba Telephone System can appear before the Public Utilities and Natural Resources Committee, is the First Minister now saying all employees . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. I would ask the cooperation of all members to allow me to hear what the person who has been recognized as having the floor is saying. It's very difficult to make a ruling later when one can hardly hear the words from any member who has the floor.

Order please.

The Honourable Member for Pembina to finish his question.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question to the First Minister is, given his answer that

employees at MTS and MTX can come before the Public Utilities Committee, is the First Minister now saying that we can call any and all employees of MTS or MTX before the committee to have them provide their words, their testimony, their version of facts, and answer all questions posed to them? Is that what the First Minister is now saying?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I'm now convinced that the Member for Pembina and others across the way want to subvert the RCMP investigation. Madam Speaker, they appear not be prepared to permit the RCMP to carry on their investigations, to conduct them in a proper way and to bring charges if necessary.

Manitoba Development Centre

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. E. CONNERY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I doubt if we'll be able to get any questions asked because of the members opposite.

Madam Speaker, to the Minister of Community Services. On about August 21st the Minister got a report from the Manitoba Developmental Centre . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. It is impossible for me to hear what the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie is saying. Could we please have some order and please revert to the proper decorum of this Legislature.

The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. E. CONNERY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. If I wanted to watch monkeys, I'd go to the zoo.

Madam Speaker, to the Minister of Community Services, on August 21st or thereabouts the Manitoba Developmental Centre Auxiliary gave a report to the Minister, a brief to the Minister, condemning the handling of the Welcome Home Program; condemning the School of Psychiatric Nursing; condemning the per diems at the MDC; and they have concerns related to parental rights and responsibilities and claims the Department of Community Services is conducting a sleep-in with the ACL. Can the Minister now tell us if she is going to accept some of the facts in this brief and give us some idea if she'll be changing some of her program?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I did have an extended meeting with the auxiliary from the Manitoba Developmental Centre during which time we reviewed their brief and discussed the general programs for the mentally disabled citizens of Manitoba. Madam Speaker, having heard the tone of the question and remembering the nature of the discussion and the sharing of information, the legitimate fears, concerns for any parents about their young people or their family members when it comes to change, I just can't find any connection between the tone of that meeting and the tone of the question put by the Member for Portage la Prairie.

There are always issues and concerns when a system is undergoing change. A change, I remind the member, all the members, is designed to improve the quality of care, not only in the community, Madam Speaker, but in the Manitoba Developmental Centre. I reject entirely the innuendo implied in the question by the Member for Portage la Prairie.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie with a supplementary.

MR. E. CONNERY: It's quite obvious now that the Minister is saying the government knows what is best for the people and we will not listen to what the people ask. These people have presented a brief. . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member was recognized to ask a supplementary question which requires no preamble.

MR. E. CONNERY: Will the Minister now tell us how many people have moved out of the Manitoba Developmental Centre in August?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I will undertake to get the update. I did give the June and July numbers. I'm not sure if the member was present at that time. I did, in Estimates, give the expected numbers and plan of movement out of the centre.

But I would like to remind the member that there are many interest groups, many parents, many individuals, who have mental disabilities in this province. Naturally they don't all agree on the particular type of service that is appropriate. The purpose of the Welcome Home and of the general program for the mentally disabled is to increase the range of options, along with improving the quality of services available, Madam Speaker, and I stand firmly on that policy and on that direction. If there are improvements in the process, the particular auxiliary referred to, is part of the planning process, Madam Speaker, and has a regular monthly opportunity to raise their issues and to influence the way in which the program is developing.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie with a final supplementary.

MR. E. CONNERY: Thank you, Madam Speaker, to the same Minister. Can the Minister now assure us that her own self-proclaimed numbers of moving people from the MDC into the community will be achieved by the end of December, or will we continue to have people put into the community at risk and will we still continue to have overcrowding at the MDC which is drastically overcrowded, and even beyond the required limits of the fire regulations?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I am outraged at the exaggeration presented by the member opposite. He is alleging overcrowding beyond fire regulations, forgetting that that very institution had 1,100 people. It is now, for the first time in history, under 700 with a plan to move down to 550. There is that optimum level, Madam Speaker.

There is so much inaccuracy and distortion in the approach of the member opposite. I have asked

repeatedly for examples of any movement of an individual to the community when the appropriate service plan in the community was not ready. I had two names given to me by an anonymous note delivered in this Legislature, Madam Speaker. I followed up and found that the situation was much different than alleged.

I have given my commitment to the auxiliary and to all the people of Manitoba that we will not move people out before the services are ready or before the parents approve. Now, in some cases, that may mean that an individual stays on in the institution when they could be better served in the community, but I have given that commitment, Madam Speaker. If we get down to the point where the trustee, who has the legal authority for the individual, and the family, are in disagreement, we will take time, Madam Speaker. We will take time to work out a mutually satisfactory resolution.

Workplace hours - limit on overtime

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ellice.

MR. H. SMITH: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Environment and Workplace Health and Safety.

The question involves the pipeline worker who died over a week ago in a traffic accident. I just have to get this preamble - he was having to go ahead to work extremely long hours, over a hundred hours a week. For example, one morning he was off work at 4:00 a.m. and had to start work at 6:00 a.m. The Minister's department has investigated this matter, and I'm wondering if he has any recommendations to this House.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Workplace Safety and Health.

HON. G. LECUYER: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

To my knowledge, Madam Speaker, this was a traffic accident. It is not a workplace accident. That is not to say that the accident is not at all related to the workplace. For that reason, there have been discussions with the safety and health officers and the employers in this particular instance. There is an investigation, the results of which are still pending, but a number of changes in the interval have occurred to ensure that the safety procedures are used in the workplace and that the hours may not be a cause of any other accidents of this type, if indeed it was a factor in this particular case.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ellice with a supplementary.

MR. H. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I would think that hours are a condition of work. I'm wondering why the Minister and his department have not taken action in making a recommendation to curtail the lengthy hours of work to where someone has worked so long, so many hours, that they're not fit to drive down the highway.

MADAM SPEAKER: May I remind the honourable member that question period is not a time for making

speeches or expressing opinions, but for asking questions.

MR. H. SMITH: I'll rephrase it, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ellice with a supplementary question with no preamble.

MR. H. SMITH: Has the Minister considered making a recommendation to limit the amount of overtime that a worker must work to maintain their job?

HON. G. LECUYER: Madam Speaker, this can only come under the purview of my department inasmuch as it might affect workplace safety and health conditions. Otherwise, I do assume it would come under the Department of Labour.

Perhaps, the member did not understand that I did say that the length of hours worked and worked alone in this particular case has been remedied on this particular work site.

MTS - Misinformation by officials of MTS re MTX

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Thank you, Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System.

Yesterday, no less a personage than our Attorney-General stated in his grievance that the \$1.5 million loan to Al Bassam was unauthorized. Will the Minister inform the House if disciplinary action has been taken against an official or officials of MTX for failure to inform the Boards of MTX and MTS as soon as possible of this violation of the Articles of Agreement?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for MTS.

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, this Minister will not fire or suspend people until there has been full investigation of the facts. We will be meeting on Thursday. I have requested further detailed information in respect to those matters. That information will be available for Thursday, and then I will let the honourable member judge whether or not there should be suspension or firings. Madam Speaker, let's let the RCMP and the management audit do the kind of interrogation and questioning that is necessary to produce fact and not fiction.

MTS - advertising

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, while I have the floor, the Honourable Member for River Heights the other day asked a question about double advertisement of a telephone ad. I now have the full detail on this, and I will table a copy for the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek, whose hearing sometimes doesn't allow his understanding. The information is that the management . . .

MR. F. JOHNSTON: It'll be something you've done right; that would be something you do right.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. A. MACKLING: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek has had an ugly pill this morning, Madam Speaker.

Manitoba Telephone System, along with other members of Telecom Canada, placed national ads on CBC with local offices cutting in with the local telephone company's logo, rather than the Telecom Canada logo. On August 27, 1986, CBC Winnipeg failed to cut in with the MTS ad and, subsequently, the ad was run twice. MTS paid for only one ad. That is the explanation, Madam Speaker.

In respect to the concerns raised by the Honourable Member for Ellice . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, order please.

