

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
8:00 o' clock, Monday, May 7, 1973

SUPPLY - HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 21, Resolution 55 (a)(1) -- passed. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. TRUEMAN: Mr. Chairman, I wasn't certain whether the Minister had finished answering his questions but I have some more remarks that I would like to make on this item.

MR. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Point of order.

MR. BARROW: I had the floor Friday at twenty after five, half past five.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right. I believe the honourable member has 21 minutes.

MR. BARROW: Twenty-one. That's a hockey period.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right. The honourable member has 21 minutes.

MR. BARROW: Listen, you'll hear something. Mr. Chairman, before I start, I gave that letter from Mrs. Ann Moore and I'd displaced her other letter, and both these letters are signed and can be tabled. Here's what she's saying. This letter was written in 1967 to all MLAs and to all MPs. And she got some nice letters back. I'll read it to you and I'll quote. "We talk about the brain drain; we talk about the highway and traffic accidents; we talk about the school drop-outs, the retarded" -- no offence to the Member from Charleswood -- "but do we ever stop to think about the tragedy of men, women, teenagers and children who are mentally disturbed and spend endless months, sometimes years in institutions, outdated ones at that? We spend millions on obsolete planes - the Hydrofoil, which was just recently scrapped, about some 50 million alone. We subsize railroads, the airlines, the B. and B. survey cost seven and one-half million to date. In 1966 our CBC cost \$5.90 per capita, for what? For colour TV and furniture for a few top executives. In Flin Flon at that time we had reruns and relays.

In proportion what did we spend on mental health research? Five cents. Yes, five cents per capita. We boast that Canada is a wealthy country, one of the best fed nations in the world and yet all we can afford is five cents per capita on mental health research. Our politicians, every member provincially and federally right up to the Prime Minister should hang their heads in shame to allow statistics like this to take place and be made public. What a cruel thing to subject our mentally disturbed to overcrowded old-fashioned and outdated institutions. We can spend thousands on such an article. Mallard explosion is needed in Manitoba. How ridiculous can we get? A duck is equivalent to a human being. I wonder how much the advertising on People's Path or watch T.V. even reruns -- we must be healthy. I believe health comes first or we can not enjoy any of the other things in life. If some of the money spent in the Defence Department since 1956, which is in excess of \$700 million, had been geared towards mental health research instead of trying to compete with the United States, Britain and Japan for such things as the velvet glove, sparrows numbers one, two and three, the aero adventure, the bobcat troop carrier, the bomb tossed computer, the hydrofoil, etc., I am sure all Canadians would have benefitted more. While I realize there's an extreme shortage of professionally trained personnel in the mental health field then let the powers that be smarten up and institute a crash education program to alleviate this shortage. Instead of spending many millions on defence weapons that is outdated and often obsolete before it ever gets off the assembly line. Do the MLA's and MP's not care about these people because they don't vote? Other members of their families do. If so, why has nothing much ever been mentioned in provincial and federal sessions of parliament? Don't think that you're exempt because mental illness can strike you or any member of your family." And this is just signed Mrs. Bruce Moore, 79 Tweedsmuir Street, Flin Flon, Manitoba.

Mr. Chairman, these letters can be tabled if you wish, and I'm going to call on my colleague to answer to this concerned parent, and there are many of them, and will you try something. They say that injections of B-12 for schizophrenics are effective in other provinces. Why don't we do it here? Will you consider follow-up programs on these people? Will you take every step to remove the stigma attached to the mentally ill. Will you encourage the same program as they have in AA towards the mentally ill?

Now, Mr. Speaker -- pardon me, Mr. Chairman, I misplaced my glasses. I imagine one of the opposition picked them up and refused to return them. We have constantly been

SUPPLY - HEALTH

(MR. BARROW cont'd) accused as a government of encouraging welfare and welfare bums. We are repeatedly being confronted with the fallacy that the majority of those people receiving assistance are good for nothing drunken imbeciles. I am surprised at the logic and the double standards of those that accuse us. Those that are supposedly the representatives of the people regardless of class distinction, racial origin and cultural values. That includes Poles.

The Honourable Member of Fort Rouge in this very room emotionally informed us of the deprived situation of the working poor, yet that same person can drive her car on Main Street, lock her doors and whisper to herself, there but for the Grace of God go I. --(Interjection)-- I'll get you later. For those among us whose feelings are numb, for those among us whose springs of compassion have long dried up, let me tell you what constitutes, what forms the group that you so labelled and degraded. Mothers that are deserted, widowed and alone with dependent children. Adults infirm in and outside institutions. Aged people in and outside of institutions. Unemployables due to physical or mental incapacity. I would like to further state that the small remainder in no way falls in the category of bums. These are the unfortunates. These are the people who require assistance not only in finding a job but in maintaining a job. And more has been done with these people under this government both north and south of 53 than has been done in the eleven years of preceding governments.

To you who sit surrounded by riches -- (I'm talking to you, Mr. Borowski)-- to you who by virtue of colour and class hold membership, to you whose mistakes are covered by hypocritical oaths, and associations, to you who above all you've got still milk the system, I say others less fortunate than yourselves are also entitled to have a drink, indulge in sex, be forgiven a few mistakes and taught the system. The majority of people in my constituency who are dependent on the public purse are people who fish and trap for a livelihood, an occupation I'm sure you must agree is extremely sporadic and dependent on natural conditions. They're not bums. That is all they have been taught. Is it their fault that they are not doctors, vocal wise vocal wise I say, that they're not lawyers, social workers, nurses, policemen, inspectors, firemen and God forbid, politicians? They live from the land as did our forefathers. Should relief have been stopped in the dirty 30's? What is the difference? The fact that they now can constitute a minority. To live in common law is a grave sin. What do you call a fleeting affair with a nurse or a secretary? That's the good part of my speech. --(Interjection)-- Who is making this speech, Mr. Mackling?

Now if you want to get your teeth into something, if you want an issue, here it is, here it is for you. In 1971 INCO paid not a penny of income tax although it had net earnings of \$210 million and profits of 94.2 million. In fact not only did they pay no income tax, it received an income tax credit of \$2.8 million. --(Interjection)-- That's performance! That it . . . can deduct from income tax payments in the future. Between 1966 and 1971 INCO deferred payment of income tax of \$170.2 million as the present law allows it to do. Until it pays, which it may never do, that money --(Interjection)-- we'll change over the Kierans Report, we'll change it. I'll tell . . . until it pays, which it may never do, that money amounts to an interest-free loan from the Canadian people to this powerful corporation. --(Interjection)-- Do you want me to table it? Do you want me to table it?

A MEMBER: No. Forget it? It's garbage anyway.

MR. BARROW: This is from a magazine that has never been known to lie, distort or exaggerate - dimension.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

A MEMBER: Name one.

MR. BARROW: Name what? The Dimension. The Dimension. Never been distorted. Now, Mr. Speaker, my friend from Thompson raised such a furor of a man that had a chance for employment in an institution where he was an inmate. And I'd like to read this article by Val Werier. I've never met this man but I'm going to meet him because his articles is terrific. I'll quote him. --(Interjection)-- These rude interruptions, Mr. Speaker.

"Gordon was a successful businessman and very well respected in his field. He had a family a nice home and a reputation as a worker in the community. Then his whole life came tumbling down. Apparently in debt he tried to extricate" -- my limited education is a handicap to me. "But anyway he got out of it and he resorted to fraud. He was caught and charged with fraud and sentenced to 18 months in jail. It was a shattering blow. He had

SUPPLY - HEALTH

(MR. BARROW cont'd) never been in trouble before and now at the age of 40 he was going to jail. At Headingley Jail" -- and you Winnipeg people should be interested in this -- "he became executive secretary to the resident council. This is a council chosen by inmates to represent them in matters with the administration. The council meets weekly with administration officials to discuss problems and recommend changes. The council concept was introduced two years ago" -- that's under our government, two years ago -- "to achieve better relationships within the institution." We believe that inmates of institutions are human beings. "Gordon was very much the spokesman for the inmates. An enterprising individual himself and one with executive background he was persistent in raising questions which he thought required some changes. Some of the staff may have taken a dim view when they seen him disturbing the status quo. He was challenging the system" -- and there's where he got in trouble with my honourable friend from Thompson, he was challenging the system. "And he assisted in bringing about some changes" -- and good changes, listen to this.

