

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
Tuesday, 31 March, 1981

Time — 8:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): The Honourable Member for St. George has 35 minutes.

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when we left off at the supper hour I had just begun my remarks in reply to some of the statements that were made by the Minister of Natural Resources and I am sorry to say that the Minister is not here and neither, at this time, is the Minister of Agriculture.

I am glad that the Member for Roblin is here, Mr. Speaker, because the Member for Roblin should be very interested in what I have to say this evening since he was one of the members that at one time in committee raised and made statements with respect to hay purchases under the drought program that we had for farmers and the drought assistance program and a flood assistance program.

The Minister of Natural Resources in his speech said during the years of the NDP they didn't have a flood, they didn't have a drought, they didn't have all the problems that somehow we have inherited in the last three years. We came through a drought and we came through a flood.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources seems to forget the historical flood of the Interlake Region in 1975 where we received over 20 inches of rain in the space of three weeks, where practically every inch of arable land was under water. How quickly the Minister of Natural Resources forgets, Mr. Speaker, how quickly he forgets.

Mr. Speaker, we also had a drought following that wet year of 1975. So, Mr. Speaker, the weather conditions while last year may have been somewhat more severe because it covered a wider area of our province but certainly the magnitude of the problems on a regional basis were, I would say, not any less over the span of time that we were in government and that the Conservatives are presently in government.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister talked about foresight and planning and the way they handled these crises. I think the Minister of Finance will want to question the foresight and the planning that was done by his colleague who sits behind him, the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker. There was assistance provided to farmers in Manitoba with the purchase of hay from Ontario; members should recall that. I think there were statements made that in the news releases approximately 40,000 tons of hay were purchased in the Province of Ontario, Mr. Speaker, over the summer period. The average price of hay from the department and from the Minister, was running at \$60 a ton, some slightly less, and some as high as \$66 a ton, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture, last spring when we discussed Estimates, left us with the impression that members of his staff had actually gone to Ontario and made those purchases of hay, had gone there and done the coordinating of the purchases of hay. Well, Mr. Speaker, we find out upon checking, that if the staff were down there, I

don't know to what extent there was coordination other than locating what one could call none other than brokers, Mr. Speaker, because the bulk of the hay that was purchased in Ontario was done through brokers. It was not done through government to government actions asking the Department of Agriculture in Ontario to coordinate the purchasing, Mr. Speaker. I've had calls from farmers and I've discussed this with farmers, in fact during a meeting in Ashern this fall, right after the heavy rainfall, farmers at that meeting complained that the price of hay that farmers were being charged was excessive, Mr. Speaker, and the reason that they gave, because there was a farmer that made the statement. He went down to Ontario, just at the time that the program was getting on its way, and he spoke to the farmers in Ontario and he bought hay. He bought a couple of thousand bales of hay, Mr. Speaker, from I think two or three farmers he mentioned, Mr. Speaker, and he purchased that hay at 85 cents a bale, Mr. Speaker, and I asked him the quality of the hay, and he said it was excellent, and that amounted to roughly, Mr. Speaker, at 85 cents a bale at roughly \$34.00 a ton, say \$35.00 a ton, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the deals that were made through the brokers amounted to \$60.00 a ton, Mr. Speaker, a substantial difference of at least \$25.00 a ton in terms of the cost of hay. That is good business, that is saving the farmers of Manitoba a lot of money, Mr. Speaker. You know when you look it over the 40,000 tons or approximately, what are we talking about, Mr. Speaker? A million dollar rip-off, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the prices that farmers of Manitoba had to purchase the hay through the brokers in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, the government and the people of Manitoba during the fire situation, the fire crisis in Ontario and rightly so, made the gesture and brought in and housed people who had to leave the residences in Red Lake who were surrounded by fire. Those people had to leave the community and the people of Manitoba opened their arms, and rightly so, Mr. Speaker. That was the right thing to do and the Premier and his government are to be commended for that move, Mr. Speaker, but a good reciprocal move if the government was in good relations with the Province of Ontario would have certainly been to ask the Province of Ontario through their staff because they have a Department of Agriculture to coordinate these purchases and make sure that the hay is sold at cost to farmers because the farmers of Ontario, I'm told by this farmer who spent over a week there, and I'll tell you where, Mr. Speaker, it was in the area of, he even told me the area, it was in the Listowel area. I guess that's near the Kitchener area where most of the hay was purchased and he indicated that hay was very plentiful at the time, in fact, he indicated that there was still in that area farmers had about half of their 1980 hay crop left and they had their entire 1981 hay crop to cut yet at the time he was down there, Mr. Speaker, so there was a lot of hay.