The Honourable Member for River Heights with a supplementary.

MTS - immunity for employees

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Thank you, Madam Speaker, with a new question to the same Minister.

Madam Speaker, I have continued to receive calls from employees of the Manitoba Telephone System requesting a public inquiry, not because they will not tell the truth, if asked, at either a legislative committee hearing or at a public inquiry - they are prepared to tell the truth in any case - but because they will not step forward and give information voluntarily if they do not have some protection. Madam Speaker, will the Minister take this weekend to reconsider giving these employees that protection by one of two options: (a) to hold a public inquiry; or (b) to suspend with pay the senior officers of the Manitoba Telephone System in order for the employees to feel protection?

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, I can appreciate that honourable members feel that sometimes governments should suspend people and do an interrogation investigation later, if there's some suggestion of wrongdoing. We know that some honourable members were demanding that my colleague, the Member for Transcona, resign on the basis of innuendo.

Madam Speaker, this Minister and this government engaged the RCMP, and the RCMP can ask individual employees questions. They can take their evidence under oath. Under the Charter of Rights, those employees, if they wish, can have counsel present when they're speaking to the RCMP. That information is confidential; it is not available to the employer. Unless the RCMP makes that information available at a public hearing in court, that matter is not open for the public.

The best protection for any employee is to talk to the RCMP, and not talk to the Honourable Member for Pembina or someone else who, according to his leader, would then be at prejudice should there be any error in their statements.

MTS - RCMP investigation re shoddy business practices by MTX

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

The Honourable Member for River Heights with a final supplementary.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Is the Minister stating in this House that the RCMP will, in fact, interview all 4,500 members and employees of the Manitoba Telephone System for both corporate and criminal violations?

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, if that honourable member is suggesting that 4,500 workers are under a cloud, I reject that categorically. There are workers who have some information that may be of assistance. The Premier, this government has said, no worker has anything to fear for coming forward and cooperating with the RCMP or the management audit or talking to Mr. Curtis. We've said that unequivocally. All the protections are there, unlike the kind of judicial inquiry that honourable members want where they believe that workers will then be at risk.

Madam Speaker, there was a serious question asked this morning about a fatality, and this Minister will look into that matter as well.

MTS - services, rural Manitoba

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Springfield.

MR. G. ROCH: Thank you, Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Telephone System.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

I cannot hear the honourable member.

MR. G. ROCH: Sorry, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Telephone System.

I've received several complaints from constituents in regard to poor service. They tend to come up more these days, given all that's going on and of course they're sending them in by mail, because their phones are not working. As a matter of fact, the other day I got a call from a lady from Whitemouth . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Question?

MR. G. ROCH: . . . and the line went dead halfway through the conversation.

Anyway, some go for days before . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have a question?

MR. G. ROCH: If you could keep them under control. I know their nerves are frayed but calm down, boys.

Madam Speaker, in view of the fact that many of them go for many days without proper service and yet they're expected to pay the full monthly bill, will this Minister at least look into looking at taking some of those dollars which are squandered all over the world and possibly compensating the customers of MTS here in Manitoba?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for MTS.

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, the Honourable Member for Springfield should know that the Honourable Member for Lakeside was concerned that the Telephone System should be looking at improving services in the R.M. of Springfield and the equipment was only six years old and shouldn't be replaced.

A MEMBER: What's the matter with it?

HON. A. MACKLING: Yes, what's the matter with it? The Honourable Member for Springfield doesn't appreciate that the world doesn't stand still and technology has provided for ways to improve service, and we're doing that. We're providing for improved service throughout Manitoba. We're spending millions of dollars. I indicated the hundreds of millions of dollars that have been spent since this Minister has been in office, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, he knows that this government has requested the Telephone System to do even better, to provide a work plan and priorities and options so that the System can develop a program to eliminate party-line service, to provide an even better service at the very, very low rates we enjoy in Manitoba.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Springfield with a supplementary.

MR. G. ROCH: Madam Speaker, I realize that the Minister is under pressure these days but I wish he'd calm down a little bit when he answers. The fact is that the . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Question?

MR. G. ROCH: . . . service is not improving at a fast rate, not expanding at the rate expected. Madam Speaker, my question was: when proper service is not provided, when lines are not working properly for so many days, yet the people are paying their bills, expected to, at a higher rate of interest than you charge the Arabs, will they be compensated for that lack of service? That's the question I asked. Will you answer for a change?

MADAM SPEAKER: That question was repetitious and a member cannot dictate the answer a Minister gives.

The Honourable Member for Springfield with a supplementary.

MR. G. ROCH: I take it then, Madam Speaker, if I understand your ruling right, it means he doesn't have to answer. Is that correct?

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. G. ROCH: I'm asking for clarification.

MADAM SPEAKER: For the member's clarification, on many occasions I've reminded members that questions cannot be repetitious and that they cannot

determine how a Minister answers or whether he answers.

The Honourable Member for Springfield with a supplementary.

MR. G. ROCH: Madam Speaker, would the Minister then consider rebates to those ratepayers who have not had the opportunity of full service for which they have paid?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for MTS.

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, the honourable member expresses a concern for outage, which I think we appreciate happens in respect to hydro, in respect to gas service; it happens in respect to telephones. All of those things do provide inconvenience from time-to-time to people but, overall, the system accommodates those problems. We can appreciate that sometimes that is vexatious for individuals, but we all understand that we don't have a perfect world; we don't have a perfect system. There are breakages, occurrences that occur, and we all accept that is part of the balancing and the cross-subsidization that takes place in respect to service.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Springfield with a final supplementary.

MR. G. ROCH: Madam Speaker, as part of the ongoing review that the Minister often refers to as going on, will he look at taking some of the MTX monies, given the fact that the MTX operations are now supposedly frozen, would he take a look at using those monies to compensate those people who have outages?

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, I believe I answered that question.

Farmers of Manitoba - assistance to

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. C. BAKER: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture.
I'd like to ask him — (Interjection) —

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. C. BAKER: Madam Speaker, I think that a question on agriculture is of enough importance that members could remain silent, at least while I'm asking it.

I'm sure, Madam Speaker, that the farmers out there, while they're harvesting their crop, would like to know whether anything was accomplished at the Ag. Ministers' Conference in B.C. and whether, in fact, we can be looking forward to some financial assistance in the coming months?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I thank the honourable member for Lac du Bonnet for his question. At least provincial Ministers of Agriculture meeting in British Columbia, many of whom are Conservative Ministers, were not prepared to bail out the Federal Government as members on the opposite side.

Madam Speaker, there was great concern and agreement by Ministers of Agriculture that there is lack of action at the national level, both in the area of income support for the grain industry and, as well, on the area of operating credit to complement the programs that Provincial Governments have had to put into place.

Madam Speaker, as well, there was great concern about the Federal Government's haste to implement a program called the Rural Transition Program to get farmers off the land. In fact, there was a unanimous recommendation made for the Federal Government to withhold implementation of that program.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur on a point of order.

MR. J. DOWNEY: We on this side of the House consider agriculture such an important matter that it would be — (Interjection) — normal House procedure . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. Could I please hear.

MR. J. DOWNEY: It would be normal House procedure, Madam Speaker, that when a Minister returned from an agriculture conference such as this Minister of Agriculture has done, that we would have an agriculture statement to the House, to the farm community, so we could respond. That is the point of order.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader on the point of order.

HON. J. COWAN: Yes, on the point of order, Madam Speaker.

I believe it — (Interjection) —

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. Could we please have some order so I could hear.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: On the point of order, Madam Speaker, it is becoming increasingly clear, if not transparent, that members opposite only have one issue that concerns them. If they want, at this time, to feign interest in agriculture, by leave we would be prepared to have the Minister of Agriculture stand up and make that statement which they asked for.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The Honourable Member for Virden, was he wanting to speak on the point of order?

MR. G. FINDLAY: On the point of order, Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, since under the Constitution, agriculture is a shared and joint responsibility . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. May I remind all honourable members that points of order are on

procedural matters, not an opportunity to make speeches.

The Honourable Opposition House Leader on the point of order.

