

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
2.30 o'clock, Friday, March 22, 1968

MR. SPEAKER: Before we proceed with the business of the afternoon I would like to introduce our guests in the gallery. We have 70 students of Grade 11 standing, from the Westwood Collegiate School. These students are under the direction of Mr. Richardson and Mrs. Steubing.

We have 30 students also of Grade 11 standing, of the Lac du Bonnet School. These students are under the direction of Mrs. Morgan.

Also on my left we have 22 students of Grade 8 standing, from the General Wolfe School. These students are under the direction of Mr. Moroz. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Wellington. On behalf of all the honourable members of the Legislative Assembly I welcome you all here today.

The adjourned debate on the proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for Virden, and the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell in amendment thereto. The Honourable Member for Ethelbert Plains.

MR. KRAWCHUK: Mr. Speaker, in adjourning the debate the other day on the amendment proposed by the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell, I did so to give the amendment some consideration and I now find myself that I will have to also submit a sub-amendment, however before I do that I would just like to point out to the House here that the farmer is the only one today that has to wait some 18 months for his wages or salary upon delivery of his grain; he does not get his final payment until some 18 months later. In particular last year it was in November and as it is this year, it will be at the end of March which will make it more than 18 months.

My friend from Birtle-Russell suggests that interim payments be made when the grain in the previous crop year's pool has not been disposed of. Well I suggest, Mr. Speaker, it was only last year the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell had brought in a resolution asking that the initial payments be increased and that has now been done so consequently there will be very little final payment in the next crop year so I see very little use of having an interim payment made mailing out some 360,000 cheques plus the postage. This is certainly not an efficient operation.

We also note that he places a lot of emphasis on the fact that the Wheat Board has been doing a very efficient job on behalf of the western grain producers and he also went as far as to say that 99.9 percent of rural farmers are in favour of the Wheat Board. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that I concur with the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell and I think that perhaps this was high time today that the coarse grains that have been exempted from the Wheat Board regulations in '60 or 1961 be now placed back under the Wheat Board jurisdiction and in addition to that I think that we should ask the Federal Government to include under the Wheat Board's jurisdiction the handling of rye, flax and rapeseed. Rapeseed is getting to be a bigger and bigger and more important crop grown in Western Canada, and I'm sure that the producers of Western Canada would be much in favour of having that grain handled under the Wheat Board.

So to assist my honourable friends from Virden and the Honourable friend from Birtle-Russell I propose the following amendment. I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. John's whereas the per - I'm sorry - seconded by the - that the amendment be amended by striking out all words after the word "board" in the second line of the first operative paragraph and add the following: to terminate the various pools that operate not later than December 31st, and issue all payments at the earliest possible date thereafter; and be it further resolved that the sale of all grains including rye, flax and rapeseed be placed under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion.

MR. MOLGAT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order if I may. Just glancing at the resolution I would think that the first portion would be in order but I wonder if the second portion is, in view of the fact that it brings in an entirely new principle. If the honourable member wishes to introduce a separate resolution to do so I would think in order but I wonder here if this is in fact in order.

MR. KRAWCHUK: Mr. Speaker, I felt the fact that we were instructing the Federal Government to suggest to the Wheat Board that certain things be done so I thought it was quite appropriate to have this included in the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: I believe the amendment to be acceptable at this time. Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. NELSON SHOEMAKER (Gladstone): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Birtle-Russell that the debate be adjourned.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The adjourned debate of the Honourable Member for La Verendrye. The Honourable Member for Portage La Prairie.

MR. GORDON E. JOHNSTON (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, as you well know, this resolution is pointing up the fact that the Department of Agriculture has been I would say one of the four main portfolios in the ministry here in the Province of Manitoba in the Cabinet. The Minister of Agriculture should be a full-time job; the Minister should be unhampered with the problem of looking after another ministry and especially at this time. Much has been said about the cost-price squeeze as it affects the farmers and for those people who are earning their livelihood in agriculture and they see the action of our new Premier immediately after he takes office, that he saddles the Minister of Agriculture with another portfolio, I'm sure that the farm people of Manitoba are wondering if our present Premier's first decision was a bad one. I know I have had it said to me many times, I spent about two weeks in the constituency of Turtle Mountain which is an agricultural constituency, and this was mentioned many many times to me by the farm people in the district that I spoke to.

Now just to point up some of the more obvious problems that are facing the Minister of Agriculture. For example, he has inherited quite a mess in the way the Vegetable Marketing Board had to be dissolved with much dissatisfaction on both sides of the question. Recently, again when I was in the Turtle Mountain constituency, I was told about a creamery that either is in the process of closing or is in very great difficulties in Souris. This problem there is affecting the livelihood of a great number of farmers who take their milk and cream to the creamery at Souris; yet apparently the Minister of Agriculture had been so taken with other duties that the time had passed when his department could have been some help there.

He is also handling the Highways Department. I know in my own constituency there are two residents, one a farmer, who has been trying desperately for months to seek an audience with the present Minister of Agriculture and he had tried before that to have an audience with the Premier who was the former Minister of Highways, regarding a serious problem that he has in the construction of a highway by his farm. Adjacent to this farmer who has the problem of access on to the highway is a small filling station operator who had bought a piece of land from the farmer that I just mentioned, constructed a filling station, started up his business and he had bought and constructed on the main premise that he had handy access to No. 1 highway - there was a crossing right near his place of business - and since that time the crossing has been taken out, seriously inconveniencing the farmer that I'm talking about and at the same time practically putting out of business a man who has sunk his life's savings into a filling station.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Minister of Agriculture and Conservation) (Rockwood-Iberville): Would the member permit a question?

MR. JOHNSTON: Certainly.

MR. ENNS: Is it not a fact that that particular property is serviced by a frontal service road?

MR. JOHNSTON: Yes, I don't dispute that. If the Honourable Minister wishes me to spell out the problem in detail at this time I certainly will. The farmer's name is Mr. Ronald, he farms on both sides of the Trans-Canada Highway and when the double lane was being put in, he was approached by the Land Acquisition agents who were acting on behalf of the Department of Highways and in discussions with them he made it quite plain that he was prepared to expedite the acquisition of the land from his farm to the Department of Highways so that they could proceed without delay with their road construction program. During the preliminary discussion this Mr. Ronald made it quite plain that he would not demand an unreasonable price, as a matter of fact he would take the price that was offered to him, but he had one important provision and that was that because of the nature of his farming, for he had to truck daily potatoes and other crops that were sold on a contract basis, that he had to truck daily to Winnipeg or to Carberry, that it was so very important for him to have a direct access onto the highway. Verbally this was agreed to by the engineer who was in on the negotiations. As a matter of fact this engineer cleared by phoning Winnipeg and having

(MR. JOHNSTON cont'd.) a further clearance from higher up. Now this was the basis of the preliminary discussions. The farmer sold his land, consequently he did not try to delay, he did not ask a higher price. Then a year later when the highway is put in, his direct access onto the highway was taken out. Now the Minister I'm sure is quite aware of this case, I know the Premier is aware of it. I had arranged appointments, I had accompanied Mr. Ronald to one of these meetings with officials in the Highways Department and nothing has come of it. Privately, one of the officials who had acted and negotiated with Mr. Ronald told me privately that these agreements, verbal agreements, were made but when it came to a year later and his access road was taken out, the verbal agreements were disregarded.

Now the point I make here, Mr. Speaker, is that a Minister who has two important portfolios to handle, cannot possibly have the time to look into every problem. So, I'm hoping that perhaps the First Minister will speak and try and explain his stand as to why he appointed an already busy Minister to handle another portfolio. I know in speaking with other members of the House, on all parties, that there is agreement with this motion. Whether or not the government is going to amend it or not we are waiting to see, but I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that the farmers across Manitoba consider this an affront to their industry to have the Department of Agriculture downgraded to a part-time position.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. FROESE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Inkster that debate be adjourned.

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

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

MR. PATRICK: Mr. Speaker, I ask indulgence of the House to have this resolution stand?

MR. SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have leave? The adjourned debate of the Honourable Member for St. James, The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, the resolution presented by the Honourable Member for St. James is a very interesting one. Some of the comments, or the idea behind this resolution was discussed in the House last year when the City of Winnipeg requested an amendment to their Charter whereby they may be given permission to enter into agreements with the School Board, the idea of jointly undertaking projects for the purposes of recreation. Now you may recall, Mr. Speaker, that last year this request on the part of the City of Winnipeg was rejected by the government. They would not accept this proposal.

Now the Member for St. James poses a very simple proposition; he agrees that recreation is essential; he agrees that existing recreational facilities are not always used to the maximum advantage; he agrees that there should be greater co-ordination of facilities, but then he ends in a most surprising resolved portion where he says "that council should be encouraged to give leadership and direction in this essential service to the public." Well, Mr. Speaker, I think this is an insult to every municipal council, every school board and every community club that is struggling today to get along. They've been working within the limits imposed upon them by their lack of funds to give precisely what the member is suggesting that they should give, that is adequate recreational facilities for the people in their community. And pious resolutions are not going to achieve this end. If we are concerned, and if it is the consensus of this House that more direction should be given in this matter and that more concern should be shown towards developing the facilities in our communities then I suggest we've got to do more than just urge somebody else to do something about it. We've got to make it possible for them to do this. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we can only make this possible if this House takes the leadership and creates legislation whereby municipalities, municipal councils and school boards will be encouraged and will be prodded, if necessary, but certainly encouraged to enter into joint agreements whereby they can undertake the kind of programs which the Member for St. James agrees we should have.

When a new school building is being planned, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't take much, a few changes in design is all really that might be required to make a building a multi-purpose building. But what do you have today? The school board builds a building for its school, the council, perhaps under pressure, a community club or part of a recreation program which it has, because it has a recreation commission, has its own land, its own site and they are required to build on that site and they proceed to build independently of the school board.

(MR. MILLER cont'd.) Last year, the Minister of Municipal Affairs agreed that it would be very nice if something could be arranged but she said that basically the problem is a council problem, let it rest with them. The Minister of Education says this would require amendments in the legislation governing schools and education and he doesn't want to get involved in it. But you can't divorce the problem. If we want to use the facilities to the maximum, if we want total utilization and total involvement, then we have to use the facilities that naturally lend themselves. Mr. Speaker, the areas that lend themselves are the school and the grounds on which the schools are built. Today in too many areas you have a situation where you have schools costing hundreds of thousands of dollars that simply aren't utilized outside of school hours and that means a very small percentage of the time. During the summer holidays they close down completely. During the winter after 4 or 5 they are empty. If we want better facilities, we can combine the efforts of the council and school board to create this jointly created facility, we avoid the duplication, and the kind of duplication that ends up really in not giving you too much of anything. You end up with usually a pretty mediocre type of community club and all of us know what they are. They are built with very little funds, sometimes voluntary help, sometimes a few donations, a contribution from firms in the area, but at best they are simply four walls and a roof and we say this is all we can afford - and this is all that we can afford. But, Mr. Speaker, just imagine if a little thought was given in the design of a new building, a new school complex, on adequate grounds, if the design was such that incorporated in that building, you could have your change rooms so the children could change their skates, get in out of the cold in the winter time, so that when they have summer programs of baseball or soccer, they would have change rooms and dressing rooms and perhaps even showers. It could all be incorporated in the one building. It's the same heating unit; it's the same plant; it's the same four walls; it's a matter of design.

Last year in discussing this, the position taken by the government that somehow we shouldn't confuse education and recreation and municipal council - we shouldn't somehow get them all into the same boat - they were dealing with other jurisdictions. But, Mr. Speaker, we're dealing with the same taxpayer, we're dealing with the same property. You can't say this is one person's property or one government's property, schools, this is another government's property, municipal council. This in fact is the situation today, but it's all basically municipally owned or school board owned property so therefore it's owned by the community itself, and since it is owned by them and since they are basically the same taxpayers, then surely it makes sense that we encourage, not by a resolution saying do something, but be encouraged by legislation in this House, making it possible for school boards and municipal councils to get together and jointly lay down plans to build schools which can be combined with recreational facilities on grounds that are large enough so they can perform more than one function. I'm not talking about putting a school on half an acre of land, that's useless, but that the municipal land set aside for recreation in their planning, and school sites, be combined into larger units so that you have basically an opportunity to build properly, and so in that way you could have community involvement which could develop into almost educational parks - you could call them that - you know those large areas of land including schools, a community centre, the playground, a recreational facility or any other combined facility - would be the most efficient use of land that we could conceive of and the most efficient use of the structure itself

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to move an amendment, seconded by the Member for Brokenhead, that the resolution be amended by eliminating all the words after "adult" in the first line thereof and substituting therefor the following: "is an essential public service that is growing in importance; and whereas there should be greater utilization of school buildings and grounds for recreational purposes; and whereas present legislation discourages school boards and municipal councils from entering into co-operative projects; therefore be it resolved that this House request enabling legislation to permit school boards and municipalities to initiate and enter into joint construction and development projects for recreation; and be it further resolved that this House commend the municipal councils, school boards and community clubs for their efforts in providing recreation facilities despite their limited financial resources". Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion. Are you ready for the question?