The farmers were very concerned about the plight of Manitoba farmers, in fact, you know, they would have preferred if they could have, they were asking

this farmer, have you any cattle to sell, because we would like to feed the cattle in our province because of the supply of hay. He told me that the quantity of hay was excellent and the semi-trailers that he utilized, pulled up and loaded the hay on the farm and delivered it here to Manitoba to the Interlake area, the area that was flooded, at the rate that was subsidized; the government assisted in the transportation subsidy. But, Mr. Speaker, by going through rather than government to government channels, this government took the easy way out. They agreed to go the brokerage route; the wheeler-dealer route, Mr. Speaker.

As a result one would have to deduct that they have cost the farmers of Manitoba and the taxpayers of Manitoba \$1 million in that transaction, Mr. Speaker. You know, you're talking about \$25.00 for every ton of hay, Mr. Speaker. Now I can't say, Mr. Speaker, that the purchases would have all occurred at that price but surely, Mr. Speaker, once the decision was made to go through the brokers and a range was established, any farmer in the area would have been foolish not to go with the price range that was established, Mr. Speaker, so that if a price range would have been established at what was being purchased and, Mr. Speaker, the receipts, I've asked this farmer for the receipts. He's assured me that he will send me the receipts for those purchases, Mr. Speaker, so if there's any doubt that this hay was not moved into Manitoba that I am prepared to bring those receipts to the Legislature. The farmer has assured me that he is prepared to provide me with the receipts, Mr. Speaker; otherwise I would have not made the statement that I have made today.

So, Mr. Speaker, the efficiency of this government, let him talk about how efficient they have been when they have brought in 40,000 tons of hay. Mr. Speaker, it's almost double in price, very close to double the price of the hay. Is that real good business management on behalf of the Conservatives, as the Minister of Natural Resources alleged, is that foresight in terms of how they are doing the long-range planning with respect to providing assistance to farmers in this province, Mr. Speaker? Far from it. Far from it.

Mr. Speaker, the farmers of Manitoba, while they should be grateful for the assistance that they have received in terms of transportation, in terms of other programs, Mr. Speaker, the farmers of Manitoba should be very skeptical about the business acumen of this government. They have been ripped off in no uncertain terms, and no matter what the members on the government side say, that was not the way to handle it, Mr. Speaker, they took the easy way out. Of course. Very easy. Phone up several brokers, you know there were primarily four large brokers that did the movement of hay. The members should know that. There were several, but there were four main ones, talking upwards to \$150,000 in sales was the top broker. Mr. Speaker, when you take that \$150,000 in terms of hay and you reduce that by 40 percent, what are we talking about? One month's work for \$40,000.00? It's more than that, Mr. Speaker, it's more like \$60,000 a month. That's pretty good wages, wouldn't you say so, Mr. Speaker? That's a pretty good salary. That's good business management. That's really good business management.

Now, some brokers handled slightly less. But surely, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture who led members on this side last spring to believe that it was his staff who were doing the purchasing, certainly has a lot of explaining to do in terms of how he led the farmers of Manitoba to believe that it was his department that was getting the best deal for the farmers of Manitoba as they could. It was not his department. It took the easy way out. The very same way that they got rid of the Water Services Board in terms of providing the pumps and hoses and equipment to farmers at cost plus ten percent, a warehouse that was paying its own way. They got rid of that, Mr. Speaker. They did the easy way out, handled the hay situation through brokers. That's how they did it, Mr. Speaker. You're talking about \$25.00 a ton for every ton that was brought into the Province of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of Natural Resources also spoke of efficiency in the drought, in how they handled these programs; well, Mr. Speaker, he should be the last one to speak, because the member, and I'm sorry he's not here either, the Member for Emerson last night was at a meeting in the Minister of Natural Resources home riding in Oak Point, where a large number of people, farmers and residents of the Oak Point area were very upset about a number of crossings that were put in supposedly to benefit farmers that were going to cut hay in an area that not normally would be accessible to farmers during the drought period, Mr. Speaker. But what came out of the meeting was, first of all, was that the road was begun, these crossings were constructed after farmers had barged themselves into the area, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Emerson when he spoke to the crowd indicated that the assessment and the decision was made by the Government of Manitoba, indicating that there would be at least 5,000 tons of hay to come out of this area, Mr. Speaker. That was the analysis to spend the \$17,000 to put in these three crossings in the Marshy Point area, Mr. Speaker, that was the analysis. Well, Mr. Speaker, the councillors and the farmers at that meeting laughed at that analysis.