"One of the council's aims was to improve the program of legal aid for those in Headingley Jail. Legal aid wasn't always available for prisoners on remand waiting for trial. Once a person was locked up the provision of legal aid was wound up in red tape and delays. For example, there was a difficulty of getting to a phone should a lawyer call." Imagine not being able to get to a phone to talk to your lawyer. "In addition to those on remand persons already sentenced and serving time often require legal advice for problems concerning the family debt or other matters. But once a man was sentenced essentially he was deprived of legal aid. The problem was solved by having a legal aid lawyer visit Headingley on a regular basis. Gordon as well as the administration was concerned about the difficulty of an inmate obtaining community assistance once he left Headingley. Then the ex-inmate was pretty well on his own. Gordon raised questions about making access easier to existing services of a community. Apparently the guards" -- and there's a point, the guards -- "at the jail did not like Gordon. They felt he was an agitator. According to one administrator he was too persistent in his views and rubbed some of the guards the wrong way. He wasn't active in a negative sense says Doug Lawrence, Superintendent of Headingley Jail, Sure, he was seeking change." And what's wrong with that? "And so as the President of the Resident Council Gordon was paroled from Headingley Jail after serving one year. He went on to university to take a couple of courses in an attempt to enter the field of corrections because he feels there's a lot to be done. This week in fact he started working at Headingley which resulted in a much publicized decision of the guards to protest his hiring and threatened to go on strike. The guards have some strange reason for protesting his employment at Headingley. First of all, they're against any inmate working at the institution." There's a point. There's a real good point because personally I have done a little time myself. I spent 28 days detention. I've been picked up for looking for work, I've been picked up for vagrancy and I've spent time. But still I don't think this should be held against any inmate. Where is the Member from Thompson? --(Interjection)-- Talking? Why doesn't he listen for a change?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

MR. BARROW: "It has been suggested too that he may be pressured by inmates into bringing in contraband or create a security risk". How stupid can you get? "Worse still said the guard spokesman, he may become involved in a fight with an inmate. In such a case a fellow guard might be injured when he goes to his assistance. These are pretty feeble arguments against hiring Gordon." Incidentally this is not his right name. "The main point is whether Gordon is qualified to do the job. If anything, if anything, his experience at Headingley should help, help him in his new vocation. He will be working in the community re-entry program. In this position he will try to locate jobs for inmates, take them out for interviews with employers; help them find accommodation if necessary, arrange entry to school if desirable. One of his chief tasks was to help inmates find their way into community programs. He will not be working in the main jail. He'll be in the annex where men reside the last 40 days before leaving jail. The only time he will go into the main jail, but not into cell area, is when he has to visit the offices there, and his new job won't depend on his popularity with the guards, it will depend how well he works with the department inmates. Obviously the inmates thought highly of him for they elected him to the residence council. Now here is the man that my honourable friend -- when I say honourable friend I mean honourable friend, and where is he? --(Interjection)-- He's gone. --(Interjection) Come on

SUPPLY - HEALTH

(MR. BARROW cont'd) down, Joe. Come on down. --(Interjection)-- I have more to say to you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. The Honourable member will address his remarks to the Chair and other members will be silent while that honourable member is on the floor.

MR. BARROW: Now, the biggest, the biggest --(Interjection)-- I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, if I seem a little stuffy in my speech -- The biggest abuse of welfare are mining companies. Now what I'm going to do now, Mr. Chairman, is do a little reminiscing on the Kierans Report because it is welfare abuse of the worst kind.

Chapter One. This chapter gives this a little background of past, past, past, government policies. Reference is made to naive and immature government which made poor resource politics. --(Interjection)-- No. It then states that the government is responsible to the people to use their resources efficiently and wisely. If their credit and capital are squandered, if their labour is not employed . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member's time has expired.

MR. BARROW: Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member got leave? No leave is granted.

MR. BARROW: Well on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. On a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. There's no point of order before the House. All right, point of order. Oh, you're raising a point of order?

MR. BARROW: I'm raising a point of order. Then if I can't finish this speech now, may I finish it later because I've got more to say.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any honourable member in Estimates can speak as many times as he can gain the floor. For 30 minutes. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. TRUEMAN: Mr. Speaker, on Friday morning last the Minister of Health and Social Development told us that he held meaningful dialogue with professional groups, and I think if any of us wants to check Hansard for May 4th in the morning you'll find that this is so. And I feel and I must take this opportunity to set the record straight, and to tell it as it is.

During previous debates I've referred to the anti-professionalism syndrome of the NDP Party, with specific mention of a down-grading of the social work component in the Department of Health and Social Development, and my colleague the Member for Fort Garry has spoken of a cold war that has developed with the medical profession.

Well, Mr. Chairman, the war with the Dental Association is now heating up. The government has unilaterally established the rates to be paid for dental work for social assistance recipients, although the Dental Association had wished to arrive at a fee schedule through negotiation. While this government so zealously guards the rights of labour unions to bargain and negotiate their pay rates, however that privilege has not been granted to the Manitoba Dental Association.

I want to read into the record parts of two letters. The first is sent by the Manitoba Dental Association to the - a member dentist. In it they state: "The social allowance schedule of benefits circulated to the membership by the Provincial Government does not in any way represent a negotiated fee schedule. The government on their own drafted their schedule and would not listen to our request to base it on the 1971 MDA fee schedule. We no longer have any agreement or commitment with the Provincial Government about the provisions of services for social allowance recipients, and we ask that each determine if he is prepared to treat social allowance recipients." A letter we sent to the Minister of Health about this subject is attached.

In that letter, Mr. Chairman, the President of the Association states: "That in February the membership of the Manitoba Dental Association was told that at the final meeting of the H . . . Committee and the executive, we were informed that the benefit schedule would not under any circumstances be based on the current recommended schedule of fees of the association. The membership was also told that Mr. Miller had stressed this in spite of our express desire to negotiate a social allowance schedule on the same basis as agreements with the Workmen's Compensation Board, Autopac, and other third party agents. They were informed also that in spite of our argument for uniformity, Mr. Miller reiterated that

(1) The social allowance payments would be developed by the government and would be presented to us as a procedure benefit list, and;

SUPPLY - HEALTH

(MRS. TRUEMAN cont'd)

(2) That this list in his opinion, and we assume in the opinion of yourself, " this is addressed to Mr. Toupin, "and the opinion of yourself and Mr. Hanuschak was to be considered relative to social allowance dentistry and wasn't relevant to other agreements, past or future, since each other agreement would have to be negotiated separately on its own merits, just as union labour contracts are negotiated.

"The benefit schedule was disclosed in late March to be effective April 1st, 1973. It was circulated under a title indicating that it was a joint product of the negotiation of the Manitoba Government and the Manitoba Dental Association. It is necessary to point out that:

(1) The benefit schedule is not a joint document of the Government of Manitoba and Manitoba Dental Association;

(2) That it is in fact a list of services and payments to be made for those services when given to social allowance recipients, a list produced unilaterally without discussion or request for comment or review by the Association; and that

(3) The benefit schedule is not approved by or acceptable to the Manitoba Dental Association;

(4) It is considered arbitrary and unrealistic; and

(5) The Manitoba Dental Association does not accept the existence of any contract or agreement to continue to provide anybody emergency services to persons covered by the social allowance benefit list. " They go on to say that each dentist can make his own decision about treating these people.

Further down in the letter he says, "We feel strongly under the present circumstances that the social allowance recipient requiring dental care is being discriminated against doubly by the Manitoba Government because:

(1) The services allowed are minimal; and because

(2) The benefits allowed are so deficient that preventive or comprehensive care of these persons is impossible and is frankly discouraged.

This is truly a regrettable situation which we sincerely hope will be rectified."

Well Mr. Speaker, this describes the relationship which exists at the present time between . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Point of order for the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. J. R. (Bud) BOYCE (Winnipeg Centre): Would the honourable member table the letter, please?

MRS. TRUEMAN: Yes, I'll table copies of both letters.

Well, Mr. Chairman, it's obvious that there has been no meaningful dialogue here. The action has been unilateral, autocratic, and dictatorial, and it's typical of the way that this government deals with the professions.