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

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

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

MR. SIDNEY GREEN (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I would request the indulgence of the House and honourable members to let this matter stand.

MR. SPEAKER: The adjourned debate on the proposed resolution of the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition and the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Inkster in amendment thereto. The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. EARL DAWSON (Hamiota): In the absence of the Member for Portage la Prairie, I beg leave of the House to have this matter stand.

MR. SPEAKER: The adjourned debate of the Honourable Member for Emerson. The Honourable the Minister of Education.

HON. GEORGE JOHNSON (Minister of Education) (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, (clapping) ... well I don't know what prompts that spontaneous measure of support especially when I'm about to do some surgery. I appreciate the factors which prompted the Honourable Member from Emerson - and I'm sorry he's not in his seat - to bring forward a similar resolution to that which he presented a year ago. As the spokesman for matters educational for his party, I know of his deep concern in this House that these matters educational be discussed as much as possible. He and the Member from Elmwood have suggested that other portfolios have standing committees of the House, such as Municipal Affairs, Agriculture. As I review it in my experience and that of this House, these committees as we know deal with matters of legislation, largely, wherein members are permitted to call respective organizations in the communities before them on such matters and where further direction in policies are gone over at the time of reviewing these particular matters.

The Member from Elmwood says it is of particular value to deal with educational matters outside this Chamber and he, as I understood it, felt he couldn't question members of the department. I would just like to say in this latter connection, Mr. Speaker, that no member of our staff in the Department has ever refused to see a member of the House on any matter of education and certainly our doors do remain open at all times for this kind of discussion. However, very often the staff in being approached by an MLA will refer the member concerned to the Minister and I hope I have never refused to discuss any item that they want to talk to me about, or the officials of the department. We try to be most careful to inform the House of the progress and problems in the department.

The Member from Emerson felt that such a standing committee as I understand it, would enable the members to hear what the grass roots, as he says, have to say about education in this rapidly changing world, and he went on to point out that we in the House don't know everything nor does the Minister - and to that I say touche. But as has been the practice since I've been in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the fullest discussion be undertaken by members during our Estimates and during debates of various resolutions. As I see it, this Chamber is really the policy making body. From what research I have been able to do in this matter, it has not been the custom in Canadian provinces to establish standing committees of the Legislature to deal with matters which really are the total responsibility of the department as I understand it.

Also a standing committee of the House of course, could report in many cases on the very matters which are the established responsibility of the Minister, and also because of its nature, such a committee of course would require a substantial amount of staff time to carry on its investigations. I feel also that a standing committee of this type would inevitably overlap the function of the Advisory Board in the field in which the board has the responsibility and would produce some confusion. It would in fact deal with the same matters as the existing statutory body, and Advisory Board. It would also become directly involved in the operation of the department in its various functions and possibly, as I see it, would transgress in some cases on the role of the Minister. But in the main, as I see it, this resolution, and as the Member for Emerson who introduced the resolution develops his arguments he tends more and more to suggest that the new committee should deal with matters related to curriculum, which are precisely those matters where a body such as the advisory board and a myriad of committees of practicing teachers in the field are competent. I find that in most jurisdictions in Canada, one jurisdiction, the entire development of the professional curriculum aspect of courses is left entirely outside the departments. In this province, as in most, we take the responsibility within the department of developing the sound curriculum branch.

(MR. JOHNSON cont'd.) For example, such a committee might - in the examples he cited such as the teaching of reading and second language I don't think it would really be our function to have a committee of the House decide how these subjects should be taught. I'm sure that the honourable members would reinforce, as has been the custom in Manitoba since the beginning, namely, that the involvement of these actively practicing teachers in subject areas should be developing these programs as they do in most jurisdictions.

I think that that is an example in the field of reading or the introduction of a second language such as Francals last year, or the extension of the French language where we introduced Science Sociale under Bill 59, I think it's really the function of this House to say this is the kind of thing, this is the policy we have passed now Mr. Minister you get your myriad of committees together and you develop the program and we'll comment on it next year as to what we think of it and what the people think of it but we don't want to get into dotting the t's and crossing the i's and I think we would be -- (Interjection) -- My honourable friend - I see, I'm sending him the course outline. But we do

MR. SPEAKER: Order. The Honourable the Minister said he was crossing the i's - I think that was the cause of the amusement. -- (Interjection) --

MR. MOLGAT: The phonics system is getting to the Minister I suspect.

MR. JOHNSON: Well the Member from Lakeside nodded his head, so I figured I was on -- (Interjection) -- But what I'm trying to point out is that the House and the Legislature and the members of the House are the policy making body and I feel that the kind of proposal that the member from Emerson was trying to develop would be best left along the general lines that are now operating.

Now as for the grass roots, my goodness in the field of education I used to think everyone was an expert in Health and Welfare but I can assure you that everyone plus, plus, plus is an expert in the field of education and I don't think any of us ever pick up a newspaper by the day that we don't find some provocative article or some story on education.

I don't think any department probably has as many committees and groups that deal with educational matters at the grass roots level. From time to time we have Royal Commissions, one very exhaustive one which reported as you know in '58. We have the Manitoba Teachers' Society of over 8,300 teachers in the public school system; over 10,000 practising teachers in the province whom we meet on a regular basis with their resolutions once a year which are public documents mainly on policy direction or details they want to bring before the department. We involve them heavily in consultation, of course, in these myriad of committees - I think we have close to four or five hundred practising teachers - 600 - involved in various activities such as the new curriculum councils, and in each subject area. Again we have the Manitoba Association of School Trustees whom we meet with regularly and have a very close liaison with. This surely is the grass roots opinion. We receive resolutions from them once a year. We meet at least two or three times a year for periods in which we review policy matters and the direction of the department and almost weekly or more communication on smaller matters. We have the Home and School and Parent-Teachers Federations throughout our province who . . . in and meet with our teachers and where there's a mixture of both trustee and laymen and interested citizens and we meet with these people once a year or more.

Our Union of Manitoba Municipalities and the Manitoba Urban Association, are in very close association and touch with the Department of Education. Usually the Federation of Labour, the Farmers' Union, the Chambers of Commerce in their annual briefs to the government bring forward matters of public concern. I think there is a very extensive feed back, to put it bluntly, from the grass roots to the department and these documents are of course all available and are public documents available to the members of the House.

The honourable members here and opposite I think know that we in the department are always willing to know of their problems and what they have to say and to discuss policy. During the past year I can record that several of the MLAs have been in touch with me; the resources of this office and staff have certainly been available and at the service of the members and we're very pleased about this. I am very pleased during the sitting of this House to arrange for visits of the honourable members to any of the schools, interesting programs and different facilities that come under our jurisdiction so they may better see firsthand the actual programming and talk to the students. I hope shortly to be contacting through my Whip the members of the House to see who might be interested in seeing certain

(MR. JOHNSON cont'd.) facilities. You have a standing invitation at any time to have a tour of any of these buildings. Possibly we can arrange groups of visits during this Session.

So, Mr. Speaker, in a department that's constantly meeting boards in the office and in the country, delegations, individuals, on local matters to listening to ideas and opinions I think we have a department closely associated with the grass roots and at the same time we have the responsibility of bringing some of these policies and programs as we see them before the House at estimate time for a very close examination. I think the tremendous re-organization as we know that has occurred in the past years as we, as other provinces, are marching forward at an unprecedented rate in offering educational services. But I think the main point I would like to leave with the House, Mr. Speaker, is that I really feel that I would hope, through the channels that are open, as I've tried to indicate today for the members to become knowledgeable in the various fields, that we're prepared in the department to provide all the information and resources of the department to the members to bring about understanding, if that exists, and to give our reasons for direction and I think there would be duplication, it would be a departure from the pattern of the past. I completely understand the concern of members for all matters in the field of education but I don't feel a committee such as this would be our answer. I feel that by stressing policy, by seeing our institutions, talking with staff and through the organizations which exist in the community today, we can achieve the same ends.

I therefore propose, Mr. Speaker, to vote against the resolution as it is.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN (Elmwood): Would the Honourable Minister submit to a question?

MR. JOHNSON: Yes.

MR. DOERN: Since you've made such a strong case against have a standing committee in education, I wonder whether you would extend your argument against standing committees in such fields as agriculture, industrial relations, and public utilities, and so on? Are you opposed to any kind of standing committees? Why single out education?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, there isn't really too much more that can be said about this subject. It came up last year and rather than adjourn it perhaps I will speak on it now.

I was intrigued by some of the thoughts that the Minister threw out that really the MLAs didn't need a standing committee to study education, although we all know that education probably spends one of the largest share of the provincial budget. But the MLAs didn't need a committee to study these matters because every member of the staff if approached would listen to the MLAs and would give them any assistance they desired and that if there's any confusion on the part of an MLA, any Deputy Minister or administrative staff would help to straighten them out or enlighten them and that during the course of the session Ministers would - or members could be even taken on a Cook's tour of the province or any establishments that existed and this could be arranged. But, Mr. Speaker, certainly that isn't the extent to which the MLAs should concern themselves about education. It's very nice to go through the buildings and I joined other members of this House when we went up north. We saw the beautiful facilities available in that part of the country and it was very enlightening, very educational but that isn't the educational problem in Manitoba.

He suggests that this would be a first in Canada, that basically in other provinces this is not done. Well, maybe it's time Manitoba was a first in something. Maybe Manitoba should lead the way. I think we have to recognize that government is becoming a bigger and bigger operation. More and more government is taking over larger segments of our economy and our operation. And we're not going to reverse that trend; it's going to get larger. But because it's going to get larger, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that you cannot expect 57 members to be brought together on a given day of March, concern themselves with all the problems of the province -- and that runs from A in the estimates, Attorney-General, to Z -- there's nothing under Z, is there? -- Well, Welfare - W -- in the eight or 10 weeks that's available to us, and really do a job in education which by the government's own admission is one of the most important and has the greatest priority of any program that is presently operated in Manitoba.

The reason why I think a standing committee is essential is that not that it meet during the session, but that the committee be able to meet during sessions - that is when it can be most effective. And it's all very well to say that he talks to the MTS, the Teachers Society and the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, and he even gets to talk to the odd Urban Association or Union of Manitoba Municipalities and the Home and School Association - that's

(MR. MILLER cont'd.) fine. But, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that if those same bodies could come to a committee of this House, made up of all members, and let the government have the majority on there; I'm not looking to this committee somehow to dig up dirt on the government, that's not my interest I can assure you. But if these organizations could come to a standing committee, not during a hectic period of a session when maybe you can meet with them for half an hour between caucus meetings and lunch hour or after they've just finished meeting with the Conservative caucus and the Liberal caucus and the New Democratic caucus. These are very interesting but really quite futile meetings because they take place at a period when you can't really give them the full attention they deserve and they can't really put their problems before everyone.

The Federal Government recently has introduced the idea that maybe these committees should be put to work because by putting these committees to work they can work coolly, calmly, they can call people to testify or to bring information; they have some staff and the net result has been that the committees at the federal level have proved their worth because they've brought into the House and made recommendations that the government has acted on, that the government could see the value of and it wasn't to the discredit of the government that this took place.

One of the things that surprises me is the more I'm in this House is this partisan feeling that develops where because one says white, the other must say black. Surely we're all here to achieve the same purpose, and although the Minister may be quite unhappy about some of the remarks I made yesterday, but I was just as steamed up as he was, basically we both have the same goal, we're both trying to achieve the same thing. I can assure him that if I was a member of this committee my interest would not be to discredit the government and I'm sure I speak for other members of all sides of this House, the interest of this committee would be to evaluate the educational structure in Manitoba and to come up with some productive suggestions which the government could then act upon. And I'm not talking about the fields which the Minister mentioned, that which I agree is purely of professional interest - I'm not talking about whether there should be this French course or that French course, because frankly, unless you're in the business, I can't see how any member of the House can really get into the technique or the profession of being a pedagogue.

The areas that a committee could discuss are the areas that are discussed during the estimates, are the areas that we can't get at during the estimates, are a greater understanding of the whole educational structure within Manitoba, and I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if such committee had been in existence, perhaps the problem that we were faced with this year with regard to the Foundation Program, with regard to the obvious misunderstanding on the part, not only of members of this House, but throughout Manitoba of what the Foundation Program was, I suggest that a lot of that might have been avoided had there been a committee which had evaluated it, had studied it and looked at all facets of it, and the government might not find itself in the position that it does today with regard to that program.