One of the councillors said, they must have been dreaming, they must have been dreaming, because what came out of the area was not 5,000 tons of hay, Mr. Speaker, but to be more precise, Mr. Speaker, at that meeting, more like 1,339 bales; round, some small, some larger, but, Mr. Chairman, more like in the vicinity of 500 tons, 10 percent of the hay that was alleged to have been in the area. I asked the farmers, well where is this assessment? They said, look the whole area you probably couldn't get 5,000 tons of hay out of that area and the area that they're talking about is on the other side of the lake in this marshy area, where you don't need any access from these crossings, Mr. Speaker. There may be three to four quarters of land that they could have cut hay on.

So the Minister of Agriculture, at least in his answers to me, indicated the reason that the road was built was not now to get the farmers in there, it was to get the hay out, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the farmers in that area don't believe so. They believe that the decision and even the Member for Emerson admitted that the decision was, and I'll use his words, rather, "They were hasty

moves." Mr. Speaker, in fact even a Member of the Minister of Natural Resources staff, when he wrote a letter to the Executive Director of the Manitoba Wildlife Federation, who complained about the effects in this area, because, Mr. Speaker, this area in the prime goose nesting area on Lake Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, and this road, the Marshy Point area, the East Meadows Ranch is adjacent to it. There is great concern that if these crossings are left in there that the disturbance to the goose nesting season will be very detrimental to the goose population in this province.

But, Mr. Speaker, even the staff said that perhaps it reflects the drought panic which prevailed in some areas this past summer and which resulted in requests for assistance that in retrospect now appear almost irresponsible. Even staff within government indicated that those decisions appeared almost irresponsible, Mr. Speaker, but the farmers in that area know that it was a spur of the moment decision by the Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of Agriculture.

Do you know what the story is in that area? That the two Ministers met at the Lundar Fair and one of the constituents of the Minister said, look, this would be a good idea, we might be able to get some hay out. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, the farmers were already in there and cutting the hay, they had barged themselves in. Now what was wrong with utilizing the barge that had been built by a couple of farmers in that area?

But, Mr. Speaker, when I spoke of the 1,400 bails, 1,339 bails of hay that was cut out of the area, that included the hay of those farmers who barged themselves in. That's a total amount. Now can you imagine 500 tons of hay, to spend \$17,000 to move out 500 tons of hay, Mr. Speaker? Is that efficiency?

Mr. Speaker, the farmers themselves said it was — and I'll read the letter from the staff, but the farmers agreed, "Our best estimate is less than 500 tons of rough, poor quality hay was harvested on Crown lands in question, and we have been informed by Agricultural Crown Lands that most of it is still sitting in water."

Mr. Speaker, this whole area is an area — and it has caused greater difficulties, because when they put in those crossings they didn't remove them. The area in question, and Mr. Speaker, I have a map, it is along the east shore of Lake Manitoba, and it just so happens that . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Gladstone on a point of order.

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON: Would the member table the document he's quoting from, please?

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

MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'll be glad to table the map as long as I get a copy back. It's the Western Interlake Planning District Map No. 1, if the member wishes to . . .

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

MR. FERGUSON: It was the letter I was asking for, Mr. Speaker.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, I will table the letter but with one caveat. I will remove the person's name who sent the letter. I'm sure the Minister . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The honourable member has been asked to table the document.

MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will be pleased to provide the document that the member asked for. It's available in the Minister's own department because it's a letter from his own department.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. FERGUSON: I would again request, Mr. Speaker, that the document is tabled intact; regardless of where it may be, he's quoting from one in the House and that's the one we want to see.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, I will be pleased to table the document, but I want to tell the Member for Gladstone that he should check with the Minister of Natural Resources because it comes from his department. Mr. Speaker, it's a departmental document that was sent to the Executive Director of the Manitoba Wildlife Federation.