Furthermore, the Minister has announced a proposed dental care plan, a universal dental care plan for children some time within the next four years. He frankly states that the Study Committee which is preparing to introduce such a program is in-House without representation from the elected representatives of the dental profession. They apparently are to be consulted after the fact. Well this is - to use one of the government's empty cliché's, this is not equality of the human condition. I think it's blatant politicking and it's meant to leave, it's meant to leave an impression that something is going to be done when an election is in the offing and is something that the government may very well not be able to deliver. --(Interjection)--

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to deal with some of the questions posed of me in the last few days. I'd like to go back to the question asked by the Honourable Member for Rhineland. He made reference to an amount of \$590,000 for Home Care Services within my Estimates. When we get to that appropriation within the Estimates the honourable member will find a million dollars through the Department of Health and Social Development and an additional \$500,000 in the Budget of the Manitoba Health Services Commission, to give a grand total of a million, five. Details will be supplied when we hit these items.

I think the Honourable Member for - I forget the - the member's constituency --(Interjection)-- no Henderson. Pembina. He was asking I believe the cost of Professor Barber's study. Professor Barber's study was commissioned by Planning and Priority a Sub-Committee

SUPPLY - HEALTH

(MR. TOUPIN cont'd)of Cabinet, and the cost was \$8,700 in salaries, and a 124.54 for travel expenses. That was a grand total of what was paid to Professor Barber by - not by my department but by Planning and Priority Committee of Committee.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to lay on the record some information pertaining to the relationship of my department and the Medical Association. Let me repeat what I have previously said. The Health Services Act provides that the Commission, the Manitoba Health Services Commission - I don't know if the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge will realize that, but here it is. She can read it in Hansard if she can't hear me now. The Act provides that the Health Services Commission may negotiate an agreement establishing a fee schedule. That's within the Act. The first such schedule was established in 1969, and I would ask any member on the other side of the House to give me the base, on that base that the schedule was established on back in 1969. If they could tell me the base of that schedule, they're much better than I am or anyone in my department, because there was no such base established back in 1969, and yet there was a new fee schedule. That schedule assisted, that schedule assisted the doctors in getting an immediate increase in their income of 30 percent back in 1969. --(Interjection)-- Since then medical payments have gone up by some 15 percent in total in the last three years. Does the Member for Fort Garry, did the Member for Fort Garry, Mr. Chairman hear this, that in the last three years that the costs have gone up by 15 percent in the last three years without a revision, without a revision in the salary.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, would the minister submit to a question?

MR. TOUPIN: Later please. And that was even without an increase in the fees paid for individual procedures. However some doctors were not sharing equally in the increased income, and we realize that, and the MMA made certain representations to the Manitoba Health Services Commission where they should, and it is to the credit of the MMA that they wished to correct imbalances in the fee schedule and improve the position of the low earners among their colleagues which were earning much more, so they negotiated in good faith, in perfectly good faith. A member of the . . . adjustment in the fee schedule, they negotiated - the MMA, the Manitoba Health Services Commission through its negotiator. When you attempt to make a redistribution of income, of medical income especially, in a more equitable way it would only confuse the issue if at the same time you increased payments across the board. I understand at one time the officers of the MMA were also of this opinion -- and that came to us by our negotiator.

But having achieved this redistribution at the request of the MMA, this does not rule out continuing negotiations to test the adequacy of compensation for all doctors in the Province of Manitoba. These negotiations are going on at this time. There is an understanding between the MMA and the Manitoba Health Services Commission that they will proceed toward a conclusion of a formal agreement, which never existed during the previous administration.

I would like, Mr. Chairman, to express the earnest hope that the dialogue with the Medical Profession could take place on a broader basis than the discussion of rates of payment for specific procedures. I would like, I would like them to consider total health services costs. This week, Ministers of Finance, Ministers of Health, Ministers of Education, are meeting in Ottawa to discuss future arrangements for health cost-sharing. Unfortunately I am unable to attend the conference because of my responsibilities here during my Estimates.

The Federal Government is no longer willing to continue an open-ended agreement for cost-sharing. They are attempting to impose a ceiling on cost escalation amounting to between eight and nine percent annually. If this happens we will be hard pressed to find the means to meet salary increases for hospital workers and other uncontrollable cost escalations which have been amounting to more than this percentage increase a year. Many health costs besides doctor's fees are influenced by the decision doctors make. They admit patients to hospitals; they also discharge patients; they order a lab test and X-ray tests; they prescribe drugs; they influence practically every health care cost that you or I can imagine. We face a situation where there is a ceiling on the total we can spend on health care, and the point has been made very clear by the Federal Government. They do want to impose a ceiling on the cost of health and welfare in Canada. I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that in the future the amount we can spend to improve medical incomes will be heavily influenced by the amount we can save in other areas of health care. Only the doctors themselves are in a position to really help in making these savings; this is the contest we should in future discuss their own

SUPPLY - HEALTH

(MR. TOUPIN cont'd) incomes with them. I hope this is the kind of negotiation we can carry on with doctors in the months to come. They are in the best position to help us, to help the people of Manitoba and in the process to help themselves.

I did, Mr. Chairman, the other day make reference to certain statistics that had been supplied to us by the Federal Government. I would like to lay on the records maybe only one table of ratios that will again indicate to honourable members of the House where we as a province stand pertaining to doctors per citizens in the Province of Manitoba. Newfoundland in the last year that we have before us here, 1971, was a 1, 090; P. E. I. - 1, 143; Nova Scotia - 730; New Brunswick - 1, 043; Quebec - 660; Ontario - 616; Manitoba - 644; Saskatchewan - 821; Alberta - 683; British Columbia - 603; Yukon - 1, 059; Northwest Territories - 1, 250; and Canada - 661. Per capita we were the third in Canada. We the Province of Manitoba considered a have-not province were the third in Canada pertaining to doctor in ratio to individuals in our province.

A MEMBER: Pretty good record.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Chairman, I hate to dwell on a point that - it gets very close to my heart in a sense and very close to my feelings as an individual, but I believe that I must put on the record a statement which I believe to be a government statement, and that's in regards to the question posed by the Honourable Member for Thompson, and this deals with the question of abortions in the Province of Manitoba. Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Thompson has once again raised the question of legal abortions. Let me say here and now that this is a subject which I cannot take lightly. I only regret that the Member for Thompson presents his arguments with such violent and immoderate language and with such twisted logic. Under the circumstance it is impossible to develop a reasonable dialogue on this serious social problem which troubles me as much as any member present in this House. As a person with a conscience and one who has been taught in the tradition which holds human life to be sacred, I am myself inwardly torn by the arguments for and against legal abortions. As Minister of Health and Social Development however I know where my duties lie. I know to begin with that persons applying for abortions are governed by federal law; nothing can be done provincially either to abet or hinder that law.

A MEMBER: Hear, hear. It's stupid to think otherwise.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

MR. TOUPIN: I know that under the hospital and medical plans the province is obliged to cover all services required to maintain life and good health. Can I repeat this sentence, I believe it's very important, --(Interjection)-- I know because I've been told, not because of my knowledge that under the hospital and medical plans the provinces in Canada are obliged to cover all services required to maintain life and good health. All that we would achieve is a double standard for the rich and poor if we try to change that. The rich to whom the cost is no consideration would remain free to make the choice and pay the hospital and medical costs out of their own pocket. The poor would look for cheaper alternatives and we might find ourselves with an increasing number of illegal abortions performed in backrooms by quacks. (Hear, Hear.) As Minister of Health and Social Development I know that it is my duty to ensure that medical procedures demanded by the public, and permissible under law, are carried out safely, and are available to rich and poor alike on equal conditions. I must therefore reject as immoral, impractical and impossible the suggestions that legal abortions should be excluded from the list of insured hospital and medical benefits. Because this is actually arrived at in an agreement between the provinces and the Government of Canada. Let this therefore stand on the record as my official position, but permit me, Mr. Chairman to add a personal view. I sincerely believe that we must in our society seek to raise the general moral standards. (Hear, Hear) I do not believe that an increasing number of abortions is the right answer to population control, or will in the long run add to the stability of our social structure. I hope through my department, through the MMA, through the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and all other groups in our province, we can improve the state of health, social conditions, and family stability, so that the physical, mental, and social problems, which contribute to the demand for legal abortions, may be minimized to save the life of the expectant mother.