So I would strongly urge the Minister to reconsider his decision not to support this recommendation but to get behind it and to believe this side of the House when we say that we are not looking for the establishment of this committee for the purpose of partisan gain, but rather for the common objective of working towards the betterment and the improving of the educational structure as it exists in Manitoba.

MR. FROESE: Mr. Speaker, I think the resolution that is before us is one worthy of support. As has already been pointed out the Department of Education is the department that spends the largest amount of money of the estimates and the budget of the Province of Manitoba and this is the department where we have no committee at all. Now I'm not saying that we should poke our nose into the affairs of the Ministers or the department unnecessarily but certainly there are things that we should look at. We have the utilities department, and here like this morning the Minister invited us to a meeting on Tuesday where we will be looking into the affairs of Manitoba Hydro and the same holds true for Telephones. We will be meeting with the officials of these utilities and I feel the same should hold true for such bodies as the Universities Grants Commission and the Provincial Finance Board. Here are bodies that are set up to apportion funds and apportion levies and I think we should be satisfied that these moneys are well spent.

Then, too, the Department of Agriculture comes into the matter too because from that department we apportion certain moneys to the University as well to be spent on agricultural

(MR. FROESE cont'd.) research and so on. Certainly a committee of this type could prove very valuable in that they could assess the program and see whether improvements could be made and whether we could not improve the whole situation. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, this would be a committee that could do valuable work and I will definitely support the motion.

MR. SPEAKER put the question.

MR. CAMPBELL: Mr. Speaker, if no one else is wishing to speak I would move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. George that the debate be adjourned.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for St. Boniface. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. LAURENT DESJARDINS (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Lakeside,

Whereas the Premier of Manitoba has announced outside of this House that Manitoba will not proceed with the medicare plan on July 1, 1968, and

Whereas the federal government has indicated its intention of proceeding with the national medicare plan on July 1, 1968, and

Whereas the Manitoba taxpayers will therefore be required to pay their share of federal taxes to finance this plan and will not be getting any benefits from the plan, and

Whereas many people are finding it increasingly difficult to meet the increasing costs of the present medical coverage,

Therefore be it resolved that this House request the Manitoba Government to join the national plan effective July 1, 1968.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, during the last Session the different political parties had a chance to debate this issue of Medicare. Certain members would have us believe that only their party had any compassion for those that were suffering. Well, Sir, I refuse to believe any party of the monopoly on any of these humane qualities and should any one be interested in reviewing the position of the different parties, the different members of this House on this debate I would refer them to Hansard and especially Hansard of 1967 covering the debate on Bill 68.

The New Democratic Party is in favour of a Medicare program, a compulsory plan, sponsored and administered by the government -- and here I'm not necessarily referring only to the Government of Canada. They want a Medicare plan now, at all costs in fact and they claim they have been advocating this for a number of years. Now this is what they said last year, this is what they're saying now and I don't see where they're going to change their mind. Their position isn't changed therefore quite clear and I would therefore, Mr. Speaker, think that we should look now to the policies of the other major parties in the House.

Well the Liberal Party during 1966 - 1967 Session our position was made quite clear. We stated that especially in a country as rich as ours no one should be deprived of proper medical care simply because of lack of money. We are of the opinion that the plan should be compulsory only if it is the only possible means of achieving what we're after. Our main concern therefore, Mr. Speaker, is the individual and not any ideals. The ideals would not take priority over the individual. But we made it quite clear also that we do not believe that this plan had to be compulsory to work. To support this contention, Sir, let me quote from a speech I made in this House on March 17, 1966, on page 1037 of Hansard and I quote: "I, speaking for myself have said at one time that I felt that the important thing was to see that everybody received adequate medical care and I still think that this is most important. I also said that in a country as rich as ours there shouldn't be any need for compulsion and that the people of Manitoba certainly had a responsibility to see that everybody in the province received adequate care. There's another thing that I added. I also stated that the important thing, the number one point was to see that everybody received adequate care and therefore if it was impossible to have this care without a compulsory plan I felt that then and only then we should go to compulsion." End of quotation.

In 1966, in 1967 and even now I am against the principle of a compulsory plan. It is my belief that it is not needed and I would prefer to see a national medicare plan being phased in. In other words let's take care of those who are in need first of all. We fought for this last year and I'll come back to this a little later on, Mr. Speaker.

(MR. DESJARDINS cont'd.)

I reluctantly, and for the benefit of the members of the New Democratic Party, I want to repeat, I reluctantly voted for second reading of Bill 68 last year and for this I make no apology. I hope that I've made myself quite clear. I do not apologize for voting in favour of the bill and I do not apologize for being reluctant in doing so. We cannot afford to pay into a fund that will provide medical care for Canadians without receiving benefits ourselves. I could at this time, Sir, refer to the speeches that I have made on this subject, on speeches made by my Leader and other members of my Party, but I will refrain from taking too much time of the House at this time but if I am questioned I certainly will refer to these when I close the debate on this resolution.

Now maybe we should look at the Government of Manitoba Medicare. I think that it is fair to say that the members of the government, the former Premier, the Minister of Health included, felt as I did and what I have said about the Liberal Party's position on this Medicare, I think that I could repeat it about the -- well referring to the Conservative Party, with one exception. I have never heard any of them say that the individual took priority over ideals. Now, Mr. Speaker, even though they have never said this to my knowledge anyway I was sure that they agreed with me that this was the case. That is until the new Premier issued a statement that Manitoba would not participate. Once again, Mr. Speaker, I might say that I found many many quotes by the Minister of Health and the members of his Party establishing clearly their position and I will refer but to very few to refresh your memory, Sir.

Let's start with the Minister of Health himself. This is from the Free Press of March 14th, 1967. "Health Minister C. H. Witney made the compulsory aspect of the legislation certain Monday as a money resolution to authorize incurring the costs of setting up the medical insurance scheme was given first reading in the Manitoba Legislature. He also confirmed that the Roblin government would not try to implement the legislation on July 1st of this year but would prepare the legislation and wait until Ottawa was ready to implement the plan. Previously Mr. Roblin had indicated Manitoba was willing to go ahead this year." The Minister of Health again: "Manitoba was forced into a compulsory medical insurance program instead of the voluntary scheme proposed by the Roblin administration because of Federal Government regulations according to Health Minister C. H. Witney. He told the Legislature Thursday that joining the Federal plan under its terms and conditions was the only practical choice the government could take if it wanted to provide insurance against the cost of medical services for all Manitobans." Now he says, "This is what faced us. The government could have done nothing but that would have meant forfeiting an estimated \$17 million that will be Ottawa's share of the Manitoba plan." Then he says, "A scheme could have been developed to meet specific provincial needs of the 30 percent of the population not covered at present by medical insurance. However the Federal Government refused to participate in such a plan. As a result Manitobans would be contributing to federal tax revenues in support of medical care in other provinces while at the same time providing for a provincial plan without federal support." So that was out. "The third position was joining the compulsory federal program benefitting by the federal contribution of \$17 million annually and raising the other half of the \$35 million by premiums. In Mr. Witney's view the third alternative was the only choice of Manitoba regardless of age, health or financial circumstances if they were to receive the adequate Medicare." This was the only choice.

Now the former Premier also had something to say and this is from the Tribune of October 12th last year. "Premier Roblin of Manitoba today indicated Manitoba will go along with the national medical care program if the Federal Government is prepared to put it into effect next July 1st. The Federal Government is calling the shots Mr. Roblin told a news conference so we have to play their way. Mr. Roblin said the provinces are compelled to take the government plan or no plan at all." And finally, a few lines from the Provincial Treasurer. This is what he said as reported in the Free Press, November 18th. "As things now stand Manitoba will be forced to go into the plan on July 1st. If it did not enter the scheme it would in effect be depriving its taxpayers of the benefits of a plan for which they were being taxed." So the position is quite clear.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that up to now we can agree that I've covered quite adequately and thoroughly the positions taken by the three parties up to and until April 24th, 1967 when a recorded vote of Bill 68 was taken in this House with only two members of the House voting against it, one of them a member of our Party and the other one the only Social Credit

(MR. DESJARDINS cont'd.) in the House who by the way made his position quite clear. He was not in favour of any kind of medicare program.

Mr. Speaker, no doubt before this debate is finished some of the members, especially those opposite us, will want to bring in the Federal Government. This might cloud up the issue a little bit and by placing the blame on Ottawa well then maybe they can try to get off the spot here in Manitoba. Well, Sir, let's accommodate them. Let's discuss the part played by Ottawa in all this. First of all although we recognize that the government must accept the responsibility for any legislation that it introduces, let us also recognize the fact that if the members of the Opposition do not agree with any proposed legislation it is not only their right but their duty to oppose it. I think that it is a known fact that this government's bill received near unanimous support -- and I'm talking about this bill when it passed in Ottawa -- and does anyone here wish to deny this? It will be said that the Liberals in Ottawa might be divided on this issue. Some of them might not prefer a voluntary plan, might now wish to see this plan phased in. Well, Sir, I quite candidly admit that. I am one that believes this, and I believe also that some Conservative members in Ottawa have also changed their minds. The Federal Liberals felt that they had made an election promise and they have tried to keep it and as often the case when you have a minority government this legislation took a long time in coming and I think that we've had a changing situation in Canada, I think that from now on we'll see both the Liberals and the Conservatives in Ottawa getting away from these compulsory plans.

Some will say that the Liberals are afraid; they must be playing politics because even those who would like to change their mind are afraid to do so. But let us remember that the Bill is already passed. I will admit, Sir, that the members of the Liberal Party are afraid of dividing the party at this time just before an election of their new Leader, I'll admit that, and after serious reflection I find that they should be. They have nothing to gain. It's not going to help the country at all if they divide the party on this issue at the start. I don't think that a party has to be too rigid at all times and I believe that we will see less idealism in the future as I said, not only in the Liberal Party but also the other party. The Liberals are playing politics; but what about the Conservatives in Ottawa? What about Stanfield? Couldn't they introduce a bill or an amendment? We, the Liberals of Manitoba, a few years ago introduced an amendment. We wanted to do away with the heat tax. We gained our point. I think that it is quite clear to assume that if the Liberals are playing politics they have a much more valid reason than the Conservatives whose only aim seems to embarrass the government at this time. -- (Interjection) -- Isn't that right? Well how's your friends in Ottawa going to vote then? What's the matter with Stanfield? You'd sooner just blame Pearson, I know. I'm blaming both parties because I'm representing Manitoba and I'm not worried about the Liberals in Ottawa.

I think that I've covered the Federal field pretty well but before leaving this, leaving my friends from Ottawa, let me thank my friends from the New Democratic Party for reminding me of my duty as a delegate in the forthcoming Liberal Leadership Convention. Let me assure them that I am quite conscious of my responsibility, that I will take it seriously and that I will vote for the candidate who I believe, not my friends, but I believe will be the best man for Canada. This is democracy, this is the name of the game and this is why I think it is important to fight to conserve our freedom and our liberty and to fight against Communism.

Up to this point, Mr. Speaker, I think it is quite safe to say that both the Liberals and the Conservatives in the House were in agreement, but after receiving second reading Bill 68 then went to Committee. I personally moved that the bill should not be passed but that the Manitoba Government should approach the other provincial governments, call a meeting on Medicare, try to arrive at a unanimous decision and then united approach the Federal Government to discuss this. I think you remember this last year when I made this motion in Committee. I explained that I wasn't trying to delay us entering this plan because I felt that we could reconvene, we could have a special meeting of the House to discuss just Medicare-- a special session I should say. I felt that then we would not tie our hands and could negotiate with the Federal Government and the other provinces. I'm sorry to say that the only members voting for this motion were the eight members of my Party who happened to be sitting on this Committee on this particular day. So then when we asked them to go slow, take your time, you're not going to delay anything, see if you can negotiate some more, meet with the other provinces. No, that was a ridiculous suggestion last year.

(MR. DESJARDINS cont'd.)..

The bill then went to the Committee of the Whole House. There I moved the motion that I'd been opposed in Committee by both the Conservatives and the NDP. My motion in effect would permit only doctors opting out of the Medicare to charge more than the scheduled fee. Well this time, Mr. Speaker, after lengthy debate I'm pleased to say that my motion received unanimous support. I believe that this was the only amendment that was made to this bill last year from the original bill. My Leader, supported by all the members of the Opposition, moved that the schedule of doctors' fees be included as part of the Act, but the government did not want any part of this. The government was saying that this wasn't any of our business and gave clear sailing for the doctors in establishing their fees, raising their fees, without I submit proper protection to the public of Manitoba. We were told that this was the best possible bill we could have and that although many preferred a voluntary plan we had no alternative if we wanted to be practical but to accept the federal plan. This is what my honourable friend said.