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

We are prepared to grant leave if the Minister of Agriculture wishes to make a ministerial statement and we have the opportunity to respond.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. First of all, the honourable member did not have a point of order. Secondly, when I rose and recognized the Honourable Member for Arthur, the time for Oral Questions had expired. Thirdly, if it's the will of the House to grant leave, - for a ministerial statement, was that what the leave was granted for?

Does the Minister have leave to revert to ministerial statements? Order please.

The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, we're also . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. I can't hear the Opposition House Leader.

MR. G. MERCIER: We're also prepared to grant leave for the fact that the Minister, I don't believe, has a written statement.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

There will be no written statement and I'm sure members opposite would like to know what occurred at the Ministers' Conference and I will give them a report on what occurred.

Before I begin, Madam Speaker, let it be very clear that members opposite would not grant a pair for a member of this government to . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition shouted from his seat, "You didn't go to Edmonton." Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition should be aware that I was sick in bed with the flu and I was unable to go.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please!

Leave was granted for the Minister to make a ministerial statement on the Agriculture Ministers' Meeting. I think it's most inappropriate for us to wander off the topic.

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, but they are all related and I just want to tell my honourable friends that I was in bed on Sunday and Monday and I was requested to come back to the House because of the

tactics of the honourable members; and my wife drove me in that evening, to be here in the evening.

Madam Speaker, the first day of the Conference on Agriculture, the Provincial Ministers' of Agriculture raised a number of concerns dealing with the implementation of the federal legislation, dealing with the setting up of the rural transition program and a number of unanimous recommendations were made by Provincial Ministers.

First of all, dealing with the setting up of the federal legislation, there was great concern about the haste and the non-consultation of the Federal Government in bringing in their debt review boards, in fact, so much so, Madam Speaker, that there was a recommendation made that the Federal Government begin meaningful consultation with each individual province so that the rules and procedures set up in the debt review boards in each province could accommodate provincial concerns.

Madam Speaker, secondly, in the area of operating credit and credit programs, Ministers of Agriculture nationally agreed in November of 1984 on 12 major recommendations by all Ministers, a federal/provincial review on farm credit. There was a denial of one major recommendation, as well as other recommendations, and the Ministers at this conference restated their need to have a national operating loan guarantee program to complement the programs that have been put in by this government and other provincial governments. These were unanimous recommendations, Madam Speaker.

Thirdly, as well, all provinces indicated that the review of the federal legislation that will take place later this year, there should be meaningful consultation between all provincial Ministers so that the kind of legislation that was brought in without consultation, without review, without discussion with the farm community, should not occur again, and that was unanimous, Madam Speaker.

In view of the fact that in Western Canada, that there will be - and these are federal/provincial figures - a huge increase in the numbers of farmers at risk in terms of financial difficulty, that there is a need for massive federal infusion of funds through either an announcement of a deficiency payment, as has been put forward by the Premier of this province and the Premier of Saskatchewan and the Premier of Alberta or through an announcement that there will be an advance payment through the Western Grain Stabilization Plan, there was unanimous concurrence right across the country that there should be federal responsibility in this area.

But along with the thousands of farmers, Madam Speaker, who face the prospect of being forced off their farms, there was also unanimous concurrence that the Federal Government delay the announcement of the Canadian Rural Transition Program because it will be not only viewed as pushing farmers off the land, it will be seen and it will be, in fact, a case of a voluntary review process, no money behind the act and the Rural Transition Program get rid of 10,000 farmers within the next two years and that was the unanimous decision of Ministers of Agriculture in this country.

Madam Speaker, they were played down by the Federal Minister. I want to say that there was some agreement; I don't want to be all negative because there was agreement by Provincial and Federal

Ministers on the need for a long-term agricultural policy and a strategy program and work will continue to have both policies in place for review by the First Ministers at the First Ministers' Conference. That is one concrete measure that there was unanimous agreement on but, clearly, on the short-term measures that are required, Madam Speaker, there was great concern by all Ministers in this country about the lack of commitment and the lack of action at the federal level.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Madam Speaker, I take pleasure in having this opportunity to respond to the Minister of Agriculture's statement which he says is not all negative, but I have yet to hear him stand up and say anything constructive about giving real support to the farmers of Manitoba on any issue.

He has never once stood up and said anything beneficial about any federal program that's either in place or being contemplated. You talk about haste and non-consultation. When he brought in The Family Farm Protection Act, Bill 4, there was virtually no consultation; there was a set up group of meetings; he didn't listen to the farmers; he is not listening to the farmers now in terms of what they're saying.

Farm organizations are saying repeatedly that this legislation is not meeting the needs of the farm community. It's financial assistance that's needed in the farm community, and this Minister goes and says the Federal Government is not doing their fair share.

Agriculture is a joint and shared responsibility, and what is this Minister doing? He hasn't said one constructive word about what he's going to do for the farmers of Manitoba. He goes to a meeting this week; he takes a holiday for four days. When the First Ministers' Conference was on in Edmonton, he didn't even go; we offered him a pair. He hasn't come forward with any meaningful program for the farmers of Manitoba for the real problem of the cost price squeeze. All he does is fedspeak and never answers a question straight on.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

HOUSE BUSINESS

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

MR. G. MERCIER: Yes, Madam Speaker, on Government House Business, if I may ask the Government House Leader a question.

On August 26th, Tuesday, he wrote to me indicating that the government will require passage of another Interim Supply Bill on or before September 4, 1986: "I am prepared to begin debate on Interim Supply anytime after today. Can you please indicate to me your preference to having this matter debated?"

I handed in the letter, Madam Speaker, on Wednesday afternoon, indicating, in reply to his letter: "I request

that you call Interim Supply on Thursday, August 28th and continue with it until passed."

I just want to ask the Government House Leader if he intends to continue with Interim Supply today and until it is passed?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, it is my intention to call Third Readings on the Order Paper as they appear today and, following Third Readings, if there is time following that, to call Interim Supply.

In doing so, I just want to make a couple of points because there has been some suggestion that this House works far better by cooperation, whenever that is possible, in arranging the business of the House, and that was entirely what I was attempting to do in writing the letter to the Opposition House Leader.

I asked him when he'd like to begin debate on Interim Supply; he indicated when he would like to begin the debate. We did begin it on that particular day. He indicated that he wanted to continue on until it was passed. That does not fit in with the needs of the government.

Cooperation, Madam Speaker, means working together - it does not mean concession - and the cooperation, which I have found to be a very useful way in expediting the business of this House, to date, has in fact moved the business along in an orderly fashion.

I sincerely appreciate the cooperation from members opposite, all members opposite, particularly from the Opposition House Leader, when it was offered and when it did help move the business of the House, but it is no longer accomplishing that objective in the same way and other avenues must be pursued.

Madam Speaker, Hansard is very clear in respect to the calling of government business and the responsibility of the House Leaders. It says, "The Member of the Government who is primarily responsible . . . for the arrangement of government business . . ." - and I'm paraphrasing - ". . . in the House . . . is known as the Government House Leader." Beauchesne, Citation 158, Page 49. It continues on Page 50: "This Minister has the authority to call any items of government business as he may decide."

It goes on, in Point (3) of that citation to say, "The Government House Leader discusses with the House Leaders of the other Parties . . ." - in this instance, the Opposition House Leader - ". . . the business arrangements for the House and attempts to reach some compromise on the length of debate on each of the various items of business."

As long as we are able, through cooperation and compromise, to reach that sort of a decision, I'm prepared to continue that process, I think it works in the best interests of all members; but where it is impossible or where it is not likely that we are going to reach that sort of compromise as to the length of the time of the debate, then it is incumbent upon the House Leader to call the business of the House and that person has sole authority to arrange the business of the House so that that business can be expedited.

So we, in fact, will cooperate as much as possible; we will compromise where full cooperation is not

possible. But, in the end, we have the responsibility to make certain that the business of the House gets done as well as to make certain that the members opposite have an opportunity to debate the issue of the day. That we will continue to do in the spirit of compromise, not cooperation, on this particular day because we could not reach a consensus.

In the spirit of compromise, I am prepared to call debate on Third Readings. My understanding is that most of them will be adjourned by members opposite, and that is perfectly acceptable. Following that, we will move into Interim Supply so that debate can proceed.