As I was indicating, Mr. Speaker, the area is on the east side of Lake Manitoba, and it so happened the area that was diked off are streams that come through the whole area of wildlife nesting and this is a key area for the fishermen of that area because it is also the spawning grounds of the pickerel fishery in that area. This winter the fishermen went to set their nets and, Mr. Speaker, because of the narrowing of these crossings the current was so swift that the fishermen in that area have indicated they lost over 100 nets, and in fact I hope the Member for Emerson has already delivered the bill that one of the fishermen gave him that he said he would deliver to the Minister of Agriculture asking him for compensation for the loss of nets. But, Mr. Speaker, it was stated that there was at least 100 nets lost due to these currents that were frozen underneath the ice as a result of these crossings, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that is efficiency, that is this government's way of an efficient handling of the drought program. We talked about Crown lands before but here are two very current issues, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that the Minister of Natural Resources who — I presume he had a legitimate reason that he was unable to attend that meeting because he thought his Estimates may be up in the House last night — I hope that the Member for Emerson who represented the Minister will certainly make recommendations and ask the staff of Natural Resources because they were put in a very awkward position, Mr. Speaker, to speak as they felt as resource people on the damages that this supposedly temporary structure would have caused to the ecological eco-systems of the area, Mr. Speaker; the goose population, the fishery and the wildlife habitat in the area that would be and could be disturbed. It was admitted, Mr. Speaker, by staff of Natural Resources that if those crossings were to be maintained the size of the culverts would have to be increased to say the least, and that there would have to be at least a permanent patrol established in

that area; a permanent patrol because they were equally concerned that any traffic into that area would certainly disturb the entire wildlife population and habitat in the area. I believe the Member for Emerson could rise and indicate that was said by the Assistant Deputy Minister of Natural Resources when he was questioned at the meeting.

Mr. Speaker, you know, \$17,000 to move 500 tons of hay, that's to say the least, and they could have waited, they could have barged it out, there was a barge but, Mr. Speaker, they could have also waited till it froze. I presume that they were worried that it may not freeze fast enough and they hay was wanted by the farmers a lot sooner, but certainly there wasn't the 5,000 tons of hay that the Member for Emerson quoted from a document at that meeting. The farmers, and I repeat, Mr. Speaker, for his edification that the farmers of the area said they must be dreaming if they had a figure of 5,000 tons of hay in that corner of the area, Mr. Speaker. I would be willing to hear what this government has to say about that in terms of their handling of this situation.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources spoke and the Premier today spoke about the way that this government has been open in terms of providing its financial statements to the public of Manitoba and how because we now provide quarterly reports the people of Manitoba are somehow more aware of how the government is doing. Mr. Speaker, that is nothing but hocus-pocus. All that is . . . I want the Minister of Finance of this province to get up and tell me of what benefit do the people of Manitoba have from those quarterly reports. What benefit does anyone have from the printing of that information on a quarterly basis when they are nothing but estimates, Mr. Speaker? But you know the value of that, Mr. Speaker, the backbench should know; should get the feeling. Mr. Speaker, if one decides to indicate at the beginning of the year that you are going to have a larger deficit or at least build up your deficit position and during the year, like in the drought program, you make an announcement of \$40.5 million of drought assistance, and somehow through the year you don't expend and rightly so because they were overestimated, half of the money, Mr. Speaker, don't your budgetary figures look good? You spent less than half the money, Mr. Speaker. You can tell the people of Manitoba, look, our deficit position is even more improved; we've improved our deficit position.

Mr. Speaker, where are those balanced budgets that they talked about? Mr. Speaker, where is that reorganization, where is the zero base budgeting that we heard so much about in 1977? Where is the program analysis that they talked about, that they promised the efficiency in government that they would not allow any program to go on, to begin its financing unless it was started at zero, Mr. Speaker? Where is that? We don't hear anything about that, Mr. Speaker. It's like the reinventing of the wheel. It's a good gimmick, Mr. Speaker, but it just doesn't wash. It's a manipulation of figures to the highest degree, nothing else, because I venture to say, who uses those quarterly reports other than, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance, who can get up quarterly and issue a press release and say our deficit position is a little better.