This Bill received third reading on May 2nd, 1967, and the Act was proclaimed I believe on May 18th of the same year - except of course the sections dealing directly with the collection of premiums and so on. And of course the Manitoba Medical Services Insurance Corporation was set up at the time. We were told today the Chairman gets \$21,000 a year, there's 5 members at \$3,000 and a few full-time employees. This Act has been passed; this Act is law.

On February 2, 1968, just a few months ago, the Premier of Manitoba informed the Federal Government that Manitoba would defer implementing the Medicare plan in the province for at least one year. It was only because there appeared to be no alternative that Manitoba in 1967 took the initial step to implement the Federal plan in 1968 he said. The government, Mr. Speaker, which through its Minister of Health had said that the only practical choice the government could take if it wanted to provide insurance against the cost of medical services for all Manitobans - now we are told that the government no longer wants to be practical. The Minister of Health no longer wants to be practical. But, Sir, the Liberal Party intends to remain practical. This is the reason for this resolution.

A few days ago the Premier of this province gave us some reasons why the government changed its mind and decided not to take advantage of the plan. He started by saying that they hadn't changed their mind, they hadn't changed their mind at all, he says that everyone should be able to obtain full medical insurance regardless of income. But, Sir, by refusing to enter this plan, proposed by the Federal Government, and by failing to bring in a plan of its own, here in Manitoba - although he tells us that he has a very wealthy province - the Premier has made it impossible for the people to be covered, those people that can't afford to pay the premiums and there are an awful lot of them. Then, of course, when the government is in trouble, it must produce a red herring. This time with tongue in cheek the Premier told us that Medicare without consent is unconstitutional. This government did not think of this when it taxed all the people of Manitoba to give them benefits and grants for education. That is they'd receive the grant only if they would vote for larger school divisions; everybody was taxed but this was fine. And nobody thought about this last year when we passed Bill 68. What was the difference? What's the change? Why was it all right then?

Then he says, well we thought that all the other provinces were doing the same thing we were. That's a very valid point; that's leadership at its best. Last year as you recall, Mr. Chairman, I suggested that we wait, that we do not pass the Act immediately and that we call these other provinces, discuss these things, and then the Minister would have found out what the other provinces were doing. Then he comes in with a real ridiculous reason. This bad government in Ottawa promised a portable plan but now we wanted nothing to do with this plan, but they would not let us take advantage of it when we visit Saskatchewan. Boy, that's a doozer, Mr. Speaker.

Now the Minister tells us all of a sudden - all of a sudden the First Minister tells us that it will be much more costly than it was first mentioned. Well, Sir, last year the members and some of their own Party predicted exactly this, but Bill 68 was passed nevertheless. I would like to read what the Member for Morris had to say on this - a member of the Government - Hansard 2846. "I have been told that the doctors have been raising their fees. An operation that would cost \$250 a year ago, today will cost you \$350; an operation that would cost \$75 to \$100 is costing \$125 to \$150 today; and their fees are going up accordingly. I think

(MR. DESJARDINS cont'd.)... that's one thing that this board that is set up to look after these things will have to study, the cost of fees very closely because I believe that we will have to pay a lot more for the medical care that we will be getting than has been suggested to date. We are told that the cost will be in the neighborhood of \$35 million but I'd almost bet a new Panama hat - and I look terrible in a Panama hat - " -- that got me --" but I would almost bet a Panama hat that within five years' time that fee will be doubled or maybe more and we'll be left holding the bag, as the previous speaker mentioned, then we'll have to foot this bill ourselves." This is what the Member from Morris said. He knew that it would be much more than that.

The Member from Brandon said the same thing and I'm not going to read it, but look on Page 2850 and read it. The Member from Selkirk said the same thing. The Member from Souris-Lansdowne, he's on Page 2854. I think I should read what he says. -- (Interjection) -- He's not here? They are not interested.

And then there's the -- well no, let's see what the Minister himself had to say on this. Mr. Minister on Page 2860 of last year's Hansard. "I don't think we were inconsistent at all with our election promises as the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition seems to think so. We said we would go into this plan; we said we wanted it voluntary. We tried to keep it voluntary as often as we possibly could. As late as about October the Premier was endeavouring to obtain a voluntary plan to pick up that area of need that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition speaks about, to get them to help us with it. Ottawa stayed with their principles as I pointed out before, and then that left us with this position. As I see the future - it may not have happened - but as I see the future, the diagnostic services were going to rise and the net costs were going to rise, their premiums were going to rise, we would have to pick up more indigency, people would pay more in premiums and they were paying money to Ottawa for something that they weren't getting." That's what the Minister said last year. --(Interjection) -- Yes, it was good reading last year.

I think we should finish with our friend the former Premier, because he had something to say on this too. "Premier Roblin of Manitoba" - this is the Tribune of October 12, 1967, - "Premier Roblin of Manitoba today indicated Manitoba will go along with the national medical care program which the Federal Government is prepared to put into effect next July 1st. 'The Federal Government is calling the shot', Mr. Roblin told a news conference, 'so we have to play their way.' Mr. Roblin said the provinces are compelled to take the government's plan or no plan at all." So I think it is quite safe to say that they are going in.

Then the Premier said that the Federal Government had a clause stating that they could opt out of the program by 1972. All of a sudden he found out about that clause. That clause was put in away before he passed Bill 68, but all of a sudden three days ago he found out about this. But the big reason why he changed his mind is because last year it was felt that the Government of Canada had an immovable position, but now we had varying positions by different leadership candidates. In other words, he was gambling - he was gambling.

To my knowledge there is but one candidate who stated that he would review this before the date of July 1st and that is Mr. Sharp, and he made that statement two days ago, long before the government decided not to -- long after, I should say, the government decided not to take advantage of this plan. All the other candidates stated that it was the law, and although some of them it is true did not think that this was the best plan, they all agreed that the plan would definitely go into force on July 1st of this year, although some did state that with the co-operation of every one some agreement might be forthcoming.

And, Sir, we the members of the Liberal Party hope that some amendments will be brought in. We want that too. Some of us will certainly keep on fighting for this. I know that I will, but this is not the point of issue here, not at all. The steps taken by the province will not have any bearing on this at all. You are not going to change their mind at all. You can go in the plan now and think about the people of Manitoba now. I don't think that we have the right to punish the people of Manitoba by gambling in such a way. The best that the government could hope is that, say Mr. Sharp is elected, he said he will review this before the first. -- (Interjection) -- that's what I'd like to know. You are the one that's gambling. What does it mean?

He'd have to change - remember there's no election before that - he would have to change the minds and get an awful lot of Liberals to change anything, and then he would have to turn around and go and talk to your boys, and I'm sure they are going to say, whatever you say we are not going to go to the country --(Interjection)-- I'm not talking about the other provinces;

(MR. DESJARDINS cont'd.)... I was elected in Manitoba. I don't know if you are a rover, if you are working at large, but I'm working here in Manitoba, and you passed Bill 68 when I said take it easy.

Now this is the best that you can do. We agree with you about the plan, but we do not agree when all of a sudden you change your mind after giving all the chance to the doctors to work, because they haven't been sleeping. They have been working, and what are they pulling off? 30 percent or so - 30 percent. This is what we're faced with now, and then you say that it's going to cost more. Sure it's going to cost more. You made it possible - you made it possible when you passed that Act. I want changes; I'll fight for these changes; but I must be realistic and I don't intend to gamble with the health and maybe the lives of the people of Manitoba. Even if this plan would be changed in the first year, have we the right to sacrifice a year, sacrifice a year of health and maybe living of the people of Manitoba?

The Minister of Health was warned last year not to go too fast on this Bill 68, by myself when I made this motion, by the Member from Morris, the Member from Brandon, the Member from Selkirk, the Member from Rhineland. Maybe I should read what the Member from Rhineland said because I think he had a good point. Yes, the Member from Souris too. Of course he changes his mind so often.

MR. NELSON SHOEMAKER (Gladstone): What a difference a day makes eh?

MR. DESJARDINS: Yeah, this is a year. I've got to find this because this is good. Oh yes, from Mr. Froese on Page 2757 - and don't laugh for a minute, just listen. "I don't see the urgency of bringing this bill at this particular time, at this session. I think we could have waited another year with bringing a measure of this type forward and I think it would have been to the benefit of the people of Manitoba to do so. I feel that they're jeopardizing our bargaining position in bringing it forward at this particular time and so early when it could have waited for another year." Doesn't that make sense? But you wouldn't listen to him then.

The government went ahead anyway; the Minister was in a rush. Of course, as I said, the doctors were not idle and they organized and you know what happened. Do you think for a minute that all of a sudden the doctors will say, well you're not going in this Medicare plan, we'll lower our rates, lower our fees? I don't believe so - I don't believe so. And I think that they had what - half a million reserve then? Where's that reserve now in their fund?

Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that the new Premier was chosen on the promise that he would stop spending, and I commend him for this. But this is not the place. He's going to spend an awful lot -- it's going to cost the people of Manitoba an awful lot more than he saves in money and also in suffering.

Just before closing -- I believe I have a few minutes left - I simply must quote the Minister of Health because this is priceless. This was the speech he made while closing the debate on second reading of Bill 68 last year, and I'm going to say this starts on Page 2859. I'm not going to read all of his speech; it would be worth it, but I am sure that he has read it many times since then when he was forced into this. But let's start and we'll read some of the excerpts. "I was rather surprised" - this is the Minister speaking -- "I was rather surprised to hear some of the honourable members from the other side of the House, and from this side too I might say, who spoke in such terms that I thought they were going to vote against it, but instead they all said they were going to vote for it. Now there is a certain inconsistency here somewhere, Mr. Speaker, and I would just like to point it out." Inconsistency; that's what he said. Boy, he's consistent now. Is George helping you with notes? He'd better write fast because you've got some other good ones here.

Another one here: "At the present time we have old age pensioners on no-group contracts. They are paying upwards to \$150 a year, and if their premiums have to go up following these diagnostic services increase which is going up all over the country, can they afford to go up even higher? And remember the diagnostic services utilization is because basically of the scientific knowledge that has been gained in the explosion that's taken place in the last five to ten years. These are new tests, these are new procedures that are wanted by the doctors and the people, and then you find yourself on a voluntary scheme with the province having to pick up more medical indigents." Well that wouldn't do. "You'll find on a voluntary scheme that you have people who are paying MMS and who are going to have to pay more, if my assumptions are correct, and at the same time they are paying through federal taxes for the moneys that are sitting down there as the Ottawa contribution which would be going somewhere else."

A MEMBER: It's a good point.

MR. DESJARDINS: It's a good point indeed. He's talking against voluntary plan here. He hasn't changed his mind; he's consistent, my honourable friend. Then he says: "You take when this scheme comes in, and you take the person who is on no-group, the old age pensioner who at the present time is paying around about \$150, it's quite reasonable to assume that his costs are going to come down. Now do we not want those costs to come down for older people? You take also in this plan that we will be picking up the lab and X-ray all across the province. At the present time we have lab and X-ray out in the rural parts but we haven't got it in the metropolitan parts." So we want the rate to come down. And we're told that the rates for these exact people are going up 30 percent. Still no plan, but we are being consistent. Now what will this plan do?" -- he's telling us about how good this plan is -- "This plan will mean that doctors can go into rural Manitoba with the knowledge that they are going to have income. This means that doctors can go into rural Manitoba with that knowledge and will be able to set up the group clinics."

And last -- these are all good points -- that's when we were being consistent. I'd like also to mention about medical education -- because that's another red herring that the First Minister brought in -- "When the Bill came in the Federal Government about six months later laid \$500 million on the table for medical education. I'll never forget that year because within a period of about six months Ottawa put down on a green table in Ottawa the equivalent of one billion on this plan. This 500 million was not enough, but it sparked a whole series of imaginative programs right from stem to gudgeon of Canada. It sparked too many. It sparked so many that we're not going to have enough professional staff to staff them all, but this was the first impetus the medical education has had for some time in order to graduate doctors and the paramedical personnel."

Mr. Speaker, how can the Minister of Health face the people of Manitoba now? How can he? How can he go around and change his mind at this time after all his colleagues voted for this? How can he impose this suffering on the people of Manitoba just because an ill-guided man -- ill-guided when it comes to this -- makes the promise that he'll cut down, and you're not cutting down at all on this. How can the Minister of Health -- I can't see how he -- and I imagine that we will be receiving his resignation pretty soon. I can't see how he can stand up, I can't see how he can say what he said during last year and all of a sudden say we've changed our mind. At least if they would have kept quiet, but they made it possible for these premiums to go up because of that bill.