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, let me just say to the Government House Leader that I do acknowledge the right of a Government House Leader to call business as he sees fit. However, I point out to him that it does not mean that the business will be passed.

And when he asks the Opposition, particularly in this case, indicating that they require Interim Supply by September 4th, we indicate what we want done in order to cooperate with him to have it passed by September 4th, and then we have an afternoon of grievances and then we have bills being called when we have requested Interim Supply be dealt with during all of these times, he would, at the same time, acknowledge that he now has no right to expect the Interim Supply Bill to be passed.

HON. J. COWAN: It should be clear, Madam Speaker, and it would be clear to anyone who would take the time to review the records for the past number of years, that Interim Supply takes a certain amount of time to be passed, on average; and, in fact, given the commitment today to call Interim Supply following the calling of Third Readings, which I understand will be adjourned, and given that we had some Interim Supply debate last evening, and given that we will have Interim Supply debate - and I'll make that commitment to the member now - on Tuesday, I believe that there is sufficient time for that bill to be thoroughly debated.

If the members opposite do not believe that to be the case, that is a decision they will have to take, and the consequences of that decision is one that they will have to abide by.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THIRD READINGS

BILL NO. 5 - THE TRADE PRACTICES INQUIRY ACT

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 5, The Trade Practices Inquiry Act for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. G. DUCHARME: I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 8 - THE REAL ESTATE BROKERS ACT

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 8, An Act to amend The Real Estate Brokers Act for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL 9 - THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ACT

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 9, An Act to amend The Public Schools Act for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. C. BIRT: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Arthur, that debate on this bill be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 10 - THE MANITOBA HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT CORPORATION ACT

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 10, The Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation Act for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kirkfield Park, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL 23 - THE CHARTER COMPLIANCE STATUTE AMENDMENT ACT, 1986

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 23, The Charter Compliance Statute Amendment Act, 1986, for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Sturgeon Creek, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL 24 - THE TEACHERS' PENSIONS ACT

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 24, An Act to amend The Teachers' Pensions Act, for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. C. BIRT: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for St. Norbert, that debate on this bill be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL 26 - THE PUBLIC TRUSTEE ACT

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 26, An Act to amend The Public Trustee Act, for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Fort Garry, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL 29 - THE WORKERS COMPENSATION ACT

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 29, An Act to amend The Workers Compensation Act, for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Madam Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Riel, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL 30 - THE JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 30, The Justice for Victims of Crime Act, for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Brandon West, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL 32 - THE PENSION BENEFITS ACT

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 32, An Act to amend The Pension Benefits Act, for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for La Verendrye, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

**BILL 35 - THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMERCIAL ARBITRATION ACT**

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 35, The International Commercial Arbitration Act, for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Sturgeon Creek, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL 37 - THE CITY OF WINNIPEG ACT

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 37, An Act to amend The City of Winnipeg Act for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Charleswood.

MR. J. ERNST: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for River East, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

**BILL 39 - THE MANITOBA
ENERGY AUTHORITY ACT**

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 39, An Act to amend The Manitoba Energy Authority Act for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for St. Norbert that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

**BILL 42 - THE INSURANCE ACT
AND THE QUEEN'S BENCH ACT**

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 42, An Act to amend The Insurance Act and the Queen's Bench Act for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. G. DUCHARME: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move, seconded by the Member for Springfield, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

**BILL 46 - THE CERTIFIED
MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS OF
MANITOBA**

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 46, An Act respecting The Institute of Certified Management Consultants of Manitoba, for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. C. BIRT: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Arthur, that debate on this bill be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

**BILL 47 - AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE
ESTABLISHMENT
AND MAINTENANCE OF A BOYS' AND
GIRLS' BAND
IN THE TOWN OF DAUPHIN**

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 47, An Act to amend an Act to provide for the establishment and maintenance of a Boys' and Girls' Band in the Town of Dauphin; for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Gladstone, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

**BILL 48 - THE MANITOBA MUNICIPAL
SECRETARY-TREASURERS' ASSOCIATION
ACT**

HON. J. COWAN presented Bill No. 48, An Act to amend The Manitoba Municipal Secretary-Treasurers' Association Act for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. H. PANKRATZ: I move, seconded by the Member for River East, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

**BILL 49 - THE PORTAGE DISTRICT
GENERAL HOSPITAL FOUNDATION**

HON. J. COWAN presented, by leave, Bill No. 49, An Act to incorporate The Portage District General Hospital Foundation, for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance, that debate on this bill be now adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

HON. R. PENNER: Consistency, Ed, consistency. You've got to learn the lesson of consistency.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Excuse me, Madam Speaker, on a point of order.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Niakwa on a point of order.

MR. A. KOVNATS: The Honourable Attorney-General was making some remarks about the Boys' Band at Dauphin. I would like to correct the situation. It's the Boys' and Girls' Band at Dauphin.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member does not have a point of order, but he has a point well taken.

HOUSE BUSINESS

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, we'd now like to call the Adjourned Debate on Bill No. 56, by leave. It does not show on the Order Paper, but it is the Interim Supply Bill. I would also like to indicate that we will be continuing in Interim Supply on Tuesday, perhaps after calling the rest of the amended bills as we did today, but that's something I'll want to discuss with the

Opposition House Leader and report back to the House on Tuesday. But it is our intention now to have Interim Supply proceed for the bulk of the day on Tuesday for certain.

I also want to indicate, Madam Speaker, that on the Order Paper there's a notice of motion for Monday next, Bill No. 57. I should actually read "for Tuesday next," given that Monday is a holiday.

So would you please call adjourned debates, standing in the name of the Member for Springfield, on Bill No. 56.

**ADJOURNED DEBATE ON SECOND
READING**

**BILL 56 - THE INTERIM APPROPRIATION
ACT, 1986**

MADAM SPEAKER: On the adjourned debate on Bill No. 56, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Springfield, who has 39 3/4 minutes remaining.

MR. G. ROCH: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I was saying last night - I believe I had 39 3/4 of a minute left.

Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to participate in this debate on Bill 56. I find it somewhat amazing that, once again, the government has to introduce another Interim Supply resolution. It seems that, had the Session been called a little earlier and Estimates could have gone through back last spring, the government would have had the money it needs.

But given the fact of the large deficit they have and given the fact that they need money as soon as possible, I can't understand why they must call Interim Supply, especially with the three-time drop in credit ratings that this government has had since 1981.

Madam Speaker, possibly if there was less money wasted on exotic adventures in Saudi Arabia and maybe if there was less money spent, supposedly invested in other money-losing Crown corporations, of which one of the most glaring examples is Manfor, not to mention the recently sold Flyer Industries. If one can call paying someone to take something off your hands a sale, I guess it was a sale. One could go on and on about the numerous money-losing ventures that this administration continues to prop up with the people's money.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, C. Santos, in the Chair)

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, members opposite are quick to criticize the banks and other lending institutions for donating to the political parties of their choice. Yet, they're the very ones who go, cap in hand, practically crawling on their bellies to the big bankers of New York and to the so-called gnomes of Zurich, among other places in the world, in order to get yet more and more money to not only finance their ill-conceived projects but, in many cases, to refinance some of their previous spending.

You know, it begs the question, why? Why do we have this ever-increasing deficit; a burden of debt which we are placing on the citizens of Manitoba, not only the citizens now, but those of many generations to come.

I would suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it's all because of incompetence, mismanagement, ideology, ill-conceived ideas, and especially, political expediency. Many rash promises are made left, right and centre during the election campaign and, all of sudden, fully expecting to lose by quirk of fate, they find themselves back in government and they have to try and at least give a semblance of fulfilling those promises. Therefore, money is no object; if you haven't got it, simply borrow it.