I want to know which institution looks at those quarterly financial statements of the government. Nobody, Mr. Speaker, I venture to say no one. I am sure that the financial houses when they go to borrow money, don't look at those quarterly reports, Mr. Speaker. They look at the stability of the province in terms of its natural resources. The people of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, look at them, I venture to say are the only ones that look at them. I am sure that if one was to ask the question of the Deputy Minister of Finance of what actual benefit other than the political benefit, Mr. Speaker, and I will grant that, it is nothing but a political benefit in terms of the reports that are put out, nothing more than that, Mr. Speaker, and it's backfiring, because when you changed the accounting system you were caught in the same kind of trap that you attempted to catch us in, in terms of combining both capital and current, and you are into it now. Mr. Speaker, you can't get out of it because you haven't had one balanced budget and your deficits are getting worse and the debt load is even worse, Mr. Speaker.

How can the Minister of Finance of this province get up and say that now we are on a good footing, we have now stabilized the financial base of this province of Manitoba? How can he get up and say that when he has already admitted that the debt load has increased from \$3,400 to over \$4,000, Mr. Speaker, added an additional \$600 per person? Good sound management, Mr. Speaker.

Now the argument that they'll use, yeh, but if you were in government it would have been worse, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance can talk about, yeh, but if you were in government things would have been worse; the fact of the matter is it was your bookkeeping, your changes that now have you in your own trap, Mr. Speaker, and you're going to have to live with it. That's where you are with respect to the changes that you've made.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources spoke about cost savings, you know the restraint program was necessary. Well, Mr. Speaker, what did the restraint program cost us in the Interlake just in the Nursing Home Program, Mr. Speaker? Because, of the two-year freeze of Nursing Homes within the community of Ashern and Eriksdale, which were ready to go and which were tendered and were stopped by this administration, Mr. Speaker, the increased costs are over \$1 million on two projects, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the increased costs; the two projects initially were and I'm going from memory, Mr. Speaker, approximately \$1.5 million. The increased costs are in excess of, I say approximately \$1 million, Mr. Speaker, almost \$2.5 million, the difference in costs of the two projects. That's how much we saved. The members of the back bench, we saved \$1 million, Mr. Speaker; instead of spending a \$1.5 million were now spending \$2.5 million by Tory arithmetic. That's how much we've saved on restraint on just two nursing home projects, Mr. Speaker.

You were the ones in Opposition who berated us and said, that look, we will expand and continue the good programs that the NDP brought in, Mr. Speaker. That was your policy to the people of Manitoba.

So what do we have, Mr. Speaker? We had an avalanche and an iceberg come over Manitoba, froze

everything. That's what happened for two years. We had the big freeze. It was necessary, Mr. Speaker. Along with the big freeze, Mr. Speaker, came the cut in the Civil Service of positions which were not filled; along with those to try and show people that if we cut the Civil Service, we have restraint, we can give you a tax cut, Mr. Speaker. What a bunch of hog wash, Mr. Speaker. Not accurate.

Mr. Speaker, the people have recognized — you know, I could go on and tell you stories of when they talk about people in nursing homes and the cutbacks, Mr. Speaker, one can repeat chapter and verse, but all you have to do is go from community to community and talk to the people there who have suffered under restraint, Mr. Speaker.

It is too late and, Mr. Speaker, they can do whatever they please. The people of Manitoba have made up their minds, Mr. Speaker, and, you know, if you want to hang on till '82, fine and dandy, no problem. You will dig yourself deeper but, Mr. Speaker, I think if you want to show us how strong you are, get on with the job and call the Election.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I'd not intended to enter into this debate, but I listened to the Honourable Member for St. Boniface this afternoon likely speaking his last speech in this Chamber due to the luscious Federal offer that he's had to join all of his colleagues that used to sit in this House. I guess, most of them are all down there now in plush jobs. I don't know, there's maybe one or two out of that crowd that haven't — and I know that the job is plush and I know the problems he'd have sitting over there at this time with the problems that they have, the lack of leadership, the crying that we just heard from the Member for St. George who cries everyday and sobs crocodile tears in this Chamber. Mr. Speaker, I've heard it for years and years and it just runs off me like water off a duck. I only have to remind the members opposite of when they were government what great saviours of this province they were. How they came up with Slater and solved the flood problems up there, brought their Cabinet up to Dauphin, they never even went out and looked at the flood. There's never been a nickle of compensation ever went to those people to this day.