We asked that the fees of the doctors be included as part of this Act. My Leader made the motion, supported by all the members of the New Democratic Party, supported also by the Member from Brandon and the Member from Morris, but no, this wasn't in the Act. And now, as I say, we don't even know if the MMS will continue after June 30th of this year. What's going to happen then? I would ask the

MR. SPEAKER: I was hesitant to interrupt the honourable gentleman but he has three minutes if you would care to

MR. DESJARDINS: Thanks ever so much, that will suffice, Mr. Speaker. Just during this last minute, I think that we should ask the Minister of Health to be a little more realistic, and the members of the Cabinet and the members of the Government. We've gone too far now; we can't back down on this. We'll help you -- I'll help you fight for a voluntary plan as much as I can. But I say that you haven't got the right -- you can't change your mind now especially because you've brought in this bill. I say you haven't got the right to forget about the people who will have to pay higher, much higher premiums for their medical care, and I would submit that you should reconsider and that you should vote for this motion.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. John's.

MR. SAUL M. CHERNIACK, Q. C. (St. John's): Mr. Speaker, I waited in the hope, even in the expectation, that the Honourable Minister of Health would respond to the challenge of the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, but I suppose he knew that we on this side could not let this debate go by and I'm sure he's waiting to participate a little later on in the debate. I can't conceive that he will not participate at all on this issue, so I'm assuming that. And I must say that in the light of what was said by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, I feel a strong sympathy for the Honourable Minister because of what he is on record on this issue -- for what he has said over the last couple of years and how he must now apparently justify this reversal in this change in the position of his government. How he will do it of course is his problem and I don't intend to help him out of that problem, although I would if I could because of my sympathy for him.

Of course I must confess, Mr. Speaker, that I was surprised to find that this motion did appear on the Order Paper presented by the Liberal Party. It would not be a secret to divulge that our party was preparing a resolution on Medicare, and when this came and we saw that it was before the House by the Liberals, we of course were satisfied that the debate would be held whether or not we presented such a resolution and we were quite prepared, as we are, to debate it.

But coming from the Liberal Party, with the introduction by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface who speaks sort of equivocally on this issue and who admits clearly, as he did today, that he's not happy with the Medicare plan, that he doesn't like it - and I think that he spoke on behalf of his Party, that they don't care for it - that they should be the one to produce it. And of course the preamble to the resolution makes clear just what their attitude is that once it is law, once the people of Canada will be contributing 50 percent of the program it is just bad business on the part of Manitoba not to go ahead with it. I think that summarizes his position.

He said that both the Liberals and Conservatives will be playing politics on the issue. He said, and I didn't quite follow what he said - it's something like we will be seeing less idealism in this - and, as I say, I didn't quite follow what he meant by that but I'll try and follow it through when I see Hansard. But he said that the Liberal Party intends to remain practical, that that is the basis on which they proposed this resolution, and he of course made a great issue on compulsion, as did the Honourable the First Minister, and I have yet to hear from any of these people who fear compulsion to explain just what is the nature of the compulsion that they fear. Compulsion on whom, Mr. Speaker? I wish someone would clarify it. Who is being compelled to do what? Is it the doctor who under this plan is being compelled to practice under the plan? No. The Act, Bill 68, made it clear that the doctor had the choice, he could practice under the plan or he could practice out of the plan. He could bill separately. Is it compulsion on the patient to accept services under the plan? No. There is nothing in the bill that says that the only way you can get your medical services is by doing it under the plan. No compulsion there. Anybody who wants to could go to a doctor outside of the plan and make his own financial and personal relationship and bargain with him. Then on whom is this plan compulsory? The only direction in which we can be led is that it's the taxpayer who is required to support this plan, to pay for the plan, to see to it that it operates.

The government indicated that it intended to raise its half of the contribution through premiums, so that if you call it taxes or you call it premiums, it is just a method of collection and a different way on which to put the burden of the cost - or distribute, rather, the burden of the cost. Under taxation, be it federal or provincial, it could be based on income tax; it could be based on proportionate tax such as sales tax; it could be based on the regressive tax; but it would be on a tax of some kind. If it's a premium, then it is a flat tax which I think could well be called a regressive tax, but that's the one that the government decided to carry out.

How exactly - and I wish someone would develop this for me so I could understand the argument - how exactly does this differ from protection - fire protection, police protection. Who is it that is compelled to take advantage of fire protection and police protection? Who is it that is compelled to take advantage of education in the public school system? I don't know. Anybody who wishes to opt out has the right to do so. Anybody who wishes to acquire an education outside of the public school system, which is paid by tax dollars, has a right to do so. How does this plan differ, Mr. Speaker? How does this plan differ from the Hospital Services Commission that we have now? Why is it that we have this Hospital Services Commission Plan if it

(MR. CHERNIACK, coat'd) is so reprehensible, so unsatisfactory? Possibly the Minister will be able to clarify it.

I've been questioned as to whether or not I was right in using the term "ignorance" when I referred to the Honourable the First Minister's approach to it, and on reflection I do not withdraw that statement because I believe that when he tried to distinguish between education and Medicare, he indicated that he was not aware of the fact that there is no compulsion in this plan except insofar as the financing of the plan is concerned, and to that extent it's just like education, just like the Hospital Services Plan and all the rest of them.

If the scheme used by this government to pay for its half is a premium plan as they designed, then there is not the slightest doubt in the world that the premiums chargeable by the provincial Medicare scheme would be less than is now being paid under private schemes, under the Manitoba Medical Scheme. That's obvious, because one-half the cost will be provided from the federal resources. What will happen is that the federal resources will raise their funds from taxation based on an ability-to-pay principle, which means that not necessarily will Manitobans be contributing that full 50 percent because I think it can be said pretty clearly that Manitobans are not the higher bracket people who do contribute on an ability-to-pay, and I would guess that the Ontario people, the B. C. people, the Alberta people, and others who are in the higher categories, will be contributing a substantial part of what comes to Manitoba over and above what Manitobans contribute on a federal level. To the extent that Manitobans contribute to the federal taxation that provides its half share of Medicare, there are those who are better able to contribute, who are financially better able to contribute, and this I believe is something we must recognize.

The difference in cost between that is being spent now - in total cost - and what would be spent under Medicare has been studied carefully by the Hall Commission, and nobody that I'm aware of, Mr. Speaker, has quarreled with the percentage or the proportion that Hall set up as being the overage. What the quarrel has been is what is the actual cost - is it 600 million; is it a billion? But that cost, Mr. Speaker, is related to present costs. People today are paying for health services. Whether they pay for it directly out of their pockets to the doctor or through a private scheme or through a government scheme, there is still money being paid, and the difference between the costs that will be paid through a Medicare scheme and now being paid may well be the difference between the services that are not being received by those who are in the greatest need of receipt of the services, that do not have the ability-to-pay for them, or who come in that category where they are not paid for by government.

So that I think that this compulsion - it's all very well to use words, scare words, words that attract headlines, words that make you hold back because in a democracy we fear that word compulsion - that's a lot of nonsense, Mr. Speaker. In any organized society there are things that are decided that shall be done by all members of society. You can call it compulsion; you can call it contribution; you can call it participation. It's not a dirty word unless you make it appear so, and the word compulsion is made to appear to be dirty in this sense because it isn't spelled out. I've tried in my manner to spell out what I consider is that aspect which one can consider compulsory - I would rather call it universal - but we shouldn't play with words, with semantics; we should deal with real principles. So let me ask, Mr. Speaker, that those who deal with this proposal use whatever words they want to, including the word compulsion, but surely they owe it to us and to the public of Manitoba to spell out what they mean, in what sense, to what extent, to whose damage, to whose harm, who is affected, who is benefitted. This certainly would, I think, be a much more realistic and progressive way of dealing with this.

Now the Honourable Member for St. Boniface read at length from Hansard and from speeches, newspaper reports. When I was able to speak on the Speech from the Throne I also quoted from statements made in Hansard so that I want now just to limit myself to a short statement made by the Honourable the Minister of Health on March 13, 1967. It appears on Page 1578 where he says, "At the present time some 70 percent are covered by either the MMS or by private insurance companies. There are 30 percent who are not covered but who will be covered when this legislation becomes law in a year and a half's time, and I feel that with the numbers of doctors that we have and their particular positioning in the province that we will be able to take care of their needs. With respect to the Honourable the Leader of the New Democratic Party asking whether or not we are going to proceed by July 1, 1968, this legislation will be before you and the answer will be, 'Yes, we will.'" And that I think is the issue before

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd) us, Mr. Speaker.

Now in order to clarify the issue just a little bit better and to put it in what I think is the proper realm - and which our Party thinks is in the proper realm - I propose an amendment which is one which has to some extent been reviewed already in this House in the Speech from the Throne and which attracted the support of all the people on my right who voted for the amendment of the New Democratic Party on the amendment to the amendment to the Speech from the Throne, and since they accepted that and voted for it I would expect, hope and trust that they will support this amendment. I reviewed what the Honourable the Leader of the Liberal Party said just before the vote on the amendment to the amendment on the Speech from the Throne and what he said then was: "This is a vote of non-confidence. We don't agree with all of it but we will support it."

Well, he didn't clarify it any further nor do I think any other member of his Party did. I wasn't sure whether he meant that they didn't agree with our suggestion that the Carter Report was valid or whether it was Medicare or some other thing, but in any event this is the wording which they supported and paraphrased to some extent, and therefore I move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the Honourable Member for Inkster, that the proposed resolution be amended by deleting the last line thereof, namely: "to join the national plan effective July 1, 1968," and replacing same with the following words: "to consider the advisability of introducing forthwith a health plan in accordance with the principles recommended by the Hall Commission for the provision of health care to all Manitobans, the cost to be borne by society generally through a comprehensive and universal health plan rather than by individuals."

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Elmwood, that debate be adjourned.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for Gladstone. The Honourable Member for Gladstone. The proposed resolution on Page 6.

MR. SHOEMAKER: Mr. Speaker, I didn't realize that this was coming so quickly. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, that

Whereas taxes should not be an oppressive burden on individuals, and

Whereas taxes should not discourage development, and

Whereas the sales tax has now been in effect for some months in Manitoba, and

Whereas in certain cases such as used clothing, work clothing, soaps and cleaning supplies, school supplies, labor and service charges and other necessities, the tax is oppressive on the average wage earner, and

Whereas in some of its applications the sales tax can discourage development, and

Whereas it would be in the interests of Manitobans to periodically review the effect of taxes,

Therefore be it resolved that the Law Amendments Committee of the House be instructed to undertake during this session a review of the sales tax and its effect and make recommendations to the House.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion.

MR. SHOEMAKER: Mr. Speaker, one of the factors that contributed to the long session that we had a year ago was Bill 56, the Sales Tax Bill. I guess that we in this House spent nearly a month debating it, because it was a very important Bill and one that was felt by every citizen of the Province of Manitoba, and if we spent a month discussing the implications and complications of Bill 56, I guess that we in the opposition spent about two weeks trying to convince the government that the Bill upon second reading should be referred to Law Amendments Committee. We harped on this for days on end because we felt that a Bill as important as this, the people of the province should not only have the opportunity to speak to the lawmakers about it, but we felt that the Bill would be a better one after we listened to the public at large. And I think this goes for a great deal of legislation in every jurisdiction in the world. I think it's helpful to have all bills go to Law Amendments Committee. Let the people have their say and then let us try and make the Bill as acceptable and workable as it's possible to do, because it is an educational process; there's no question about that.

Now really all this resolution that we have before us now, that is the resolved part, is that once a year that: "Resolved that the Law Amendments Committee of the House be instructed to undertake during this session" - this session - "a review of the sales tax and its effect

(MR. SHOEMAKER, cont'd) and make recommendations to the House". So this is what we're once again saying.

Now it's more important now, if that's possible, than it was a year ago. Why? Because it's been in force now - it's been in force now since June the 1st, was it? - and in that length of time there's bound to be a lot of wrinkles that should be ironed out. I have said in this House on numerous occasions that my duty as an ombudsman in the past has been taken up a great deal of the time in welfare cases, people phoning me on welfare cases of one kind and another. Since the last session of the Legislature, and in the last 11 months, I have had far more phone calls on the Sales Tax Bill than I've had on any other single department of government, and my guess is that every single member in this House has had phone calls, nearly daily, and letters saying, well, does the provincial sales tax apply to so and so and so and so and so and so. My honourable friend the Attorney-General says he's never had a phone call or a letter or anything.

MR. LYON: Maybe two in a year.

MR. SHOEMAKER: Maybe two in a year. Well, he's the exception because in the city here they're kind of far removed from their member and they don't want to bother them, but we in the country - - we in the country are truly ombudsmen, and by virtue of the fact that we have an office right down town where there's hundreds of people walking by it daily, they come in to ask you your opinion on certain things. This is naturally so, and in every case I try to be helpful. But it is difficult for people like myself, not difficult for my honourable friend the Attorney-General, but difficult for me to interpret a lot of the legislation that is in Bill 56.