Not having, Mr. Chairman, all the answers to the question in regards to abortion I

SUPPLY - HEALTH

(MR. TOUPIN cont'd) inquired with my federal counterpart in Ottawa, Mr. Marc Lalonde, and with some of my counterparts in other provinces in Canada, of which one was Dr. Potter in Ontario -- I've had many discussions with Dr. Potter, and I've talked equally recently with the College of Physicians and Surgeons, with Dr. James Morrison, the registrar. And I would like to read into the record a conversation that we had where I asked certain questions to Dr. Morrison in regards to the responsibility of the College of Physicians and Surgeons pertaining to abortions, pertaining to the conduct of medical practitioners in the Province of Manitoba. I phoned the College on the 2nd of May 1973 with respect to the matter of abortions. I had been talking to Dr. Potter, Minister of Health for Ontario, who had said that the investment of abortion committees rested with the College and not with the Department of Health and Social Development. I did wish clarification on Manitoba's situation. Dr. Morrison explained that the Medical Act, which is a public one, is administered by the College of Physicians and Surgeons and is therefore the vehicle by which all doctors are disciplined, or by which investigation into professional conduct is carried out. We would do this on complaints received from the Minister of Health or from any responsible individual or body in the Province of Manitoba.

With respect to Abortion Committees, I explained that these were appointed by the boards of hospitals concerned, which must be either accredited hospitals, or hospitals specifically approved for the purpose of abortions by the Minister of Health of the province. The members of the Abortion Committee of any hospital are appointed in accordance with the Criminal Code of Canada which states in Subsection 6(f) of Clause 18: "Therapeutic Abortion Committee for any hospital means a committee comprised of not less than three members, each of whom is a qualified medical practitioner appointed by the board at that hospital for the purpose of considering and determining questions relating to the termination of pregnancy within that hospital." In the larger hospitals where abortions are performed these committees are established directly by the Hospital Board concerned. As another section of the Criminal Code prohibits the member of an Abortion Committee from performing abortions, it would be impossible for smaller hospitals to form such a committee from members of their regular staff. Because of this the College of Physicians and Surgeons established a Central Therapeutic Abortion Committee and named members to it. Any hospital that wishes to avail itself of the resources of this committee must have these members appointed as members of an Abortion Committee by the board of that particular hospital. They then act on behalf of that board and not on behalf of the college. I explained - that is, Dr. Morrison explained to me that only one case had been referred through this central therapeutic abortion committee since its inception in 1971. It appears that people in rural Manitoba do not believe to have their abortions performed within their home communities. If there's reason to believe, Mr. Chairman, that abortions are being performed aside from the provisions of the Criminal Code, I think that one and all in the Province of Manitoba being aware of such an offence, has a responsibility to lay that information before the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

I again checked, because there was a bill before the House, Bill No. 10 I believe, yes Bill No. 10, I checked with my colleagues in other provinces, and again with Dr. Potter, in regards to facilities and funds having to be made available for procedures that were covered under an agreement between provinces and the Government of Canada, and I was assured that such a federal law decrees that abortions be available under certain circumstances and we as provinces have to make the facilities available.

Mr. Chairman, I would like only briefly to go back on some of the questions posed of me on Friday and again today.

The Honourable Member for Thompson started his remarks by saying that he will not congratulate the Minister, I didn't expect a bouquet from the Honourable Member for Thompson. I'm somewhat . . .

A MEMBER: We've got used to that.

MR. TOUPIN: I'm somewhat happy that the honourable member recognized the talent and good service on the part of my staff, and especially my Deputy Minister. I, too, said on many occasions in this House that I felt I had one of the best Deputy Ministers in the government. --(Interjection)--

A MEMBER: No, he's not any better but he's equal.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Chairman, I spent . . .

SUPPLY - HEALTH

A MEMBER: . . . even better than the ones you fired.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Chairman, I spent ten years in the co-operative movement before entering politics, and I guess it was because of the turmoil at the election but I didn't expect and didn't receive any thanks for my services. I expect to spend at least another four or five years in politics and I don't expect anyone to thank me. I only hope that whatever I can contribute to the province will help those specially in most need in the Province of Manitoba and that was the only reason why I decided to enter politics was that the New Democratic Party was so close to the philosophy that I served in the co-operative movement for so many years, that I felt that I could render some service to the citizens of Manitoba in being a politician, and this is the reason why I decided to run again, and no matter who runs against me I'm quite confident that I will win not because of only my efforts but because of the efforts of all the good constituents that I have in Springfield. Not too often has a Minister the opportunity to talk about his constituency and I believe that I have a beautiful constituency; I have beautiful people like the Clerk often says when he presents bills for proclamation. --(Interjection)-- My constituency in Springfield.

Mr. Speaker, I would have liked to ponder a few minutes on Bill 10 but I will not abuse the rules of the House, I don't believe that I can.

I would like to comment a bit on the remarks made by the Member for Virden. The Honourable Member for Virden unfortunately is not in the House this evening and I would have liked him to be in the House. I hope that one of his colleagues will relate to him the fact that I made certain comments on his remarks. I think he's been a kind and just man in this House-- we can't say that of too many members. He's just in the sense that he makes remarks that are constructive, he doesn't want to offend any one; he always tries to give you advance notice of things that he's going to ask you.

A MEMBER: That's right. You could learn a lot from him.

A MEMBER: Are you trying to kill his chances for re-election?

MR. TOUPIN: My memory, Mr. Chairman, must be failing me because I can't really recall any opportunity that I've had to dialogue with the Honourable Member for Virden that I refused to do so, and he brought forward a few examples on Friday . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister has five minutes.

MR. TOUPIN: , . . indicating that if I had not refused to talk with him there were certain things that had not been resolved because of our conversations. Well I would only invite -- and I told this to the honourable member previously - that I invite him to meet me halfway, either in his caucus room or my caucus room, or in my office, and let's discuss the problems . . .

A MEMBER: And you'll be safe even in the dark with him.

MR. TOUPIN: . . . and let's discuss some of the problems that he put forward on the record. The honourable member was talking about naturopaths, that are asking to be covered under Medicare. If my memory serves me correct I believe there are six practising naturopaths in the Province of Manitoba -- there are more, but there are six active practicing Naturopaths and I've asked the Health Services Commission to bring me a resume of what it would cost to include that service under Medicare, and only then can I really advise the honourable member and recommend to my colleagues in Cabinet the possibility of insuring that service under Medicare.

The honourable member made reference to special needs for handicapped people. As the honourable member is quite aware of we've added certain things for handicapped people. When we discuss the budget of the Health Services Commission I'll point out certain things that have been done in the last four years for handicapped people in the Province of Manitoba, what's being done now, and what is contemplated.

When we talk of the addition of prosthetics under Medicare, this is something that really did help a lot of handicapped people in Manitoba. The cost wasn't that tremendous but you should see the hundreds of letters that we got from people in need of such false limbs and so on in the Province of Manitoba.

The honourable member made reference to Home Care Services in the Province of Manitoba. I did indicate to the Member for Rhineland a while ago the amount within my Estimates of a million dollars within the Department of Health and Social Development, and half a million dollars covered under the \$70 million for the Manitoba Health Services Commission earmarked

SUPPLY - HEALTH

(MR. TOUPIN cont'd) for Home Care Services. So this is an amount of \$1,500,000 for Home Care Services that will become actually in force in Manitoba at the same time as we cover all Health institutions in Manitoba on the 1st of July, 1973. So this is actually coming in force at the same time so we can keep people at home if at all possible. This is more than a doubling of the amount for Home Care Services.