The roads in my constituency they paved them up to the border of Roblin Constituency, then cut her off. Cut it off and did you hear me in those days standing up and crying crocodile tears like the Member for St. George or the Member for St. Boniface this afternoon. Mr. Speaker, we knew how they operated and we know how were going to operate this government and it'll be operated well.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the members opposite, support this Bill; it's good legislation; it's needed and this province is going to grow and it can't grow without the legislation and the normal procession of procedure. But, Mr. Speaker, it's an interesting thing, there's a sort of a delaying tactic taking place in Ottawa this last several days on a matter that is very, very important to Canada and to Manitoba, but while the delaying tactics are going on in Ottawa, it's a different political party that's doing the delaying. It happens to be the Tories that are doing the delaying, and I heard Mr. Broadbent, the Leader of the NDP,

calling Baker, the House Leader for the Tories, sleazy the other night. Sleazy Baker was it he said? I see in the Globe and Mail today he's moved on, and he's brought out some different words, "We, in fact, have the tyranny of the minority of the Conservative Party by Ed Broadbent." Then here's Yvon Pinard, the House Leader in Ottawa, says — he was referring to Mr. Baker — has spent an hour-and-a-half systematically destroying, demolishing this noble institution. Those are the remarks that I'd like to address myself to tonight.

Mr. Speaker, where there the stakes, I dare say in Ottawa are much larger than they are in this matter that we're dealing with in this Chamber tonight, but the stakes in Ottawa, who members opposite support, is Canada and this province, Manitoba. The system in this country is going to be destroyed; this province is going to be destroyed. We're not going to have the parliamentary system when your hachet men and the Liberals get finished with that parliamentary package in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, and I don't know what is going to happen to this mother country, Canada, that we dearly love so much, or what's going to happen to the parliamentary institutions in Ottawa. NDP and Liberals going to bed together, in collusion, tearing the hearts out of this country, I just can't believe it, Mr. Speaker.

They've got this package in their hip pocket and with all these amendments here's Trudeau and Broadbent marching arm-in-arm and they've never yet gone to the provinces to show them what the package is, and here we have the Supreme Court's decision today, so it's likely not legal. If that Supreme Court decision, as I read it, from Newfoundland today, it was the decision of the Court of Appeal that actually what Broadbent and Trudeau, ably supported by Howard Pawley, the Leader of the NDP Party and members sitting over there, is actually illegal, it's actually illegal. Or what are you going to do when the decision of the Quebec court comes out, maybe next week? What if it falls in line with the decision that come out of Newfoundland today? Are you then going to back off? Are you again going to change your position and recognize what you're doing to this country, and to the parliamentary system in this country, or are you just going to sit over there like a bunch of bumps on the logs and say, we'll march behind Broadbent, we'll stay behind him to the bitter end.

I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that some, at least some of the New Democrats have an understanding of what Parliament is all about; what this country is all about; and we've seen it all already where the Honourable Member for Inkster and two other very worried members of this Chamber have seen fit to pack it up and leave that party. And, why do they leave? Why? Was it because of this Bill? No, it is because of what is going on in Ottawa; what's going on with your Leader over there, and with Mr. Broadbent, the Leader in Ottawa. Very simply, they can't get along, because of your position on the Constitution.

I say, Mr. Speaker, I ask the members opposite, take another look what you're doing to this country; take another look at what you're doing to the parliamentary system in this country, where likely if you're allowed to proceed, we will not have the privilege of debating in a manner that we're debating this legislation in this House.

I don't know, I can't understand the NDP Party. Can you figure out where we're at today? The constitutional package is there. Why can't you as NDP, Broadbent and Trudeau, take that to the table and let the ten provinces have a look at it? Is there anything wrong with that? No. But they're not going to do it. You wouldn't do it. That's your position. They said, no dice. Even though it's illegal, would you still not urge Mr. Broadbent, urge your leader, Howard Pawley, let's back off, let's go and support the Conservatives, let's go and put that package on the table and let the ten Premiers of this country at least take a look at it. No, Russ Doern, the Member for Elmwood turns his head sideways, they're not going to. So they've dug their heels in. They've dug their heels in and they're not going to talk about it. They're not going to talk about it, they're afraid the position they take and I'm surprised that it hasn't come up more often in this Supply Motion, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOERN: Where's your resolution? Put your bloody resolution in.

MR. McKENZIE: I will, have no fear. But I just wonder, Mr. Speaker, the package with this Charter of Rights, this amending formula, and that referendum override that's attached with it, tailored by the NDP and the Liberal collusion in Ottawa, and I guess here have joined them, Saskatchewan now has backed up, that has never been yet presented to the provinces, and that hurts me. That hurts the people of the constituency that I represent. I wonder why you don't, at least some of you members, at least join the Honourable Member for Inkster, he's right on that point and help us solve this problem.