Now I took it upon myself a year ago to obtain all of the various special information cards that were put out for the benefit of the trade. I think they put out about 40-some. I phoned the other day to get a new supply because the old ones were getting handled so much that you could hardly read them, but do you know what they told me? They were no longer printing any more, that they were completely out of stock and they had decided that they would not supply the trade with any more of these information cards. But they did send me over about a ten-page letter dated October 26th, and apparently they've made some changes in it. This one is headed: "Letter No. 10" - I don't know where the other nine are but this is Letter No. 10 - "The Manitoba Revenue Tax Act; Sales to Farmers".

Now, just to point up that the farmers themselves and the buying public are not the only ones that are confused, I had a farmer the other day come in and put this question before me. He said, "Is steel well-cribbing taxable under the provincial Sales Tax Act. And I'd like to ask my honourable friend the Attorney-General what's his interpretation - is it or is it not?"

MR. LYON: No, I'd have to look in the Act . . . you could tell me; I wouldn't know.

MR. SHOEMAKER: He wouldn't know. Well I didn't know either. This farmer bought a certain number of feet from one of the farm supply houses in Neepawa and he bought a certain number of feet from another farm supply house. One of the firms charged him the 5 percent tax; the other didn't. And that's the way it stands; that's the way it stands. So he paid tax on half of it and he didn't pay tax on the other, and I guess that's the end of it. Well, that's not good enough. It's either right or it's wrong. My resolution says here: let's have a review - that's all we're saying - let's have a review and iron out some of these wrinkles; get the answers to some of these.

I had a farmer come in - oh, six months ago I guess - and he said, "Listen," he said, "this is a small item," but he had a bill from a farm supply house in Winnipeg - he had bought blades for his sheep shearing machine, only \$10.00 but 50 cents tax taxed on - and he said, "I thought the interpretation was farm production machinery was exempt." He said this is my broad interpretation of it. My answer to him was: "What do you think?" I said, "Have you paid the bill yet?" He said "no". "Well," I said, "Send them a cheque less the tax." That's what he did and he's never heard from them since. But once again that doesn't clear the issue. Now I have given that answer to dozens of farmers. I said, "Have you paid the bill?" "No". "Well, just send them a cheque less the tax." That's the last they heard of it. Well, what kind of an Act is this? Let's have a review and let's get some of these things ironed out. -- (Interjection) -- That's right. Now there are hundreds of cases of this kind.

Do you know, Mr. Speaker -- Deputy Speaker, another thing that -- well, as you know, we moved in committee last year dozens of amendments and I guess that would be an understatement, wouldn't it? They moved dozens of amendments on this side of the House. I think that one of the best ones that we moved was the one on clothing, and I believe the honourable

(MR. SHOEMAKER, cont'd) . . . member for Birtle-Russell moved it but it doesn't matter. But we said, as respects clothing, we thought it would be much much better if all clothing under \$25.00 was exempt. Forget about naming all these thousands of different items; just make it clear-cut, every piece of clothing under \$25.00 would be exempt, so that the working man wanting to buy a pair of overalls wouldn't have to pay any tax. If he bought a pair of boots he wouldn't pay tax; with children's clothing, and all of these things, under \$25.00 be exempt. And we said, too, that we believed that in cases where a retail merchant might be inclined to mark an item, say \$26.95, he would make a sincere effort to keep it down to \$24.95 so that he wouldn't have to charge a tax. I still think that it would be a real improvement on the tax if we did this, and it would help the working man and it would help the farmer. These are the kind of things that should be done.

MR. LYON: What about the cost of it?

MR. SHOEMAKER: What about the cost of it?

MR. LYON: Yes.

MR. SHOEMAKER: Well, I'm just wondering. This is one of the reasons we're appointing this committee. There's all kinds of children's clothing that's exempt now, and isn't it a fact that - and it's by sizes - so is it not a fact now that a lot of the children's clothing, probably about \$100 you're exempting anyway? I don't know what the tax would be. This is why we're recommending setting up this committee.

Now, we could go on and on and on on this whole issue. We say in the resolution here that soap - - my mother said that just being hard up didn't excuse you for being dirty, that at least you could be clean. Well now, in this day and age, you've got to have some money to keep clean even, and this is one of the things that a lot of the women complain about, is having to pay tax on soap and cleaning supplies. I think it's wrong. It's striking at -- it's striking at the people in the low income bracket.

Now another matter that I did want to raise - and I was hoping that my honourable friend the Provincial Treasurer would be in his seat when I raised this one but I see that he isn't - but the Neepawa United Church are in the process of putting in a brand new memorial organ that cost something like 18 to 20 thousand dollars. They have already been assured by the federal department that they will waive the tax, the federal tax of whatever it is, 12 percent. Well, 12 percent of \$15,000 is quite a sizeable amount, so they then -- well, I wrote to my honourable friend the Provincial Treasurer and pointed out to him that inasmuch as the Federal Government had seen fit to exempt this memorial organ from tax, would they not consider doing likewise, because I thought under the Act that the Provincial Treasurer had the authority to do this himself, and I still think that he has that authority, does he not, under the Act? But he said he couldn't do that at all.

Now, isn't this -- my honourable friend the member for St. Boniface was talking about inconsistency in one department. Isn't this inconsistent to have the Federal Government exempting an item and then the Provincial Government applying a tax on an item? It seems to me to be inconsistent. I think it is anyway. There are many many cases of this kind.

My honourable friend the member for Souris-Lansdowne for about two or three years hand running, he had a resolution on the Order Paper. He left it on last year for about two months and then he just drew it off one night when nobody was looking and I slapped it back on again the next day. But he wanted the Federal Government to remove the sales tax on building supplies, wasn't it? That's what it was. Then he changed his mind and he said, oh, I have had a second thought, I kind of like paying that.

MR. M. E. MCKELLAR (Souris-Lansdowne): I stopped buying.

MR. SHOEMAKER: Pardon?

MR. MCKELLAR: I stopped buying.

MR. SHOEMAKER: You stopped buying? Well, what does my resolution say? That it does have an effect, that it does have an effect on the economy, this tax.

Now I believe that there is another resolution on the Order Paper now that has to do with removing this building tax, and I suppose my honourable friend from Souris-Lansdowne will do the same thing this year as he did last year, sneak out when it comes to voting on it. But it was a darn good idea a few years ago to remove the tax on building supplies; it was a dandy two or three years ago; but apparently my honourable friend thinks that it's fine and dandy now.

Did my honourable friends meet with the stock growers the other day or did they not, or

(MR. SHOEMAKER, cont'd) did they sneak out on that one too, because one thing those stock growers did have to say, in addition to horned cattle and a lot of other things, they were pretty mad about the way that the provincial sales tax affected some of the tools of their trade. They were not able, like myself and my honourable friend the Attorney-General, to interpret the Act - and probably my honourable friend the member for Souris-Lansdowne can answer this one - but do you have to pay a tax on storage bins, on material going into storage bins? Do you have to pay a tax on that?

MR. McKELLAR: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable gentleman that there has been a ruling on sales tax and I feel that he is sort of skating on thin ice. I would hope that he will respect the Chair and its ruling in any comments he may have to make with regard to the sales tax.

MR. SHOEMAKER: Well, I just can't comprehend the ruling and I can't comprehend the thin ice, because we're talking about sales tax and I'm just pointing out that myself, as the buying public, as an ombudsman, the retail trade - the retail trade can't interpret it. I guess, Mr. Speaker, that you were out of the Chair when I told of several instances right in Neepawa where the retail trade could not interpret the Act, where we had one merchant - one merchant exempted wellcribbing; another one didn't; and there the matter stands.

MR. LYON: That brings the whole thing crashing down does it?

MR. SHOEMAKER: Well what are you going to do about it? What are you going to do about it? Well the logical thing to do - the logical thing to do is to refer the Bill annually to Law Amendments and let these merchants come in and let the public come in and let them say what they think of it. This is the logical - if you want to get logical about it - this is the logical thing to do because there are, regardless of what my honourable friend thinks, there are people other than the 57 members of this House who have fairly sound judgment - I'm referring to the rural areas now - and I think it would be helpful if we had some of them come in here and tell the lawmakers what they think of it and let them tell us the trouble they are having in this whole field. I don't suppose my honourable friends will likely go along with it but I think it would be most helpful. - - (Interjection) -- Pardon? Oh, the stock growers, yes. That's when my honourable friend the Attorney-General he got into the act here.

But if the stock growers told the Conservative caucus the same as they told us about the provincial sales tax - if they did, and I would think they would have the courage to tell them - they found plenty of things that was wrong with the provincial sales tax, plenty of things. Now what's wrong, for instance, in having them come before the Law Amendments Committee and explain their situation. They had to meet individually with the various caucuses. Why not let them meet with the Law Amendments Committee and tell us all about their troubles.

I phoned an auctioneer, and I think we have one or two of them in the House, very good ones too -- I phoned an auctioneer last Sunday at Neepawa - incidentally, I don't think that he supports me but he does support my honourable friends opposite - I said, "What is the big problem, the one single big problem that you run into on auction sales and the provincial sales tax. What's the one single big problem." And do you know what he said? "The tax they place on horses." Every time he sells a horse he said you pay five percent sales tax. Well is this not necessary in our farming operations? I suppose in this mechanized age you could say that they were on the road out, but it seems to me that this is an area in which we should take another look at it. And do you know what he told me too? He said, "I've sold two or three cattle dogs and they were taxable under the Act."

MR. DOERN: What about oxen?

MR. SHOEMAKER: Oxen? Well I would guess they would be. And do you know another thing that he told me - and my honourable friend I think from Steinbach will likely have a lot more to say about this - he said, "Every time you come across a pail of iron or a piece of scrap iron at an auction sale, you got to pay tax on it." Scrap iron is taxable. "Now," he said, "If in that box of scrap iron you can lift out a half a dozen cultivator teeth, they're not scrap iron once you lift them out of that box. They're not taxable. But if you throw them back in there, or if there's a bolt mixed up in there, then the bolt is taxable but the cultivator teeth are not taxable."

Now this is a fact and I challenge my honourable friend the Attorney-General to say that he has another interpretation on it. If you walk into a farm supply house today and you buy a plowshare or cultivator teeth or harrow teeth, not taxable; if you buy a screw nail or a bolt to

(MR. SHOEMAKER, cont'd) put them on, they are, it is, they're taxable. Well what kind of nonsense is this? What are you supposed to do, get a piece of -- bailing wire is not taxable, is it? --(Interjection) -- Bailing wire isn't. Well then maybe my honourable friend the Minister of Agriculture could put out one of his letters and tell the farmers how to use bailing wire to tie on the cultivator teeth instead of having to pay tax on a bolt to put it in. Bailing wire isn't taxable so you could use bailing wire to tie the cultivator teeth on. Well these are things I'm sure my honourable friend the member for Souris-Lansdowne has found out and learned the hard way.

MR. MCKELLAR: I have no complaints at all.

MR. SHOEMAKER: He doesn't use any cultivator teeth does he say?

MR. MCKELLAR: on the back 80 acres.

MR. SHOEMAKER: He has no complaints at all. Well we'll put him to the test because we're going to have this building supply resolution back on again. We'll put him to the test later on.

But, Mr. Speaker, I've just scratched the surface, that's all I've done in all of the items where you find discrepancy in the Act. There's thousands of them, and I'd say that let's once a year have a look at it. Let's have a look at it. I know my honourable friends will say: Well these are some of the things that we do in Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council meetings; you'll find that under Regulation No. so and so and so and so. How many farmers have they got in that Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council? How many farmers have they got? You'll have one there now because the First Minister, the reason that he occupies the seat he does now, as I said before, is that at least he's kicked cow manure off the wheels of a tractor and I hope that he'll be able to guide some of the fellows there. He knows what a tractor wheel is; he knows what cow manure is; and he may have some influence. But what is wrong with having the farmers come into Law Amendments Committee and let them have their say; let the retailers have their say; and let everybody in Manitoba have their say.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. LEMUEL HARRIS (Logan): Mr. Speaker, if nobody else wishes to speak, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kildonan, that the debate be adjourned.

MR. LYON: Maybe the honourable member, Mr. Speaker, would let me say a few words on this matter.