It's been said by some that this government has gone bureau-crazy and that'll cost money. Take the various scandals that have happened. A few examples are MPIC, allegations of nepotism out there; and the Department of Housing, people who are both employees and also sit on the NDP Executive; and the Workers' Compensation Board, people on paid leave for conflict of interest; and Natural Resources, people relieved of duties after being charged with expense account abuse and sexual harassment; and of course there's the whole MTS-MTX affair of which the bottom line is yet to be reached. We're only touching the tip of the iceberg.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you consider the sums of money which have been sent out there, accounts receivable have over \$16 million losses in the last fiscal report. These are the economic aspects, and there are the other ones - the floggings, the discrimination against women and Jews, unauthorized loans, cover-ups, senior employees contradicting themselves in committee, the government's continuous refusal to have a public inquiry. Why? To me it looks as if this government is struggling in quicksand. The more it struggles, the deeper in it gets. No wonder some people are starting to call this camelgate, because it seems that in order to minimize political damage, they are trying to cover up the scandal. What's going to happen, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the political damage will end up being far greater and the scandal will still be there.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would suggest that this is a government which is slowly decaying. As a former NDP MLA and Cabinet Minister said recently, the reason for decay in this government is because it's more open in its attempt to reward friends. Ministers surround themselves with party hacks, therefore political affiliation, and in this case, its membership in the NDP Party supercedes merit and hiring. It was never this blatant during the Schreyer years. Under the Pawley Administration, it's very, very blatant.

I would suggest that if J.S. Woodsworth was around today that he would be ashamed of the party which he helped to found. He is probably turning in his grave right now if he would know, would be aware of all that is happening in this government. It's become a government which seems to be hanging onto power simply for the sake of power. All the matters of principle have gone out the door.

I can think of many examples, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in my own constituency. One of those is Sperring Road out in the East St. Paul-Birds Hill area, a road that was closed sometime ago, or the access from that road up to Highway 59. Despite the fact that there were numerous meetings held with government officials and a former MLA, it all fell on deaf ears. I have tried to get the correction rectified. What happens, rather than trying to help out the people in the area, the government defends its bureaucrats, rather than just taking

necessary steps to ensure safe access, they keep the road closed causing residents of the area to drive miles to another intersection. It doesn't make sense, but the government just will not listen.

There's the whole area of the Cooks Creek diversion. Officially the government calls it a postponement; in fact, it's a cutback. The Minister of Natural Resources himself said, we will look and review this particular project on a year-by-year basis. Normally when one sets out to build something, construct something, you budget for it, you have a time frame and you do it. You don't decide to build a house, for example, if you expect to complete it within four months, and budget to construct it on a week-to-week basis. It wouldn't make sense. But in any case, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the fact remains that \$4 million was cut from the Natural Resources budget, Cooks Creek diversion, after it being half-way constructed, has been cancelled, and I wonder, I question, is it strictly because of, well, cutbacks in the budget or are there political motivations to it, too? Is the government upset that one of their darling Cabinet Ministers was defeated and, therefore, they are out to punish the people of Springfield; is that a possibility? Maybe not, maybe yes. But Springfield sure seems to be receiving an above-average share of cutbacks.

There's the Medika drain which the government is trying to dump into the hands of the local officials. They're trying to say, well, the municipal people have to upgrade it to this or that standard. Yet commitments that were made by this government to those people suggest otherwise. They said that this drain would be allocated funds from this government and upgraded to the point where it could divert water from the Whitemouth River. Now this kept on going from time to time, week after week, month after month, year after year. This year there were heavy rains, heavy floods, and because the drain was not built, was not upgraded to diversion, floods occurred. To me that is not being very responsible.

Roads in general - as the Member for Minnedosa correctly pointed out awhile ago because of the used cutbacks there to the tune of - what is it, up to \$20 million cutback? Well, they're suffering. PR 206, which is in a mess right now, which hopefully will be completed at one point; PR 207, which had been promised by the former member is nowhere to be seen. There was a lot of survey stakes up during the election that have since been taken down. Now all we hear is that it's under consideration.

There's other roads. The Garven Road, the Hazelridge Road - these are just a few examples. Nothing's happening. We are told that the maintenance portion of the budget has been increased. Yet, when you get down to the grassroots level where the people actually work in the various agencies, the word there is that there has not been an increase at their local level. The increase seems to be at the administrative level.

Now with specific examples I've pointed out, I must say, in all fairness, that in some cases action is taken to rectify situations. But they're basically cosmetic, a little bit of grading here, a little bit of gravel there. The fact remains that if the Highways' budget is not increased, or at least put back to where it normally was, the whole infrastructure in rural Manitoba will suffer and suffer terribly.

The Premier made a comment one time that they were putting people before asphalt. I'd like to point

out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I've done in the past, and I have to reiterate that - I'm sorry, for the members opposite, that means repeat, in case some of them don't know - but I have to reiterate that people are the ones who use these highways. For example, if an ambulance has to go from a farm house to the nearest hospital, if the road is in terrible shape, no matter how fast the ambulance goes, it will not get there. This is an example of an emergency situation. But even for everyday use, whether it be farm people, business people, working people of whom many in my constituency work in Winnipeg, they use these roads on a daily basis. It would be nice if part of this request for Interim Supply, part of this money would be going into this infrastructure.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we talk about putting people before asphalt, is this government aware of the magnitude of not only actual loss in jobs but also the potential loss in jobs. When I say potential, I'm talking about years down the road, I'm talking about this year, this summer. Some have happened, some more will happen this fall and some more next year. Loss of jobs in the heavy construction industry - if there are no roads being built, there's no construction going on. That causes a lot of unemployment.

I think, to the Minister of Northern Affairs, who says that sounds reasonable, I don't find it reasonable at all that people are being laid off. I don't find it reasonable at all that people are losing jobs. I don't think it's to their credit at all that an Executive Council member finds it reasonable to lay off people. He laughs but I don't find it amusing at all.

This is a government which likes to boast about its Jobs Fund. I think it's done more to create jobs in the advertising industry than it has anywhere else. A lot more jobs can be created in the construction industry if this government proceeded with looking after the serious defects in the infrastructure. Not only is it for the use of Manitoba citizens, but also the tourists coming in. It's a disgrace when one comes from North Dakota into Manitoba, to look at Highway 75. We wonder why the stats are down for May and June. There are many reasons, no doubt, but one of them is certainly the deterioration in our highway system. Maybe the fact that we haven't had a pavilion at Expo and haven't promoted Manitoba properly on the way to the destination of Expo could also have an effect. But there's no doubt about it, that our lack of a proper highway system, of a good one, is one of the major reasons.

Then there are also other concerns. The Falcon Ski Slope, which will be operated this year, but again it's future is up in the air, the same as the Cooks Creek diversion. The reason given, well, I think it lost - what was it? - you mentioned something like \$20,000 at one point. That kind of boggles my mind. We're losing millions of dollars in all kinds of Crown corporations all over the place. We're throwing away taxpayers' money in Saudi Arabia, California, and God knows where else. It would take numerous hours sifting through documents to just find out how many millions are wasted. Here is a facility which is not only a tourist attraction but a benefit to the local residents, of which they have very few recreational activities during the winter, which is being closed down because of a \$20,000 loss, a \$20,000 loss which could be reversed into a

profit situation if it was properly promoted and marketed, something which the local people are willing to do.

We talk about not having a pavilion at Expo because of the costs involved. Might I say that one should have looked at it as possibly more of an investment than a cost. You just take a very small portion of the money that MTX has spent abroad and you could have had many pavilions at Expo. I'd just like to point that out.

When one talks about infrastructure, that not only includes roads and highways but includes also services to municipalities such as sewer systems. I'd like to point out specifically some areas which were promised in my riding. One finally did go through and one is up in the air. In the rural municipality of East St. Paul, the former member made a commitment that the project would go through. Now they're being told out there, because Springfield did not return a government MLA, the project is up in the air. Nothing is going to happen in 1986 and there may be grants coming in 1987. It's a question of, and I quote, "priorization." Priorization on what? Fiscal reasons or political reasons? That's what I'd like to know.

The sewers in Landmark finally went through. It took a lot of, shall we say struggling on their part to get it but once the sewers were installed. It was up in the air as to whether the connectors would be installed. How does a sewer system work without connectors? It would be impossible. Finally, someone had the good sense to realize that and let it go through, but for a while, that project was up in the air, too. It would have been a Cooks Creek diversion. You would have had half a project. You cannot put in a sewer system if it's not connected, just like you cannot use a diversion if it's not fully built. It just doesn't make sense.