The Honourable Member for Elmwood shrugs his shoulders, he says, no, I'm not ready. I'm going to stay with my leader and ride the storm out. Well, I wish you well, but I say, I just can't believe, when two-thirds of the people in this country are opposed to that Trudeau package, that Broadbent and Trudeau have cooked up and today it's now been told in the courts of Newfoundland it's illegal and they are still going to stand up and support it. I just asked the Member for St. George, what's it matter about hay or water if we don't have a constitution in this country that we can live with? Two-thirds of the people of the country against it, eight provinces now are opposing it, and they still sit over there and say, no, we're not going to change.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have the Liberals and NDP in Ottawa, jointly together, trying to cut off the debate so the Conservatives can't proceed.

MR. DOERN: What are they doing there?

MR. McKENZIE: I just wonder. Why don't you ask your leader, because I don't understand it. The Conservatives are trying to save Canada and the parliamentary system. That's what they're trying to do. They're trying to save Canada. Supposing that Trudeau and Broadbent put the closure motion in; what will happen then?

MR. DOERN: We're not voting for closure.

MR. McKENZIE: No, I know you're not because Broadbent then wouldn't get his two amendments in,

the one on native rights, which is another under-the-table deal that they've cooked up so they've got to go with this sort of a motion where they'll allow another four days debate. Mr. Speaker, I don't know how to describe this Liberal-NDP alliance in Ottawa, ably supported by Howard Pawley and the members opposite. Is it treachery, is it tyranny, or . . . ?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for St. Vital on a point of order.

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the Member for Roblin has three times referred to other honourable members in this Chamber by name. I understand there is a long custom in our Rules or in Beauchesne, Mr. Speaker, that requires members to refer to other members by their constituency or position and not by their name.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I don't know what words could ably describe that Trudeau-Broadbent-NDP-Liberal alliance that's tearing this country apart today, that's being done underground, that's being done without the consent of the ten provinces, which is being done without any consultation at all with the provinces, which is now found to be illegal as far as the courts of appeal in Newfoundland is concerned, and the court decision in this province of course which is going on; how do you describe that? Is there a word for it? If the members opposite will help me, I'm sure they could come up with some words. I just don't know what the word is. It's never happened before in this country. To see this country that we've got so proud of and has grown so big, and here it is today, its heart torn out by this alliance of NDP-New Democrats and Liberals.

Mr. Speaker, I'm terribly annoyed about it, the people in Roblin constituency are annoyed about it, and two-thirds of the people in Canada are annoyed about it and so are eight Premiers today when they go to bed.

What more ammunition do you want? Can you not read, can you not hear, or have you no caucus meetings, you have no leadership, what is your problem? Why don't you go over and join the Member for Inkster and help us solve this problem?

The Member for St. George laughs. The Member for St. George laughs. (Interjection)— Well, Mr. Speaker, the record will show, and I'm sure that members opposite will want to go out and talk about going on the hustings with that albatross hanging around their neck, I just have a field day at every political meeting where over 75 percent of the people of my constituency, just ask them, right quick, what did you do on the Constitution? Where did you stand? Are you the ones that are going to tear this country apart? This parliamentary system, yes, I would point out, every one of them on an individual basis. We know now that the three over here at least have the courage of their convictions and have an understanding of what Canada is all about and it walked out and there they sit, joining us in our battle to try and save Canada and the system that it's been so proud of in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I shall not delay the committee much longer but I thought I should put my feelings on the Constitution. I'll do it again in the resolution, have no fear.

MR. DOERN: How many people like Lyon in this province?

MR. McKENZIE: No problem. I daresay when the history books are written on this constitutional issue, Lyon will go down as one of the great men of our country, likely one of the greatest parliamentarians this province has ever seen. Lyon now has five Premiers with him, there were six, now they're eight, and I'll bet you before another month, I'll bet you Mr. Davis will be joining in with them on this constitutional matter, and then they'll have nine. Maybe our friends from New Brunswick will finally see the light that these nine Premiers can't be all wrong; at least eight can't be wrong, and that includes our friend from Saskatchewan. That includes our friend Mr. Blakeney.

Now is Blakeney wrong? Are the other members from the House of Commons that packed it up, are they wrong, Mr. Speaker? No.