I looked with a great deal of interest on this resolution when it first appeared on the Order Paper because of course it re-invigorated a demand that was made during the last session of the Legislature with respect to the method by which tax matters should be handled by the Legislature of Manitoba, and I must say after listening quite assiduously to my honourable friend the Member for Gladstone-Neepawa that he has made no stronger an argument this year in support of his case than he did last year and of course, as I recall, last year he made no argument at all. So I think, and I should say this to the House at the outset - and I don't want to shock my honourable friend with this statement - but I think I should say to him that he can expect to find very little support for his argument on this side of the House, and I suggest there is much greater argument against it this year than there was even last year after listening to his case. His case essentially is: let us refer the Sales Tax Bill which is now an Act, a Statute of Manitoba, annually to the Law Amendments Committee in order that we can hear people who have particular grievances, either administrative or policy grievances, against a particular bill.

Mr. Speaker, this procedure, if it is one that he seriously suggests should be adopted by the House, could be adopted with every piece of tax legislation with which from time to time one has problems of interpretation. And I daresay that if it were adopted, the carrying of it to what I consider to be a rather ridiculous conclusion - but we can draw no other conclusion - this Legislature could be sitting thirteen months out of twelve in a year doing nothing but sitting around listening to administrative complaints about tax legislation; this Legislature, or any other legislature or any other parliament in the Commonwealth, if this system were to be adopted. I have the view, maybe wrongly, that there is some higher purpose to a parliament and to a legislature than merely to sit around as a receptacle for complaints. I think there is a duty on the part of legislatures from time to time to act on complaints, not merely to receive them.

If the method of receiving complaints is quite easy, through the honourable member he has told us today of some of the complaints and some of the problems of interpretation that

(MR. LYON, cont'd) people in his constituency have had, and if he thinks that it is a sufficiently important matter and it involves a matter of policy and not just a pure matter of administration, he can bring that matter to the attention of this House to be debated as a matter of policy by sponsoring a resolution on the Order Paper. Nothing could be simpler. If, on the other hand, it is an administrative matter, then I suggest with the greatest of respect to him that it should not cloud up the debate that takes place in this Legislature but rather it should be dealt with administratively by the administrative people who are charged with administrative responsibility. This House is not charged with administrative responsibility. It is a policy-making area because it is here that we devise the policy; we discuss the policy; we agree upon the policy. The Executive Council is then, if it is government legislation, is then charged with the responsibility of overseeing the enforcement of that policy when it becomes administration after the Legislature has finished with the particular Act in question. I think that this is a concept that seems to be understood by most students of the parliamentary system.

Tax bills - how often have we heard this argument - tax bills do not go to committee outside of this House, outside of any House that I'm aware of in Canada. It's just that the practice has not been followed. Members are elected to a Legislative Assembly not as mere sounding boards for public opinion from their own constituencies; members are elected to make their individual judgments according to their best light, according to their best intelligence upon the matters that are placed before them. They don't constantly have to be mirroring and merely reflecting the public opinion, good or bad in some cases, that may come to them with respect to particular matters. So tax bills do not go outside of legislative assemblies here or elsewhere, and I dare say that the practice will not be followed in this Legislature or in any other legislature either at initiation or subsequently for tax bills.

We have in this House, I would suggest Mr. Speaker, the most liberal - with a small 'l' - rules of procedure with respect to the forwarding of bills from this Assembly to outside committees of any legislature in Canada. I know of no legislature in Canada that sends more bills to outside committees than this House, and I don't decry the procedure; I think it's probably a good procedure. It takes much more time than any other legislature spends on the same kind of work in the same kind of work session that we have before us, but the practice has grown up in Manitoba and by and large I think it's a good practice, but I do not think it is a practice which should be extended. I think it is a practice that has very practical limitations to it and it is a practice that with respect to tax bills should not be followed at all.

Now my honourable friend says that it's more important now than it was a year ago that this Bill should be referred to the Law Amendments Committee so that people can come in and tell us what the problems are and get an interpretation. He's looking for free legal advice courtesy of the Legislative Assembly. Well all I can say to my honourable friend is that there is a much easier and more expeditious way for this to be done and I'm sure he's aware of it. If my honourable friend is not the most inveterate letter writer of any member of this Chamber, then I dare anybody else to challenge him. He writes more letters, I'm sure, than any other member of this Chamber on behalf of his constituents. He is a good ombudsman. He's one of the best ombudsmen.

MR. SHOEMAKER: That's right.

MR. DESJARDINS: Does he get answers?

MR. LYON: He doesn't write to me all the time but I know

MR. DESJARDINS: Then how do you know?

MR. LYON: I know from reading the Gladstone Age and the Neepawa Press, which I don't think is edited or owned by my honourable friend but which seems to print more of his letters than anything else. I know that he is an inveterate letter writer and I would merely suggest that if he's going to cure some of the administrative problems that he's concerned about with his constituents that he focus his attention for one or two of these letters from time to time upon the Department of the Treasury of the Province of Manitoba where they can give him by return mail, I'm sure, a very quick answer to some of the problems that are brought to him. These are mostly administrative decisions that he is looking for. These are not decisions that should be attended to by a committee of the Legislative Assembly muddling around in administrative matters which are really not matters of concern of a policy-making group.

Now my honourable friend says that - - he brings up the example for instance of the

(MR. LYON, cont'd) well-cribbing where part of it was bought from one supply house and no tax was charged and part of it was bought from another supply house and the tax was charged. He said, "And there the matter ends. There the matter ends," he says. Well the matter doesn't end there and the formation of a committee would not do anything to solve it, as he must be as aware as I am. The formation of a committee is not going to solve that. A letter from my honourable friend to the department asking for advice on it, or better still from the supply house, will solve it. --(Interjection) -- Well, if the supply house doesn't know, Mr. Speaker, there are people in government who do know, and if they don't know and if it's a new problem where they have to seek outside opinion, they'll seek it and eventually they'll work it out, and a committee of the Legislative Assembly, I suggest with the greatest of respect, is not going to be doing that with any greater expedience than the administrative officers.

MR. SHOEMAKER: Would my honourable friend permit a question?

MR. LYON: Yes.

MR. SHOEMAKER: If I as an ombudsman write to the Attorney-General's Department for a clear interpretation of the Act in every case that's presented before me, will they free of charge give me their interpretation? The Attorney-General's Department and not the Provincial Treasurer -- the Attorney-General.

MR. LYON: Oh, the Attorney-General's Department will do what I've just been saying. It will send it down to the Treasury, direct your mail where it should be going, and get you the right answer.

MR. T. P. HILLHOUSE, Q. C. (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, theoretically the Honourable the Attorney -- Oh, I'm sorry, are you through?

MR. LYON: No, I was just answering a question for my honourable friend.

So I don't really think, Mr. Speaker, that the examples that he has cited support in any way whatsoever the main thrust of his resolution before the House. The questions to which he seems to be seeking answers will not be received from a committee of the House. He goes on to cite the examples of clothing under \$25.00, and I don't know how this relates to the subject matter under debate at all. This is a matter that was settled last year. He said this would be a real improvement and he says he doesn't know how much it would cost but it would be a relaxation of the tax. Of course it would. And I want to tell my honourable friend that any one of us on this side of the House would join with him in saying we would like to see the tax relaxed as much as possible too, but being responsible people, as I know he is, we can't do it if we are going to raise the kinds of revenues that are needed to support education, to support all the other services which he, along with all other members of the House, wants to have in his constituency.

So it's that simple. That's fairly basic, that's fairly elementary, and I think we all understand that he has no special monopoly for instance on wanting to seek tax relief for his constituents. We would all like it. How many of us have said that we would like to see the sales tax abolished, if possible. Of course we would. That's what we would like, but we know responsibly that it can't be done, and referring it to the Law Amendments Committee is not going to help that, it's not going to help any situation that I am aware of.

Now my honourable friend made the classic statement when he said that because there was a tax on soap -- and if I'm wrong he can correct me but this was the way I wrote it down when he said it -- because there is a tax on soap, this is striking at the low income bracket people. I don't know what conclusion he expects us to draw, perhaps that they are cleaner people than the ones in the higher income bracket or what, but soap is a commodity that is used universally by most people. You take soap, you can take gasoline, you can take any item you want and say it would be better if there was no tax on it. Of course it would be. But how does that support an argument for going to Law Amendments Committee? Really, I fail to follow my honourable friend's argument in that regard at all.

MR. SHOEMAKER: They said last year the necessities of life would be excluded.

MR. LYON: The necessities of life -- the food -- the food --

MR. SHOEMAKER: The basic necessities.

MR. LYON: The food -- the food -- yes. And my honourable friend said "clothing -- why is it that the overalls that are required by the workmen are taxed?" But my honourable friend is wearing his overalls at the present time. His working clothes is the suit of clothes that he has on his back right now. And he talks about tax inconsistency, but he at the same time advances another consistency to end inconsistency that he suggests is in the Act. Of

(MR. LYON, cont'd) . . . course there are inconsistencies in the tax Act. I don't know of a piece of tax legislation in this country that isn't inconsistent in some way or another. All taxes are inconsistent in some way or another.

My honourable friend thinks that the examples that he has given are quite shocking, that it's inconsistent for instance that children's clothing is not taxed and that overalls are taxed, but my honourable friend knows full well, Mr. Speaker, that it's extremely difficult in some of these cases to make administrative decisions or for the retailer to make the administrative decision. For instance, if he or I walked into the Timothy Eaton store down town and bought a pair of overalls, what discerning clerk is supposed to know that my honourable friend and I are workmen or if we're members of the Legislative Assembly. How do you determine? Do you sign an affidavit every time you buy a suit of overalls? These are some of the practical reasons why it is difficult to exempt items such as workmen's clothing or work boots or whatever. I own work boots but I don't work in the work boots, so why shouldn't I pay tax when I buy them? But how is the retail clerk supposed to know this when somebody walks in and buys a pair of work boots?

So, my honourable friend, these arguments are so old that they have moss on them because we went through all of them last year. But there are administrative reasons for some of the non-exemptions, some of the non-exemptions that appear in the sales tax legislation, where I agree, the Minister agrees, and everyone else agrees it would be better if we could devise perhaps some system to create an exemption. It might be better, but so far it has escaped the intelligence of those charged with the administration of the tax as to how you do this equitably and fairly for all people, and at the same time maintain the degree of revenue that you wish to have from this taxation source in order to support the public services that all of us generate from this House.

My honourable friend concludes his argument by saying that the retail trade can't interpret the sales tax regulations, and that's another one of these broad statements that is based upon what miniscule example I don't know, but a broad statement saying that the retail trade in this province cannot interpret the sales tax legislation. Well, I merely say to my honourable friend that if they can't interpret it they're sure doing a land office business with it, because business continues, business is still flourishing in Manitoba, it's flourishing in Neepawa, it's flourishing in Gladstone, it's flourishing at Eaton's and at the Bay, and they seem to have adapted extremely well in terms of the retail trade to the tax system that has been implemented in Manitoba, and I don't know that the Eaton Company or the branch of Eaton's in Neepawa, or the farm supply house that he spoke of in Neepawa, are going to be any the wiser if we have a Law Amendments Committee with respect to their day-to-day business, and this is the import of what he would have us believe, that unless we establish the Law Amendments Committee to look at the sales tax legislation, why retail trade is not going to be able to interpret the Act. Well that, Mr. Speaker, to be charitable, is nonsense and my honourable friend knows it's nonsense.

I conclude my few remarks today by saying what I did at the beginning, that he made no argument for this case last year, he made less of an argument this year, and that there is no intention on this side of the House of supporting the resolution.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I was going to say that -- Mr. Speaker, I was going to say I was surprised by the words of my honourable friend the Attorney-General, but on second thought he seemed to be reverting back to last year after being a good boy here for a few weeks. He's at his shining again telling us how intelligent he is and trying to ridicule the members of this side of the House when they bring in constructive criticism.

Now he tells us how he wants us to be students of the parliamentary system. I think that he should start thinking of the reason why we're elected. We're not all clever; we're not all versed in the law as he is. We don't pretend to be, but what we're trying to do is trying to represent the people of Manitoba here.

He says that a formation of a committee would not change anything. Well, this is nonsense. I remember a committee last year after my honourable friend the Minister of Agriculture - especially the former Minister of Agriculture - had decided on this Potato Marketing Board. I remember a committee that had an awful lot to say and that changed the minds of the people across here. Why? Because there was pressure and that's the way our democratic system works.

We asked one thing in the House last year. We said that we were passing a blank cheque

(MR. DESJARDINS, cont'd) when we passed this Act, We wanted the regulations. We never got those regulations, and it was ridiculous. You wouldn't go to committee and you wouldn't even go in the House, because you wouldn't give the members of the opposition anything. You asked us to pass something - blank cheque, that's the best word for it.

And now my friend is trying to ridicule my deskmate. He says, what do you mean when you're talking about soap you're talking about the ordinary people? My friend means that there's a tax on soap but there's no tax on chocolates; that's what he means - that's what he means. My friend means that there's a tax on school supplies; there's no tax on Playboy and news magazines. Maybe he uses that to work; I don't know. He might be using this to work; I don't know. This is what my friend means. We say that if there was a committee, and if the people, the members of this House, not just collect their cheques but stand closer to the people of Manitoba, rub shoulders with them, they might find out a few things.