I believe the Honourable Member for Fort Garry had a question. If he hasn't I'll continue. If he has I'll accept his question now. Did you have a question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for his courtesy. At the opening of the Minister's remarks a few moments ago, he made reference to the cost of medical services in terms of doctors fees, and I may not have the figure absolutely correct but my impression was that the Minister said that doctors' fees had increased by 15 percent, or the cost of medical services in terms of doctors' fees had increased by 15 percent in the last few years. And my question, Mr. Chairman, is, if that's true, why is that not reflected in medical costs in the Province today? The medical costs in the province don't reflect any such increase.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to restate what I said when I started my remarks. What I said was, "since medical payments have gone up by some 15 percent in total, even without an increase in the fees paid for individual procedures." So I'm not relating that 15 percent increase only to doctors' fees, and you must - there are two reasons. This is one reason. The other reason is that though the, say, \$52.5 million paid in fees to the Medical doctors in the Province of Manitoba does not actually reflect, you know, an increase, you must look at the - and this we'll be able to discuss when we look at the Manitoba Health Services Commission's budget. You must reflect the costs that are charged by doctors on the hospital base, and that contributes equally to the increased cost. Let's not forget that, that's very important. And we can pull these out by looking at the hospital budgets, that's the only way you can really pull out these additional costs. But the increase there is reflected in great part in the hospital budgets, because they're not, they're not actually paid for on the fee for service in those cases, so it's not reflected, it's not reflected in the individual amounts paid to doctors.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The hour being 9:00 o'clock, last hour of every day being Private Members' Hour. Committee rise and report. Call in the Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has directed me to report progress and asks leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

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

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS (Logan): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Vital, that the report of the Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: Private Members' hour. First item is Resolution 19. The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BARKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Assiniboia, - WHEREAS rural residents in Manitoba are suffering economic hardship and in many cases are declining in population, and WHEREAS in order to remove existing inequity suffered by the residents of rural Manitoba and encourage the location of industry in the rural areas by removing economic barriers to location of industry in rural centers; and WHEREAS Northern Manitoba residents suffer an undue cost of telephone communication with the southern portion of the province;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Provincial Government consider the advisability of instructing the Manitoba Telephone System to institute a program to allow a given number of long distance calls made within the province without a toll charge from each telephone.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BARKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I may approach this problem perhaps a little bit different than most of the members expect me to but for the sake of having a little variety we can maybe not just discuss it from a monetary angle only but also from a different principle, possibly even a more broad-minded view than I believe that the situation is being handled today.

There was a time, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure that the Honourable Minister of Labour will probably remember these times more so than some of the other members, but there was a time when telephones were actually fun, especially the entertainment factor of the Party Line. --(Interjection)-- Now the fun seems to be gone as the telephone has altered our lives and our way of doing business. I'm afraid that both the government and the Manitoba Telephone System has forgotten this simple fact. The telephone, Mr. Speaker, has become a powerful instrument. It seems to decentralize things and it does, I agree with that. It also helps create harmony in a lot of instances. It has an emergency use. It is at times a wailing wall perhaps. Junior executives use it to break down barriers either of one nature of a sale or another. Reporters seem to use it for devious reasons, and teenagers and women for everything - the Member for Rhineland has just mentioned that I should not forget that there's also romance in using telephones, and I believe that's a bit old fashioned but still the good old type of romance and I must go along with the member.

Mr. Speaker, the government and the Manitoba Telephone System still have in my opinion a back-woods approach to this communication form. They still seem to think in terms of numbers of telephones installed last year, the number of plants and service, numbers of central offices, how many telephone poles, and how many telephone lines, or how many miles of wire are in Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, by not investigating a change in the system of long-distance toll charges, we are threatened I believe to a great extent, especially in the near future, to be outmoded by our own, perhaps our own resistance to a certain change. The future in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, holds interlocking communication systems. A long-distance line will have far more important sources of revenue than just for the individual or for private firms. An example of interlocking, I believe, is that at the present they tell me that teletype and data transmission can be inserted into a vacant telephone channel at about 20 teletype channels into one telephone channel, and between 2,500 and 3,000 bits per second of data into a telephone channel. Surely, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba Telephone System, and the government, are looking at such a future use and at it also as perhaps as a revenue source. I'm also sure that they are studying the use of the gas laser in which a laser beam can carry as many as 600 simultaneous telephone conversations.

We also are aware, Mr. Speaker - - sometimes the honourable member that was just trying to speak from the seat of pants would be fortunate if he had some something to go on, or he'd move a little faster, and I don't think he was trying to make fun of the present mayor of Winnipeg's monorail, I'm sure he was just trying to make a comment. --(Interjection)--

However, getting back to this resolution, we also are aware, Mr. Speaker, that the Manitoba Telephone System was involved in the financing of Teleset Canada, Anuk I, Canada's first satellite as we know can handle up to 9,600 telephone circuits anywhere in Canada, although I understand now there's not the intention - I'm trying to find out by looking at the face of the Minister of Highways -- but apparently this is not the intention now to pursue that avenue of changing our communications system.

However, Mr. Speaker, we still persist in the back-woods approach to communications. We still persist in penalizing those Manitobans who live in rural communities. --(Interjection)-- How can we, Mr. Speaker, speak kindly -- when I hear the rumblings there I'd like to use the opposite terms - speak kindly of long distance toll charges when they cause northern residents to suffer an undue communication cost with the southern portion of the province, or when long distance toll charges impose economic hardships on residents of rural Manitoba, and economic barriers to the location of industry in the rural centers. I realize, Mr. Speaker, that long distance toll charges are a good source of revenue. Just a couple of weeks ago we found out again that the profits rose to much larger figures than perhaps ever before, but that doesn't bother me, I am happy if the Manitoba Telephone can show a profit but I think their ways of communication as it is today is outmoded and I think we must be looking for a different principle.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

(MR. BARKMAN contd')

Since 1967, toll charges were almost double their 1967 value; they also add up to about three quarters of the total increase in the total revenue. Granted some of this increase comes from out of province calls, which we're all aware of; however, our area of concern is for the in-province toll charges. In rural Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, how much service, quality service, equal to that of our urban area has been provided? We do know that more telephones were installed. We're happy for this and that several communities were changed from manual to dial service, and that all communities with a population of over 50 do have - or at least most of them do have a dial service today. This is all fine and good. But we have been speaking of trying to decentralize, to help along industry and commerce in our rural areas. I'm sure the Minister of Highways knows and many others in this Assembly that small business people especially in rural Manitoba are paying very high rates for toll charges. Some have direct lines doing business with Greater Winnipeg paying up to \$1,800 and \$2,000 a year, it's nearly a must. But somewhere I think they're being penalized.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be very short like usual. Just as Alexander Graham Bell was a teacher of the deaf, perhaps my message concerning telephones is still falling on deaf ears. But the secret of it all as Mr. Bell and another gentleman by the name of Watson found, was to make more than just the connection. The secret, Mr. Speaker, is to give all of you in here and especially the Minister in charge, and I hope the Manitoba Telephone System also hears this, I am going to try and give you a little bit more of a steady current. It seems a bit odd that in an urban community that an individual for a certain rate can pick up the telephone and call for a fireman, a nurse if you wish, in this case I'm thinking of sicknesses, an ambulance or a doctor for that matter, whereas a rural person will be charged a different rate for the call in most cases.

In the City a businessman can call another businessman to place an order and in a rural community, the same kind of call may cost you quite a few extra dollars especially over a months time. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the government and the Manitoba Telephone System feels that responsibility stops with the equipment, the dial exchanges and long distance connections. But what, Mr. Speaker, of the future uses and the present and the future needs of all Manitobans and not just the privilege of the urban areas.

I was very happy to hear the Minister of Highways mention the other day that perhaps the time has come where we are going to be considering long distance fee elimination. I think he's aware, and I must point out to him that the sooner we are going to be aware of this the sooner we can be changing certain things that need changes. I see some of the members nodding their heads; I think they're still young enough to also adopt some of these changes with their Minister and certainly with some of the changes that are necessary.