Then there are some provincial roads which go through communities. Some communities, and I'll refer specifically here to the community of Elma, because it came up as a constituency complaint recently. In many cases, in my own hometown of Lorette, the main road is also a provincial road. Many communities take pride in keeping their towns well maintained. They keep the boulevards, the meridians, well cut, well maintained, the ditches clean. Yet we have a provincial highway going through a community and there the department does not maintain it properly. The grass may be cut two, three times a year. It just doesn't fit in with the whole ambience of the rest of the community. Despite repeated requests to have this rectified, the only answers we get is that, well, there's not enough staff, or we don't have the money, or else it's not a priority, or else we can't do it right now, it's going to be done later.

I know of one specific case in the community of Elma, where students who were out for the summer were willing to do it for the nominal fee of \$40.00. Forty dollars would not have added anything, very little, a minute fraction of an amount to the Highways' budget and it would have provided employment to those individuals. Yet nothing happened - no action.

So CN cuts its portion of the ditch. The village, or in this case the R.M. of Whitemouth fulfills its responsibility as far as keeping the community neat, and there we have grass and bullrushes in the ditch because the Department of Highways neglects its responsibilities. Yet we hear that in the area of

maintenance, the budget has been increased. Well, it has not been increased in those communities or, if it is, it's not going in the right areas.

What concerns me when we go through the Highways' Estimates, the Natural Resources' Estimates, questions have been asked - for example, I mentioned Cooks Creek. When will it be completed? Well, we don't know; it will be reviewed.

It kind of scares me when a project gets started and then it's not completed. Right now there's a commitment to build a hospital in Whitemouth. The sod-turning ceremony has been done and construction has begun. What will happen if all of a sudden the Department of Health cuts its budget next year? Will they cancel that hospital midway through? Will they make it smaller? I don't know. You can be sure I'll fight for that hospital, as I'm fighting for Cooks Creek and for better roads in Springfield. But it still concerns me when governments start cancelling projects midway through because of budgetary reasons. One would have thought they would have budgeted for this right from the beginning and they would already have it completed, not only within the time frame allotted, but also have a certain amount of dollars set aside for this project, not take it from a certain project to put it somewhere else where possibly a government member was returned.

I mentioned the hospital in Whitemouth. The Minister of Education also committed himself to building a new school in Lorette. Will that be cancelled as well? I don't know. We have yet to hear from the Public Schools' Finance Board. Grant it a request has to be put in, but they are aware of it. The Minister has publicly announced that there would be one. It's another project which I intend to fight for.

What bothers me is that there is a group out there threatening to delay the whole project, because they want to take over that school for their own selfish reasons. Those people in that group happen to be NDP supporters, all. I certainly hope that the Minister will not side with them on this so as not to delay the construction. That school needs to be built and I hope it will be built.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's also the whole area of the development up North, the Limestone project. Many of the dollars being borrowed by the energy authorities, Manitoba Hydro, it's all guaranteed by the taxpayers. It's getting to a point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of when will all this borrowing stop? When will we live within our means?

We're talking about half-billion dollar deficits. We're already paying roughly 52 cents on every dollar that we pay Hydro toward interest. If you combine the Crown corps and the Crown corporations along with the government departments, out of every \$3 of revenue coming in, \$1 is going out for interest. It's getting to be a very severe situation.

Government members were all elated yesterday because one of their members was cleared. If that's the most they have to cheer about, I would say they're in very, very sad shape. When a political party has to start getting people from the bureaucracy, people from their offices, people who are no longer representative of the grassroots to run as candidates, that's the first sure sign of decay setting in and a party on its way out.

In order to govern effectively and properly, we need input from a cross section of citizens. We need input

not only from bureaucrats, but also from people who are out there in the real world, people who work on the farms, people who work in the factories, people who run businesses, people who run the professions, not professional politicians or professional bureaucrats. We need their input, but we can't rely on simply them to control our lives.

(Madam Speaker is now in the Chair.)

Madam Speaker, Bill 56 is a bill which has again provided the government with money because they've run out. It's a bill which is there to grant them the authority to spend money because they haven't gotten their proper authorization yet.

It seems to me that rather than go into this process every day, they ought to cooperate with us in our calls for a public inquiry and put the matter of MTS into the right arena. We would cooperate with them and help them expedite the business of government, finish off the Estimates in a cooperative, orderly fashion and they would not need to come back with requests for Interim Supply. However, that is their decision.

Well, Madam Speaker, I'd just like to say that there seemed to be a lot of interest last night in Interim Supply and not as much today. Today, all of a sudden, you want to introduce bills. Well, we can see through their little game plan. They tried to make it look as if the Opposition tried to obstruct the affairs of the government. It's not going to work; people can see through them. We had the comment last night of the member saying that he was going to play "hardball." Of course, we got a few laughs from that because we know full well they'd like to get out of here as soon as possible.

Madam Speaker, probably many of us would like to get out of here as soon as possible, but with the scandals of immense proportion going on in this government, we just can't let them get away with it. We have to dig in our heels and say that if you're not prepared to deal with urgent and important matters, you'll just have to stay here and face the music day after day. So, fully realizing that, they introduce another bill for Interim Supply.

Madam Speaker, I just want to get out my concerns on the record. I'm unhappy at the way some of the problems are not being dealt with in my riding. I'm unhappy at the way the state of the province is being governed or misgoverned. I feel that had we formed the government, which we will soon, had we formed the government, . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. If honourable members want to have private conversations, could they do so elsewhere?

MR. G. ROCH: . . . we would not need to be coming back time and time again, cap in hand, for Interim Supply.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise to enter into the debate on the Interim Supply motion, a bill which is before the House, and I want

to deal with a couple of issues I think which, in the last few days, have been again pointed out by the Opposition, and I would almost believe that the government has fully endorsed what we have been saying and the need for the kinds of things we've been saying, again are on the agenda of the government or should be on the agenda of the government.

I want to, first of all, refer to the financial requirements of the province and some of the things that I've said earlier in this Session, some of the things that my colleagues have said earlier in this Session, and I'm pleased the Minister of Finance is going to spend some time listening to the comments that my colleagues and I have to make.

It's unfortunate, and I don't want to make this a personal speech and I'm not going to, but one has to make certain references to individuals and personalities when we're in this Chamber, although we don't necessarily in some cases like to, but initially I made some speeches and comments here. Actually, I wouldn't say they were complimentary to the Minister of Finance, but I had indicated that I had a little bit of faith in the Minister of Finance having a bit of an idea and a handle on what he was doing as the Minister.

But I regrettably have to say, Madam Speaker, that was shaken yesterday in the admission by the Minister of Finance that he had not come clean with the Opposition when asked if he'd met with an individual from Saudi Arabia.

He had the golden opportunity, when asked the day before yesterday, by my leader, whether or not he'd met with a certain individual, and he stood up and left the full impression with everyone in this Chamber and everyone in the Province of Manitoba that he had not met with him. But he was saying that he had not met with him in the fall of the year, but in fact the truth was he had met with him, but it was in July.

Madam Speaker, is that how close this government has to come to protect their integrity, to protect their whole image as far as the public is concerned? Is that the kind of game? Is that how close we have to now come to asking the question directly, whether we get the truth or whether we don't, whether we get some perception of something else?

I regret - and I say it with all sincerity - that the Minister - (Interjection) - the Attorney-General says "I'm kidding." Well, I'm not kidding, Madam Speaker, and I wasn't kidding when I initially put those comments on the record that I did have a little bit of faith in the current Minister of Finance.

It's shaken, Madam Speaker; it's shaken by Members of the Opposition and I'm sure by the public. How will that go when the Minister of Finance is preparing or proposing a prospectus when he's talking to the international financial organizations of the world, when he's speaking on behalf of the financial affairs of the Province of Manitoba?

Do they now have to go through a full interrogation of questions about the Manitoba financial scene? Do they have to be so precise, Madam Speaker, that the Minister of Finance is eventually forced into telling what the actual facts about the province are?

Madam Speaker, I'm sorry, he has got the most responsible portfolio when it comes to dealing with fiscal affairs of the people of Manitoba, and it is unfortunate that he has shaken his credibility in his performance in the last two days in this Assembly.

Madam Speaker, I'm really upset about it because I would have thought, when entrusted with the funds, the affairs, the financial planning and the expenditures of the province, that we could have expected nothing but a clear and full statement and the clear and full admission of what his activities were in regard to anything, but I'm sorry that's not the case. I'm sorry that's not the case so now, Madam Speaker, we have to treat it in the light in which it was put, not by us, but by himself. He has now painted the kind of a picture and himself into the kind of a corner in which we have to treat him . . .