My honourable friend says that he admits he doesn't know anywhere where the tax are inconsistent. This is why we want to talk things over. This is why we want the people to have a chance to come here and talk about this. Why does my honourable friend permit all this, as he would have us believe, this waste of time last year when the potato growers were talking about the Board. Why? Didn't he tell us that the people here should take their responsibility? What's the difference? What's more important when we're taxing their money, when we're picking their pockets the way this government has been doing? We're supposed to smile and say, well this is fine, let us be students of parliamentary system. He's going to tell how the parliaments work in England and all over the place and ridicule my friend here. He tells us about clouding the debates; it's so important. We'll hear the Minister of Welfare repeat a speech that an Indian Chief made, something about the Federal Government, when we're elected to represent the people of Manitoba. We've got time for this, we've got time

HON. J. B. CARROLL (Minister of Welfare) (The Pas): On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DESJARDINS: What's your privilege.

MR. CARROLL: This is the second time the member for St. Boniface has accused me of quoting somebody's speech. I wish he would produce the newspaper article. I think the newspaper comments that he was referring to were in the paper after my speech had been delivered. I wasn't quoting anybody's speech. I want him to know that all the thoughts and ideas were my own. I would ask him to retract.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, it wasn't an accusation; it was the best speech I've heard my friend make. It's true that I read this after you made your speech, but of course they referred to the date that that Indian Chief made the speech and it was a few days before your speech. I'm not making any accusations; maybe you work together. I'm certainly not going to retract anything, you can rest assured of that.

MR. CARROLL: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I have indicated that I wasn't aware of that speech; I did not quote that speech; and if he insists on attributing this to me, I am going to demand that he retract.

MR. DESJARDINS: He can demand retract all day. I said it was the best speech he made but it should have been made in Ottawa, and I said it was the same thing that I read in the paper a few days after from an Indian Chief. I'm not going to retract that because I'd be lying, Mr. Speaker. I said the truth.

MR. LYON: On a point of order, is my honourable friend saying to the House that he is not prepared to accept the statement of a member standing in his place with respect to a statement that he has made, because if he isn't he's committing quite a serious breach of the rules of this House. If he is not prepared to accept the statement of a member, then he'd better have grounds for he is committing a very serious breach of the rules.

MR. DESJARDINS: There's the red herring. He's going to ask me what I'm not prepared to say. I'm prepared to say exactly what I said and I'm going to repeat it, and then you can wink all you want but I'm not going to retract it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. I may have appeared to delay in getting into this matter, but I spoke along these lines a few days ago. The Minister did rise and requested, or at least gave an opinion on something that the honourable gentleman had mentioned a day or so ago, and I wonder if the honourable gentleman would not accept the Minister's opinion in that regard as such.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I never said I didn't accept this. I said that the

(MR. DESJARDINS, Cont'd) . . . Minister was talking about losing time here, he didn't want any part

MR. SPEAKER: Just a moment, please. The Minister did say in his remarks that on two occasions you had mentioned the fact that he had used the words of an Indian Chief in a speech. The Minister in a few simple words said that he did not, and I wonder if the honourable gentleman would accept that as an explanation and not refer to the matter again.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I did not say that he used the words -- I said that it was the same speech. As far as I am concerned, it was the same material. If he's got nothing to do with this, if it's a coincidence -- if that's what he said, I'll accept his word. It was quite a coincidence. But I did not make any accusation, let's get this straight.

MR. SPEAKER: It is not my purpose to debate with the honourable member as he knows. All I am trying to do is to keep the business of the House going along as it normally does, and I notice the honourable gentleman, as sincere as he is, does have a tendency to probably let the blood rise a little.

MR. DESJARDINS: Well, with me it's the blood and with the Attorney-General it's a red herring, so it's the same color anyway, so if he keeps quiet I'll go back to my speech.

The point that I was trying to make -- and I'm not going to be too long -- that I don't like the Attorney-General to get up in this holy attitude, this know-it-all attitude and ridicule the members from this side when we bring constructive criticism. Now he tells us about the parliamentary system, and he knows all that, he's an expert on that. We know that. -- (Interjection) -- Oh yes, you're too modest, you're way too modest. He knows all these things, but in the meantime we are bringing what we feel, in our humble way, not too intelligent -- not too intelligent -- (Interjection) -- Thank you.

MR. LYON: Would my honourable friend permit me to go out for my gypsy violin to play background music for him?

MR. DESJARDINS: You're probably an expert at playing that too.

MR. SPEAKER: I would appeal to the honourable Attorney-General to meet the wishes and not interrupt the honourable gentleman while he has the floor.

MR. DESJARDINS: That's the first time I won against you and it won't be the last.

Now Mr. Speaker, in all seriousness, we were asking last year if we weren't allowed -- the people of Manitoba were not allowed to express their opinion except through us. We've asked for an ombudsman and we can't get it. Now we're told, write letters. Well, Mr. Speaker, my friend is not serious when he says that. We're not going to start writing a letter every time there's something, especially when it takes three months to get an answer. On this same subject, I've had occasion to question the department and my question was made -- for once I didn't have to have the Attorney-General direct this to the right department like he says -- I asked my question of the right department and I didn't get the proper answer. They said that's the law; we don't make the laws, you guys do -- referring to me as a member of the House -- you guys make the laws. This is what I was told by the department of my honourable friend.

Now all we're asking is that a committee have a chance to get together, a committee of this House, and this could be done in an orderly way. We can have delegations coming in. You'd have people that would come in and say, "I don't think this is what you meant; I don't think that you would like to see the soap taxed but not the chocolates." And we would discuss this; we would see what happens. Probably on this side of the House we would say, "Don't tax the soap", and they'd say, "Don't tax the chocolates." They'd win, but at least it would come in the open. And the same thing would happen when we talk about the school supplies and Playboy and whatever these magazines are.

A MEMBER: The workbook of the Attorney-General.

MR. JOHNSON: What's Playboy?

MR. DESJARDINS: That's your workbook, George. That's the one you run around with under your arm all day, with the big long page in the middle. That's the one.

Well Mr. Speaker, this is starting to be -- we're going on another subject here. Oh well, there's children's clothing, my honourable friends, but that's true, that's another thing. You have a child that might be a 12 year old and he's big. You're paying more money for him and he probably eats like a horse and he's big. Then you've got a fellow that's 14 who's a little runt. The young fellow you've penalized -- that's discrimination -- you're penalized. And then you stop and say, "All right, you don't pay any tax on the children but on students". And

(MR. DESJARDINS, cont'd) . . . then we're talking about how much it costs on education and so on, and we're putting more taxes on the homeowner and so on, but to buy clothes for the student you have to pay taxes and this costs more money.

I don't think it's proper to start rehashing what we did last year but I think that it would be important to have a committee so the Attorney-General and I and all the members here can rub shoulders with the worker and let them give us their impressions. And at least if my honourable friend wants to vote against this, please don't take this attitude of trying to ridicule the member from this House because he's trying to bring in what he thinks is a good suggestion. This is all I ask.

MR. SPEAKER: It was moved by the Honourable Member for Logan, seconded by the Honourable Member for Brokenhead, that the debate be adjourned. Are you of the same mind?

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

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

MR. DAWSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg, with leave of the House, to have this matter stand.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: In the absence of the honourable member, we would ask leave that this matter stand.

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

MR. PETER FOX (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Burrows,

Whereas the 40 hour work week has become the accepted standard in industry; and

Whereas the Employment Standards Act discriminates between the sexes in regards to hours of work; and

Whereas the application of the Act becomes ambiguous in its application where men and women are employed equally in the same industry and shop;

Therefore be it resolved that the Act be amended to make the 40 hour work week a standard for all employees in Manitoba under the Employment Standards Act.

MR. SPEAKER: I didn't get your seconder's name.

MR. FOX: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry for this distraction but the hour being so close I was a little hesitant to start. Nevertheless, I will and I'll see how far I can proceed with this matter.

This is a simple resolution, Mr. Chairman, and the reason I've brought it in -- in fact I wanted first of all to say I'd like to commend the Minister of Labour and the government for bringing in some amendments to The Employment Standards Act, and when the Bill was before us, Bill 31, I did express that I was disappointed we hadn't touched on this subject. Now I think when something has become an accomplished fact then there's no need to pass a law any more if everyone is practising it, and it seems to me that in this case this is what we are waiting for, until every nail has been hammered home, until every industry has got the 40 hours, and then we shall proceed with passing a statute or amending the Act to make the 40 hour mandatory.

Now why have I brought this thing forward, Mr. Speaker? There are a number of reasons. Primarily, as I said, because the practice is already prevalent. I have statistics. They are a little dated because apparently DBS statistics are not compiled from month to month; we get them five or six months later. But in the Labour Gazette of March, the March issue for this year, on Page 182 there is an indication of the average weekly hours worked in the provinces from Newfoundland all the way to B. C., and for Manitoba we have in the period of August, 1967, which is the latest figures that they have, 39.4 hours; in September, 1966, they had 40.5; and September, 1967, they're down to 39.7. Now I agree that this is an average and doesn't indicate that everyone is working, but at least it does indicate that a great majority are working 40 hours or less, if there are others that are working 48 or 44 or whatever you have over the 40. I know for a certainty that the civil service which work for this government doesn't work a 40 hour week. I know in my own industry we've had the 40 hour week for a long time.

(MR. FOX, cont'd)

Incidentally, on this same page of the statistics there is indicated the average for all of Canada from 1962 on to the present -- or the latest figure is 1966, and in all those years the average has been 40.7 for 1962, 40.8 for 1963, 41 for 1964, 41 for 1965, and 40.8 for 1966. And this, as I've said, is the total average all the way across Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if this isn't sufficient to indicate that we should go to the 40 hour week, I would like to indicate there are another number of reasons why I do not think that the present statute as it is is correct. First of all, we have under the Employment Standards Act the indication that the standard hours of work during which an employer may subject, as herein provided, require or permit an employee to work are a maximum of 8 hours in any day: (a) if a male employee, a maximum of 48 hours in any week; (b) if a female employee, a maximum 44 hours in any week. Now here we have been saying for a long time we've got a five day 40 hour week, at least to that effect, and yet according to the standard that we have under this Employment Standards Act people are subjected to working six days a week, because in order to get 48 hours under an eight hour day, which is what the law says, they must work six days. I don't think that this is right.

On top of that, as I said, we have a differential between male and female. Now the other day the Minister indicated that he wanted a difference to be chivalrous to the ladies. Well I think this is commendable; let's be chivalrous to the ladies. But if in doing this we're going to be chivalrous and at the same time place these people that are females in a less economic advantageous position than the men, then we're not being chivalrous at all. So therefore, as I say, I do not think that that argument really holds.

The other point about being chivalrous: let us consider the fact that if these women are working and they are mothers, then let's be chivalrous enough to get them higher and better wages and shorter working hours so they can stay at home and look after their children a few extra hours per week. This would be more chivalrous. We're always complaining about juvenile delinquency and many other things, yet some of these women are forced to work to earn a livelihood for themselves and their children and we do not want to be chivalrous enough to make the hours of work a little shorter with a little more pay to them so that they would have a chance to look after their families in a better manner.

The other point about it, Mr. Speaker, that is also ambiguous and discriminatory in this Act, is that it isn't sufficient that we've got all kinds of exemptions from the normal 48 hours and the 44 hours - the 48 for the men and the 44 for the women - ad infinitum, you could say, there are as many exemptions as you could shake a stick at, but on top of that we say when - and I'll read this section - "Where both male and female employees are employed within a classification or within an integrated sequence of production operation, the Board may upon application exempt the employer from the obligation to pay two employees of one sex so employed overtime rates on a basis differing from the basis applicable to the employees of the other sex so employed." This, in essence, means that we're really being chivalrous now. We're saying if you work with the men, ladies, we're not going to treat you in a chivalrous manner, we're just going to make you work 48 hours, not like the others that are working in the shop where there are only ladies, and you won't get overtime after 44, you'll get overtime only after 48. Now if we're going to be fair, if we're going to be chivalrous, let's be consistent. If they're ladies, pay them the same at all times; don't change the rules from one shop to another. I think that this is something that really needs consideration too.

I see, Mr. Speaker, that I will not get done . . .

MR. SPEAKER: It is 5:30. I'm sure that the honourable gentleman has more to say on the matter and possibly with leave of the House it could be left open.

MR. FOX: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable the Provincial Treasurer, that the House do now adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion and after a voice vote declared the motion carried and the House adjourned until 2:30 Monday afternoon.