Mr. Speaker, I fully realize that perhaps elimination of all toll charges will have to have some restrictions. I'm sorry that the Honourable Member for Virden is not here tonight because I'm sure that he would like to make some connection on this telephone bit, probably he'll be back as soon as the sun slides down enough so the golfing course will be closed. However, Mr. Speaker, we may have to consider limiting these times to two or three minutes; we may also have to think of other restrictions, probably limit the number of calls that people can make, because surely there are dangers of filling up our lines to an extent where you would even be willing to pay if you couldn't use them at all. But I think in all sincerity the time has come when we have to accept the change and forget as I said before of counting our telephone poles and counting our number of lines that we have. I think we should be more equal in uniform at least in this province. --(Interjection)-- Yes that or some other arrangements and I'm sure the Minister's thinking about this.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution may sound a bit far-reaching but I've come to the conclusion that it shouldn't be that far-reaching, especially encouraged after what the Minister said the other day as far as perhaps considering that maybe we must look at certain changes and I'm sure he was serious. And I think we can, I think we should look towards a progressive attitude, towards a new way of communications, bringing all the people of Manitoba closer together family-wise, province-wise, economical-wise and otherwise.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Minister will be encouraged, not so much by this resolution but by his own effort that something has to take place and I'm sure that if we are

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

(MR. BARKMAN cont'd) serious about this we can certainly find ourselves in a new way of thinking and I do hope the time is here now where we must start considering this. I'm rather pleased that it won't be an announcement before the election, but however we'll have more elections and perhaps we can get this going as quickly as possible .

. . . . continued on next page.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for La Verendrye is a little behind in one aspect, and that is the fact that the government has established a toll free information service anywhere in the province, he didn't expect me to make this afternoon... However, the proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for La Verendrye which states in part - and I'll read the Resolved again:

"Therefore Be It Resolved that the Provincial Government consider the advisability of instructing the Manitoba Telephone System to institute a program to allow a given number of long distance calls made within the province without a toll charge from each telephone" -- gives rise to a number of questions which will require clarification before this resolution could be discussed meaningfully.

First of all, assuming the intent of the motion is to allow some free calls from all telephones whether they be rural or city, residence or business, and recognizing that these four categories of users do not make equal use of long distance service, it is difficult to see, Mr. Speaker, how such a resolution would do other than to add to any existing inequities which the proposed resolution assumes to exist at present.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the desirability of determining the number of free calls to be allowed from each telephone, monthly or annually, is recognized. However I wonder if the member has given any thought to the difficulty which would exist in determining which calls should be considered to be the so-called free calls. Would they be the first three or five calls placed during the month? Would they be the longest calls; the shortest calls; the most expensive calls or would there be a time limit on the calls to be allowed? I would like to suggest that if no time limit were placed on the free calls that their duration would rather significantly exceed today's average conversation length. I am sure that after some consideration of these questions the Member for La Verendrye and members of this House will agree that the plan proposed under this resolution is fraught with many insoluble administrative problems.

Thirdly, the question as to whether there is really any such thing as a free long distance call is an interesting one and one which upon more thorough examination will undoubtedly prove to be a fallacy. While it is possible to allow the telephone users to make a long distance call and not bill the caller for the cost of the call such action does not make the call free. The Telephone System continues to incur expenses as a result of the call being placed and the question then becomes one of who is to pay those costs if it is not to be those who receive the benefits.

And while we are considering this point Mr. Speaker, we must not lose sight of the fact that if the user is not to be charged directly for the call the probabilities are that more calls will be placed resulting in a need for additional telephone lines and equipment which most certainly will increase telephone operating expenses. -- (Interjection) -- Well that is some you might be aware of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. I do think the interjection hour should not arrive yet, we've got a little while before that happens. Could we carry on with a normal debate. The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your concern for those gentlemen who are trying to be obscene with their outcalls. While it is agreed that telephone service plays a very important role in the social and economic life of the rural areas of this province and most certainly everything possible must be done to encourage the expansion and decentralization of industry both in Northern Manitoba and in our rural areas. And recently over this past weekend, Mr. Speaker, the First Minister announced some of the decentralization programs which this government has undertaken such as the establishment of the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation in Portage; there is the possibility of some office in Steinbach; there are various decentralization programs going on. Mr. Speaker, I wish to propose an amendment to this resolution.

Therefore I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Vital that the motion be amended by striking all the words after the word "Whereas" in line 1 and substituting the following:

WHEREAS telephone service in Manitoba is of a prime importance to the residents of the province, and

WHEREAS it is desirable that the Manitoba Telephone System continue its plans for

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

(MR. SHAFRANSKY cont'd) extending fully modern exchange and long distance network service to the whole province and establishing larger free calling exchange areas and that such grants be implemented within the shortest possible time,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Provincial Government consider the advisability of requesting the Manitoba Telephone System to (a) accelerate its present program of providing fully modern exchange and long distance network service as a first priority to Northern Manitoba; and (b) institute a program of establishing larger free calling exchange areas in southern portion of rural Manitoba and implement such programs with the greatest possible despatch.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel on the amendment.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the brevity of the speeches here tonight I'll stay true to form and speak with the same amount of authority and enthusiasm as we just heard from the Honourable Member from Radisson. Mr. Speaker, I have a very long speech here that I want to read but I think I'll forego it in view of a very few very important remarks that should be made with respect to this topic.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we're facing here an amendment by the government to an original resolution which erases the resolution completely, destroys it completely as a resolution, although in this case it doesn't change it, doesn't mutilate it and change it quite as badly as some of the previous ones. In fact nearly all the previous ones that have been amended by the government, and it's a little hard to rationalize why the government would feel compelled in this case to change this resolution. Actually the recommendation of the Member for La Verendrye isn't really -- the substantive part of the motion isn't really all that earth-shaking in terms of its implications for the Telephone System. The question is if there's to be a better break on usage of telephone between urban and rural what is the best way to go about it.

This topic has been broached before, it was discussed at some length two years ago in the Public Utilities Committee with the Chairman of the Manitoba Telephone System, and at that time the topic was broached by the very advanced and forward-looking Progressive Conservative Party in a major proposal to the Manitoba Telephone System that said why not wipe out the long distance charges completely across the Province of Manitoba for those calls that are made within the province itself. And it was pretty clear at that time that the ramifications that have been referred to and the administrative tangle that's referred to by the Member for Radisson didn't exist in the mind of the Chairman of the Manitoba Telephone System. He says we've looked at it completely, we know what it will do, we can estimate what the increased loan is on our system, we know what the increased cost would be, and he gave us a figure that if that was done that the average telephone bill across the province would have to be a flat rate of about \$14 a month. So they had worked through the arithmetic at least. Now in the questioning of the \$14 cost he said that nearly all of it, or I shouldn't say nearly all of it but a very large chunk of it was due to the increased capital cost of almost revolutionizing the system, that is in providing more adequate technical facilities to handle the increased load. So that the arguments, Mr. Chairman, here aren't for a completely free use of telephones and the mover of the resolution here has not gone that far. He said at least provide a certain number of long distance calls that might be made every month or every day. So, Mr. Speaker, I think that it would have been - the government would have . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. CRAIK: . . . not in . . . anyway have been embarrassed except perhaps for the ex and acting House Leader, if we might call him, he's got a double title, Mr. Speaker, he's got a double title here today, he's both the ex and acting House Leader and he's acting with his usual amount of contribution to the Legislature. And at least, Mr. Speaker, I think the government may have let this resolution stand because it's not a revolutionary one. It would have been a question that could have been addressed to the Chairman of the Manitoba Telephone System when he appears before the Public Utilities Committee; and I assume the Member for Radisson will want to see that that committee sits within a week or so so that we can get back to finish the business of Hydro and get on to the issue of providing better telephone service in the Province of Manitoba.

Now what alternatives are there in between providing completely flat rate pricing of monthly telephone bills across the province and this alternative where you provide some people in Manitoba - I guess all of them according to the resolution, not only those in rural areas but

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

(MR. CRAIK cont'd) all people making long distance calls in the province a few free long distance calls - so what alternatives are there in between. And these don't seem to have been discussed, they weren't mentioned by the Member for Radisson in his reply. Could you have it a one-way system to start with, unlimited from the outlying parts into the city and not vice versa; maybe there are a number of other alternatives you could go to without getting into an extensive bookkeeping system of counting the number of phone calls. But surely there must be alternatives that could be looked at and it's not going to be too big a thrust and load on the imagination of the government, and particularly the member for Osborne who I think is a member of the Telephone System, or is it now the Member for Radisson, I can't remember, Mr. Speaker. -- (Interjection) -- Yes, the Member for Radisson was on the telephone system board, therefore is conversant with these things, but he obviously feels that it would be too big an imposition on him and on his colleagues to even consider the advisability of something that was as burdensome as 23 phone calls in a month.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we started out with this legislature four years ago where the government adopted a policy that the term "consider the advisability" would mean exactly that. That they would take under consideration proposals that came before this Legislature and give them consideration. -- (Interjection) -- Well they did, Mr. Speaker, there was a resolution . . .