HON. R. PENNER: Crocodile tears.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well, Madam Speaker, the Attorney-General says "Crocodile tears." Well that's precisely what we heard yesterday all day from the government benches - was crocodile tears. Yes, Madam Speaker, they are now providing crocodile tears because they've taken such a pounding on a matter of basic - and this leads me to the next point . . .

HON. R. PENNER: You like to dish it out, but can't take it.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Oh, Madam Speaker, just like to dish it out and can't take it. Madam Speaker, they're doing precisely what one would expect the New Democratic Party to do. When cornered and at the verge, and at the brink, as most Manitobans feel they have been beaten, Madam Speaker, so they now take the attitude that the best defence is a strong offence, that's really what they're trying to do.

It's because my leader and the Member for Pembina have given them such a lacing and a trouncing on the truth that the people of Manitoba want to hear, that they can't take it any longer. They can't take the trouncing any longer, and again it was demonstrated that the one person who handles the financial affairs of the Province of Manitoba could not come forward with a clear and decisive statement about a meeting of an individual. The one question then comes up, Madam Speaker, why did he not come clear? Why did he not come clear with the fact that he had met with the Sheik from Saudi Arabia?

Yes, Madam Speaker, that begs the second question; it answers part of the question that we have put forward, why no public inquiry? Why no public inquiry, Madam Speaker, when we had the Minister of Finance stand in his place and say no, that he had met, leaving the perception that there was no meeting. It begs the question as to why did he not want the public of Manitoba to know that he had met with the Sheik? It took quite awhile to get the answer from the Minister of Telephones.

Madam Speaker, I guess there are some other questions that have to be asked. Who else in the government benches met with their buddy or their partner, the Sheik? Did the Premier happen to meet with him as well? Well, Madam Speaker, those are questions the public of Manitoba want to know. It's fine and I'm fully supportive of the RCMP. In fact, if the Attorney-General wanted to do some research, I think probably they did a pretty good job in researching

him in the past and he can probably really vouch for the activities of the RCMP and I'm not imputing motives, Madam Speaker, but he's probably speaking from some experiences. He's probably speaking with some voice of experience. We shall carry on, Madam Speaker, speaking about — (Interjection) — That's right, he's now a statesman, he's now a great statesman for our province.

But, Madam Speaker, the whole question - and I'm not going to dwell a long time on the need for a public inquiry and get into the legal jargon which the Attorney-General likes to get into - but they have been blistered and blistered badly. They've been blistered and blistered so badly that they will leave the impression that they are incompetent, that there's a cover-up of some wrongdoings, Madam Speaker, there is a connection between either Cabinet Ministers or caucus members that they are ashamed of, who will implicate them, and don't think that won't stick with them for the next one, two, three and four years. It is now a brand that they have to bear. It is a brand on their record that they have to bear, and yes, Madam Speaker, the longer they're prepared to drag it out, the longer they're prepared to leave the questions in the minds of the public, then they again will have that brand deepening into their souls or their systems.

Dealing with the need for funds, one has to really question what they are doing with the funds that they have already received in their terms of office. They have given us - and here I was quite amazed yesterday to hear the former Minister of Finance go on ranting and raving and then get such a standing ovation and a great complimentary response from his Cabinet colleagues.

Well, Madam Speaker, what they should be doing is hanging their head in shame and they should be saying to that former Minister of Finance, you have given us the most debt of any government that this province has seen in four years of your term as Minister of Finance. That's really where it's at, Madam Speaker. They should be condemning him for the way in which he guided the financial affairs of the province.

MR. E. CONNERY: The new one is no better.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Madam Speaker, my colleague from Portage la Prairie makes the comment, "The new one is no better," and the First Quarter Report points it out. We now have a \$27.4 million increase in our deficit over the projected one which the government had put out. But here, Madam Speaker, is an interesting reason for that. I would ask the Minister of Finance sometime during the debate on Interim Supply, so that members of the Opposition are clear as to where we're going, here are the reasons.

It's due - these timing differences are a normal occurrence in each quarter - well it's a timing difference. I would ask the Minister of Finance to explain, if one is putting a financial statement together, and you are looking at your projected numbers, your figures, you have got accounts payable, accounts receivable, and actualities. Well, Madam Speaker, I'm not so sure that the Minister shouldn't be able to give us a more accurate reason for this, other than timing. He should be able to make a cutoff, as is done in most accounting firms,

a cutoff of a period of time, make a projection as to what will be coming in, in tax revenue and what will be expended by the province. — (Interjection) — That's right, it shouldn't be some great, great quiz, so that the Minister of Finance has to come out with a very vague statement and say it's a matter of timing and a difference in the timing. Madam Speaker, if that's his feeble excuse, then it's not good enough for the people of Manitoba. That's why there's some reluctance on the part of the Opposition to pass the Interim Supply willy-nilly.

Madam Speaker, this government's record on going to the Legislature for funds is pretty dismal as well. They find it a lot more comfortable to pass Special Warrants in Cabinet without accounting to the public - yes, Madam Speaker, the Minister of Finance laughs about that - but the truth of the matter is . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance on a point of order.

HON. E. KOSTYRA: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My point of order is that the Member for Arthur indicated that I was laughing at comments he made. That is not true. I was laughing at a comment that the Attorney-General was making to me.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I respect the Minister of Finance and thank him for the point of clarification. I could actually look at the Attorney-General and probably see why he laughed but, Madam Speaker, I'll have to laugh now too.

Madam Speaker, the point I'm making is that it's not good enough, it's not good enough for the taxpayers of Manitoba, who are putting forward the amounts of money that they are putting forward to carry the government policies that they're carrying, to have it done either through Special Warrant, in Cabinet, and not fully debated in this Assembly.

That's why it's important that we now make that assessment, particularly when we have the numbers that we have now for the first quarter and the fact that if that were to be multiplied by the next number of quarters, if we're that far out, it would mean for the four quarters of the coming year, that they're going to be in an increased deficit — (Interjection) — Madam Speaker, the Minister of Finance, I'm telling him, if that's the case, then you multiply it times four so we're going to be out by over \$100 million.

The Minister of Finance is somewhat nervous about what I'm saying. Madam Speaker, the late Don Craik was a Minister of Finance who, when I spoke on the Condolence Motion, said he was one of the best Ministers of Finance that this province had seen because he brought responsibility and integrity. Yes, he was.

Madam Speaker, so I'm saying to the Minister of Finance, if one projects over the next three-quarters of the year as to what has happened here, we have got a pretty dismal sight. My colleague from Springfield mentioned the cost of carrying charges for Hydro. The cost of carrying the debt now for the people of Manitoba takes up 4.5 points of our 6 point sales tax to carry

the debt, Madam Speaker. That's what our interest charges are, something in the neighbourhood of \$380 million in carrying charges for our debt in the Province of Manitoba last year. That is a shame, Madam Speaker.

As pointed out in some of the Budget debates, the carrying charges are greater now on the debt than what the total budget was for the province in 1969. When you continue to escalate, Madam Speaker, the kinds of reports that we have now with the first quarter to report out, of \$27.4 million as being the increase in deficit over what the projection was, you multiply that times the remaining months of the year and we've got a major problem on our hands.

What I'm going to go back to, Madam Speaker, is again some of the comments I asked the Minister of Finance earlier. When will we get an economic statement from the Minister of Finance as to where we are going with policies and projections? What programs? Yes, there have been letters tabled in the House recently, or there have been references made to them, that there is a directive gone out to each department of a 2 percent reduction in their expenses.

Madam Speaker, the Minister of Finance knows that he's got problems up ahead. What I am asking him for, what other directives and what other statements are coming forward from the province to tell the taxpayers of Manitoba, before we pass Interim Supply, what other measures he is taking to control the deficit.

Madam Speaker, it would be very easy for the Minister of Finance - unfortunately the credibility of the Minister of Finance now is somewhat in question - but I'm saying it would at least give us some form of guideline, give the taxpayers some form of guideline as to what future plans they could make in business decisions, whether it's the employing of people, additional land or property or business activities. Give them some idea so they can project what their costs are, Madam Speaker. It's only called good common business sense and I would have hoped the Minister of Finance would have carried it out.