A MEMBER: Four years of totalitarianism has wiped that out.

MR. CRAIK: There was a resolution before this House that they unanimously agreed to consider the advisability of exempting children's clothing on an age basis rather than on a size basis. Well, Mr. Speaker, I suppose that's strong enough evidence in itself that they do not, and did not, and still do not believe that they are capable even when they do adopt a resolution of considering the advisability. If they were bound by the tradition that they appear to be trying to set now of amending a resolution and getting rid of it right in the House it must mean that they find that they're not capable of considering the advisability of anything. Because again, Mr. Speaker, they did agree in sessions three years ago, they agreed in 1970 that they would consider the advisability of taking the tax off children's clothing to age 15 based on a proof of age system, and it's never shown up in all the three years since. Mr. Speaker, if there's one item that would be helpful to the people of Manitoba, those trying to raise a young family, it would be that item.

So here again we have something that's not even nearly as imposing on the government to consider, that is to consider the advisability of altering the toll system so that the people in the rural areas get a better break, and they won't even give consideration to it, Mr. Speaker. What we have here is an amendment that rules out everything after the first whereas, changes the resolution till it just suits them, then they'll go for it. Well they're not going to do anything about it anyway, they might as well vote for the original resolution.

So to repeat, Mr. Speaker, we would favor the government considering the advisability of the first resolution, we haven't got the amendment to look at it; we haven't got our official telephone critic here either, but as soon as he's had a look at it, there'll be no doubt about it, we'll have a firm policy to come forward to you with regarding the amendment to the resolution. But, Mr. Speaker, if I can refer through the amendment to the original resolution, it's not a widespread and imposing enough resolution that anybody can take any exception to, then there's no reason to understand why the government couldn't consider the advisability of a better toll system in Manitoba. But these are closed minds, Mr. Speaker. Four years ago they were prepared to consider the advisability, albeit they didn't do anything about it; now they're not even prepared to consider the advisability. So what they've done to this resolution, Mr. Speaker, is more important than the contents of the resolution itself. They've closed their minds to providing a more equitable break on telephone rates between the rural and the urban areas of this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. BOROWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not going to be very long, Mr. Speaker, but I am a member of the northern area and I live in a rural area so I feel that I am properly qualified to deal with the subject which has been discussed in the House before. And I agree with the Member for Riel that it's really become an exercise in gum beating to deal with resolutions after the government gets through chopping them up, but I suppose to us who are not good speakers, it gives us an opportunity to polish up our speechmaking for the coming election, so I suppose that the resolution section serves some useful purpose.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

(MR. BOROWSKI cont'd)

Mr. Speaker, the resolution as it was worded, and I don't have the amendment so I can't deal with the amendment, but I notice that the amendment deals with fully modern telephones and free calling without giving any specifics, and I think that we can discuss that because that is pretty well what was in the resolution anyway and I really don't know why they had difficulty accepting - with the one exception, they said they would have difficulty in implementing, and I agree it certainly would be difficult in implementing something that's worded in the way this has been worded.

I think before we talk in this House, Mr. Speaker, about free long distance calls I must go back to what we said last year. Let's first of all have private phones. You know there's a lot of people out in the country who are paying rates for a telephone and when they want to get on there's somebody on it and there's always the risk if you're talking about some particular, those of us who are elected talking about something confidential, that somebody could be listening. This is unfair and it's unfair for the business people in the rural areas and it's unfair for the people in the northern areas.-- (Interjection) -- I think so. That first of all the government should be addressing themselves to the problem of putting in private phones or exchanging private phones for party phones. That should be the number one priority, and after that of course they can consider about how they can bring about some equalization.

I happen to be one of those who believes that you can't legislate against geography; whether you're dealing with freight rates or the cold weather in the north and the warmer weather in the south, there are certain things that we have to accept when we live in the rural areas and in northern areas. Then I think the higher cost of heating and the higher cost of food and telephones and everything else is part and parcel of this. I think rather than attacking it on a piecemeal basis, a little bit here and a little chunk there that we should look at the broad picture of it and the government do perhaps what they're doing to the civil servants. Instead of giving them special deals on various things they simply give them \$125 a month housing and living allowance and this looks after all the higher costs that may result by living there, whether it's telephones or Hydro or rents or food or whatever. That looks after the problem much better.

One of the other problems that we have to consider when we say let's eliminate long distance is who is going to be the large beneficiary. That is something that has been dealt with before and I think we must mention it because the guy who needs the breaks the most is not going to get the benefit. I had the Telephone System give me a breakdown last year of the ten or twelve largest users in Manitoba and I think the highest figure was over \$200,000 per year. And if you look at the ten figures you'll find that the fat cats in the province, the mining companies; Federal and Provincial government I believe; Eaton's; Hudson Bay; the large corporations would be the beneficiaries of free long distance tolls.

Mr. Speaker, I was not sent into this Legislature to pass resolutions or legislation to help those who are doing pretty darn good for themselves in this province, so therefore I would be opposed to giving across-the-board free long distance rates. But I do have a suggestion to the government, and they may accept it now because it's close to the election, that's the only reason I say that. They may accept it. They have just recently eliminated medicare premiums, perhaps they can consider as a first step eliminating for the rural and northern areas, or perhaps for all of Manitoba, eliminate the monthly service charge - I think it's \$4.00 - it's much less than medicare. Perhaps they would consider eliminating that and that would help everybody, the rich and the poor would get the same benefit.

I see the former House Leader waving his head and I would get the impression from that, Mr. Speaker, that he is in agreement, and if he is perhaps the next speaker that gets up will work out a resolution or a sub-amendment to the resolution incorporating that part and we will see just how progressive that government is just before an election. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A. R. (Pete) ADAM (Ste. Rose): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to make a small contribution to this resolution. I got my big surprise tonight, Mr. Speaker. The Member from La Verendrye presenting a resolution and strongly supported by the Member for Riel and when we consider the fact that these two particular members are strong free enterprisers and are constantly prostrated before the altar of free enterprise, here we find them standing up and wanting a pure socialists telephone system for Manitoba. Real strong

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

(MR. ADAM cont'd). . . . socialistic idea completely, so I find this amazing and I'm surprised.

However, be that as it may I want to say a few words now on the resolution and I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the Province of Manitoba enjoys one of the most efficient telephone services in Canada, at the very very reasonable cost and perhaps maybe the lowest in Canada. -- (Interjection) -- Well the Member for Osborne would like to applaud himself for the efficient way the telephone system is operating and the rates, he says that he's a member of the board. I believe the Telephone System was operating efficiently and at low rates long before he was on the board.

As I mentioned, the service in Manitoba is second to none in Canada and the rates likewise. This is a little bit opposite to what we see in some of the other provinces where the telephone system is operated under free enterprise, or free ownership if you will; and we can go into the eastern province perhaps in Ontario and find where the telephone service is provided by private enterprise some of the large cities and we find where the rates are perhaps double to what they are in Manitoba. So I'm pleased to see that some of the very diehard free enterprisers on the other side of the House would like to see more socialism creep into our telephone system.

However, I believe, Mr. Speaker, that no doubt there are some problems and some adjustments will have to be made in some of our rural exchange areas -- and I speak of course places like Fork River where at one time each little community had a thriving business community, where every town had two or three implement dealerships and many other allied stores along the business community. And now in the past few years this is no longer the case. Now the farmers have to travel perhaps 40, 50, 60 miles to get repair parts and so on and I realize that in some cases they have to phone long distance in order to get hold of a dealership in the next town. However like Fork River for instance -- now there's a classic example -- they're about ten miles from Winnipegosis and are about ten miles from the Dauphin exchange and they have to pay long distance charges. So there's a particular area there where there should be some adjustments made where they could phone say for instance to Dauphin and to where they do most of their business.

However I think that some of the points raised by the Member for Thompson I think are valid. I think that the higher priorities are that we should work towards more private phones; for instance we still have some lines that may have six or seven people on the same line and I think this is where we should be putting more emphasis on and see if we can't get more telephones in and with less people on the line. After we have worked in this direction and have solved some of these problems I think then we should go towards bringing in dial phones, more dial phones, and then all the while we should take a look at some of the areas and perhaps make some adjustment.

I am very pleased to see that in 1971 one of the first things that happened after my election was that the telephone service was brought into a place like Waterhen. I don't know if anybody knows where Waterhen is but these people have been waiting for a telephone for -- well they never had telephone so they'd be waiting for a hundred years perhaps or ever since telephones came to Manitoba back in 1915 or something like that. They got telephone service in 1971. And also Red Deer Point. Red Deer Point is north of Winnipegosis, they never had a telephone service until 1971. So what was going on before 1971 for these areas, what was going on before 1969 for these areas? There was also no Hydro there. So we find all kinds of little things like this, Mr. Speaker, when we get out in the back woods north of Eddystone, north of Cayer. There's seven, eight families living up along Lake Manitoba with no Hydro service. They now have hydro service; they just got it last year. They have been waiting for many many years. Red Deer Point never had hydro service, now they have hydro service. Salt Point, isolated community in the constituency of the Member for The Pas. We're in the process of putting a bridge across there and we will be able to bring telephone system in there because the utilities will be able to go in and service. So they will also have hydro I hope, they will have hydro, and now with the bridge that's been built across the West Waterhen River they will be able to have this service and the telephone company and the hydro will be able to go in and service. So here again we are making progress, Mr. Speaker, and I think that the record of the Manitoba Telephone System is one to be proud of.

I believe that if we want to talk about free telephone service there is going to be a lot of problems. For instance, let's take a look at say Kelwood for instance. They would like to

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

(MR. ADAM cont'd) join the Neepawa service there - toll free service to Neepawa. Well I'm sure that the people from Kelwood wouldn't mind paying a little more, a monthly fee, for the toll free charge. They wouldn't mind paying a few dollars more. But would the people from Neepawa be willing to pay more to call toll free to Kelwood? I say they would not. I don't think they would. I don't believe they would. -- (Interjection) -- How about the senior citizens? How about senior citizens on fixed income? Would they want to pay two, three dollars a month more to call into a neighboring town just because there's a few dealerships? I say there's a lot of things to look at before you start doing that. I say to you if you're going to take a toll free right across the province the big benefactors are going to be Inco, and the big businesses, and what are you going to do. Are you going to put a limit on a telephone call or can one person grab hold of a line and hold on to it for several hours if it's free -- (Interjection) -- no, going to cut off? Got that all figured out? Well that's good. It's nice to bring in a resolution but I think it will require a lot of study before you could implement such a resolution. The idea is good because it's really socialistic. I'm glad that you're starting to see our way.

I think Mr. Speaker, one of the areas that perhaps we should look at for free telephone systems is particularly in the rural areas. Now if you're living in Winnipeg you have all kinds of services at your disposal. You pay a monthly rate for your telephone service, a few dollars more perhaps than the rural areas but not that much difference, not that much difference for the services that are available to you. Perhaps a dollar or two or three dollars, I don't know. However, you have maybe, I don't know how many hospitals you have at your disposal, and maybe have hundreds of doctors at your disposal. You have all kinds of different services at your disposal for your monthly rate. But that is not the case out in the rural areas. In rural areas we don't have the same services available to us, we have to pay long distance charges no matter where we call.

So one of the first areas that perhaps if we're going to remove the long distance charges on phone calls we should start by removing the charges on calls to doctors, calls to hospitals and police and so on. I think that if we start in this direction maybe we'll be moving forward and perhaps later on after further studies have been made and the priorities have been completed then perhaps we can look in other alternatives. Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, let me take just a few moments to reiterate and underline what my colleague the Member from Riel has already indicated to members of the House. That is the complete circle that has been taken by members opposite with respect to the regard to any resolution that is put before this Chamber of Private Members' resolutions. Really, Mr. Speaker, it's got to a point where I think members in the Opposition, private members generally have to seriously ask themselves as to whether or not this particular traditional form of an expression of a private member's will is worthwhile in carrying on with. Because, Mr. Chairman, there was a time, there was a time when the resolution was put forward in good faith by a private member and it would be debated on the floor of the House and that the government would state its views on the question and would either accept or vote down that resolution. In some instances where there was a possibility of perhaps anticipatory legislation or somewhat of that order, it would be amended, it would be amended by the government in a certain fashion that was acceptable to the House generally.

But Mr. Speaker, what has happened to resolutions, particularly in this session, is really one that begs some examination considering the House Leader's opening remarks the time this parliament went into session about how this government was prepared to consider all resolutions and how this open government . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Order please. I would like to indicate that I am allowing a certain amount of latitude in Private Members' Hour but I think we should discuss the topic. The honourable gentleman is not discussing the topic, he's discussing just in general amendments which is contrary to our rules. Would he adhere to the resolution.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, from your experience you know how quickly I am prepared to fall into line with your admonition, having, mind you Mr. Speaker, sat through on another Private Members' Hour and listened to speakers by the - none other than the House Leader, none other than the other members here on a resolution that called for something about the minimum wages of northern Manitoba, and where we then heard a great dissertation about the

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

(MR. ENNS cont'd) . . . evils and the not so evil doings of a certain Mr. Sigfusson in the construction of northern roads. However, Mr. Speaker, that had to do, that had to do with minimum wages and I'm certainly prepared to accept your criticism of straying from the topic and come right to the topic.

Mr. Speaker, with no further ado, allow me to move a sub-amendment to the amendment before us having to do with this specific resolution that says, moved - and I move this by myself and by the Honourable Member for Roblin, that the amended resolution be further amended by adding after the last word "despatch" and such area extend from the 49th to the 60th parallel of latitude and from the Ontario to Saskatchewan boundaries. Thank you, Mr. Speaker . . .

SOME MEMBER: Question, question . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. There is nothing on the floor until I've placed the amendment.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: Members are not interested in hearing the amendment. Very well. The floor is open to speak to the amendment as amended. As proposed to be amended. The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, I don't want to speak to the amendment at all, I want to speak on a point of order as to whether or not the amendment is in order. -- (Interjection) -- No he has not. He has . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Only one person can speak to a point of order at one time and the Honourable Minister of Labour has the floor on the point of order. I'd like to hear it before I can adjudicate on it.

MR. PAULLEY: That's right, Mr. Speaker, and that is the purpose - I wonder if the Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney who is normally a rational man - I don't know what's happening to him at this particular time of the night - would at least allow me to raise a point or order on the sub-amendment, and of course we haven't had an opportunity of really reading it. This was a complaint of the Honourable Member for Riel insofar as the amendment to the main motion was concerned and I appreciate this very much, Mr. Speaker. But I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that you should take this under advisement, because if I understood the suggested amendment to the amendment proposed by the Honourable Member for Lakeside, it really reinstates the main motion, the original motion. And without having the benefit -- (Interjection) -- 60th parallel -- (Interjection) -- That's right and what does the original - Mr. Speaker, that's why I raised this point. Because the original motion said "institute a program to allow a given number of long distance calls made within the Province of Manitoba." Now the sub-amendment -- (Interjection) -- that's right. I'm not debating, all I am saying, Mr. Speaker, I am requesting you . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. PAULLEY: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I am asking you to consider the admissibility of the amendment to the amendment because it is reinstating the original motion. I realize that it is time -- (Interjection) -- 10:00 o'clock -- (Interjection) -- I am not out of order and I'm in a Hell of a better order than you are.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Order please. Order please. Would the honourable member sit down or do I have to name him -- (Interjection) -- Do I have to name the honourable member? I will reiterate once more to the House -- (Interjection) -- Order please! This House will stay in session until we have cleared this point. And I will say once again, when there's a man on the floor and there's a point of order we cannot have two points of order at the same time. And no one can interrupt. And would the honourable gentleman have the courtesy to realize that the same applies to the Chair when he's speaking on a point of order. You cannot interrupt a point of order. It's as simple as that.

Now the hour being 10:00 o'clock -- (Interjection) -- Order please. The hour being 10:00 o'clock, we will continue this matter during Private Members' Hour at the next go around. The hour being 10:00 o'clock the House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:30 tomorrow afternoon. (Tuesday)