Madam Speaker, I want to raise another point because I am extremely concerned, as are the taxpayers of the Province of Manitoba, as to where we are going with our Crown corporations. There's been a lot of reference in the last few weeks to the amount of monies that have been expended in Saudi Arabia and the fact that it is now considered to be, in a lot of cases, very questionable as to whether it will be recovered.

The Minister of Health said in his grievance, what's \$20 million? The same Minister of Finance closes hospital beds in Brandon, which services the whole Western region, and he says what's \$20 million to Saudi Arabia? He should be proud of himself as a Minister of Health. The Premier should be proud of himself and the Member for Brandon East should be darned well ashamed of himself to sit in Cabinet with a colleague who would make such a ridiculous statement, Madam Speaker. That's the kind of government we have.

Madam Speaker, back to the Crown corporations. One only has to read Peter Warren's column of yesterday in the Winnipeg Sun. The Attorney-General, for the sake of Peter Warren, should say do I admit to that; do I have no shame? That's what the Attorney-General thinks about that. Because what Peter Warren had in his column was the truth, the facts. Yes, Madam Speaker. One would never expect the Attorney-General

to ever subscribe to anything such as fact. One, in his past performance in this House, would never expect that from him. So I'm not surprised at his statement, Madam Speaker. — (Interjection) — The Attorney-General, I'm sure, can assume whatever he thinks about how I think about him but I don't want him to be under any false allusions, Madam Speaker. I don't want him to be under any false allusions. — (Interjection) — Madam Speaker, he's taking a lot of my speech. I wonder if you . . . Thank you.

Madam Speaker, what I am saying is this. We have a first quarterly report for the fiscal affairs of the province. Every time it comes to a Crown corporation, we're debating last year's activities. We're always reading a report from last year. The expenses are made. The decisions have been made. It's too late, Madam Speaker, and that's why this part of my speech has to be addressed to the Minister who's supposed to be responsible for Manfor.

Earlier this week, and it again demonstrates their inability to live up to the word which they give us, I was told earlier, Madam Speaker, a few days ago, that I would have the six-month report on Manfor by the end of this week. Where is it? — (Interjection) — I will, he says from his seat. Well, the business hours of the House are about over, Madam Speaker. I would consider it an official capacity of the Minister to have stood in his place and honour his word, Madam Speaker, as an honourable member. But he's living up to the tradition of the rest of his colleagues.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. J. STORIE: The Member for Arthur knows better than to make those kinds of accusations. He knows that the workday ends at 5:30, although he acknowledges that he quits much earlier. That's his problem. I said I would have the facts to him by the end of the week, and I will.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur on the point of order.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Madam Speaker, I would like to continue my speech, if I may, because the Minister of Education did not have a point of order.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister did not have a point of order.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Madam Speaker, the point I am making, and I made earlier, is that the business hours of this House are over in about five to seven minutes. It would have been, I would have thought, appropriate for a Minister of the Crown to honour his word publicly, as he was requested publicly on the record of this Assembly, to provide information.

That is the kind of honouring of the word that I thought would have come. I now know, Madam Speaker, that they all want to play that game. They want to play that little game of well, if it's close to what I said, and they can't pick it up, well, that's okay. It's his own honour, his own integrity that's on the line, not mine, Madam Speaker. I will give the Minister the opportunity before

I leave for my riding, which is part of the work I have as a member of the Legislature, Madam Speaker, to go home this afternoon. I would hope that I can have that report before I leave at one o'clock. If not, Madam Speaker, the Minister will have to, I'm sure, put it in my possession as of the first of the week. I would have appreciated it today and I'm sorry the Minister of Education couldn't live up to his word and provide us with that information.

Again, what we are dealing with is the Crown corporation reporting. I would think that in the best interests, and I'm not saying this government, any particular government of any stripe, I'm saying in the best interests of the taxpayers who I think that the grievance yesterday should have been given by members of the Legislature for the people of the Province of Manitoba.

What one has to ask about the Crown corporations is this: why don't we get a six-month report on an ongoing basis as to what activities are being carried out? Why don't we, Madam Speaker? Why doesn't the Minister of Finance strive for that kind of a report coming on an ongoing basis so an assessment can be made of their activities?

Let me tell you, Madam Speaker, it would have cut down a lot of the anguish and the pain that this government has gone through and will continue to go through till the truth prevails over this whole issue. If they think for one minute that we're going to back off when it comes to providing the truth and the use of taxpayers' money and the rights of people that work at MTS, they've got another thought coming, Madam Speaker, because we do believe in the truth even though they don't.

We do, as well, Madam Speaker, believe in protecting the integrity and the long-time investment of people's lives in Crown corporations such as the Manitoba Telephone System. So, I'm saying, Madam Speaker, and I would hope that the Minister of Finance, I don't think it would -(Interjection)- well, Madam Speaker, one could only expect that kind of rudeness coming from the Minister of Highways and Transportation because one only has to look at to see what he is.

Madam Speaker, I'm saying in the best interests of the taxpayers of the province that a six-month reporting of the activities of that year shouldn't be too hard to provide publicly because I'm sure they have it. They do monthly statements. They must be able to do six-month statements for the public scrutiny. They do quarterly reports for the province, Madam Speaker. Why couldn't they do it for Crown corps?

The precedent is being set, Madam Speaker, by the Minister responsible for Manfor providing, or willing to provide, the information which I am again anxious to look at because they told us something in committee. I want it so we can have a look at it.

Madam Speaker, I plead with the Minister of Finance when he passes this bill, that he passes this bill, that he is prepared to take a hold of his department; that he looks at such things-as the irresponsible spending of some of the Crown corporations. You know, we talk about the activities in Saudi Arabia. When one finds out all the activities that a Crown corporation has been in, Madam Speaker - the MTX - it would probably be shocking to total up, and will be shocking to total up,

the amount of dollars that have been lost through bad investments. It's unfortunate, Madam Speaker, that the taxpayers have to fall victim to that kind of activity without accountability.

Madam Speaker, the Premier of the province is the father of MTX; let there be no secret about it. The Deputy Premier, it would appear, was also on the signature. With the father, we would have to place her as the mother, so they really are the parents of MTX and they have to bear the brunt of it.

Madam Speaker, I would hope that in the passing of Interim Supply that members of the government, and I'm sorry I haven't had a chance to get the floor during the departmental Estimates of the Cultural Affairs Department, but I have a word for that Minister responsible for Cultural Affairs. She is taking valuable taxpayers' money, going throughout the province, Madam Speaker, encouraging - yes, and doing the right thing in most cases - encouraging the development of some of the ethnic groups in our province through the granting of funds.

But, Madam Speaker, I find it very hard to see, to really judge her and her ability to carry on in that capacity in sitting with a Cabinet who made the decision, who have a Crown corporation under a Crown corporation, to carry out the discriminatory practices against women and Jews.

I would have thought the Minister of Culture would have had the integrity to say to the Cabinet, take a hold of it and deal with the discriminating factors, the discriminating practices of which were carried out by MTX. I would have thought, Madam Speaker, she would have said I am against what you're doing, on behalf of the women of this province and on behalf of the Jewish population of this province, and I would have thought she'd have had the courage to do something about it, but she rolls right along with them.

She's a new Minister, Madam Speaker. She would have had a better opportunity to clearly state she has principles, but she doesn't have principles because she allows it to be carried on by her colleagues and by Crown corporations. Madam Speaker, why would she not carry out the responsibility of her office and live up to the honourable capacity which she was given?

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. The hour being 12:30 p.m., when this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Member for Arthur will have 11 minutes remaining.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

HOUSE BUSINESS

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, I just wanted to confirm for the record - I've been requested to do so so the notices can go out in the proper fashion - that the Public Utilities and Natural Resources Committee will be meeting on Thursday at 10:00 a.m., and there may be other meetings that have to be called but, as I indicated earlier, they'll be called on the basis of discussions between the Opposition House Leader and myself following a review of the situation.

MADAM SPEAKER: The hour being 12:30 p.m., the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m., Tuesday next.