So, Mr. Speaker, what I was intending to advise the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, take the job. Take the job, because if Trudeau goes to the people of this country on this constitutional matter, that Ottawa job that the Honourable Member for St. Boniface — it won't be there, because Trudeau won't be back; Trudeau will never be back if he goes to the people.

There are two-thirds of the people opposing him today and the election isn't called. What would it be if he called an election on this issue? I just wonder how many seats the Tories would come back with in Ottawa today if we went to the people on this constitution? Would he get as many as the great John Diefenbaker? I suspect that Clark would. The party would. (Interjection)— Well certainly. Well, I know, because the honourable members opposite don't get around and listen to the people. They've got these isms and the ideologies, they don't listen to the people, they tell the people what they've got, which is strictly socialism.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I hope the members opposite will give the Member for St. Boniface my advice. I know he's had a hard struggle in this House. He was a staunch Liberal and then he for some reason joined the ranks over there and then he's moved away over and now when he has his last chance, and likely that maybe was his last speech today, because of the dissension in the ranks opposite, from what I hear, it's not very good, they have a hard time getting a caucus, the leader is having problems getting the guys together, he can maybe get two and then the other three won't come and then maybe tomorrow he's got the other three and the other two won't come, and of course that is not easy, and how, Mr. Speaker, could that group lead this province?

First of all, they don't believe in the parliamentary system, because they don't believe in the British Parliamentary System, they're tearing it apart; they don't believe in Canada, they're tearing Canada apart, they're tearing Canada's heart out by what they're doing. So what do they believe in? I don't know what they believe in, but thank the Lord there's at least three New Democrats that have stood up in their rightful place and moved out of the party and moved over here and show them they understand what Canada's about; they understand what the parliamentary system is about and support us and

what we're doing, here and in Ottawa, to try and save this system that's been so great for so long.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Boniface today, he went on for a long time and tried to mislead the House, maybe not mislead, but put a lot of things in the records, as if nothing was happening as far as this government was concerned, and that we didn't in fact need this bill, and we maybe didn't need these moneys because we were going to waste it. He went through a long rigamarole of things.

I'd just like to tell the honourable members opposite and the Honourable Member for St. Boniface that there's been \$234 million in approved health facilities and construction this year, which includes 800 new personal care home beds in this province. There's \$138 million redevelopment for the Health Sciences Centre. These are works that's approved. Major new psychiatric facilities at St. Boniface Hospital, at Grace Hospital, at the Health Sciences Centre and at Seven Oaks. Those are all things that are approved, Mr. Speaker. A \$4 million expansion of the Manitoba Cancer Treatment and the Cancer Research Centre, \$4 million expenditure there. \$3.7 million for the Cadham Lab, Mr. Speaker, and the Member for St. Boniface and members opposite say that this government hasn't got a conscience, it hasn't got a soul.

Mr. Speaker, there was new hospitals mentioned in the Minister's Estimates for Carman, for Selkirk, for Crystal City, for Snow Lake, and this government, you say, has no heart, no constitution. My, oh my, I should like to someday and I think I could put it on the end of a pencil what the members opposite did in my constituency when they were government. I think the end of a pencil would cover it very ably.

Mr. Speaker, this government has established a Manitoba Health Research Council, and a new first time program of direct funding for medical research. That's already in the works, Mr. Speaker. What about the Council on Aging? Have the members opposite got anything to say about that? The Member for Elmwood shirks his shoulders, he never heard of that one before. Of course, at his age and having so many problems with his Leader and to find out where he's going to sit in that group over there, I'm sure that he doesn't do as much reading as he should.

Mr. Speaker, look at some of the new insurance services that are mentioned in the Honourable Minister of Health's Estimates under the Health Services Commission. The breast prosthesis, hearing aids for children, the orthopedic shoes for children, the cleft lip and palate repair that was mentioned in the Honourable Minister's Estimates, adult care at personal homes, incentives for rural medical practise to help us with doctors out in rural Manitoba, a 10 percent incentive fee to go into the northern areas.

My gosh, Mr. Speaker, as I look through the figures, the annual health programming budget in 1977, when this government took office, was some \$500 million. What is it this year, Mr. Speaker? I think it's \$771 million and the members opposite have the courage and the audacity to stand up in this Chamber and say this government hasn't got a conscience, and hasn't got any concern about the people in this province. Mr. Speaker, I certainly can recognize — I think the Member of St. Boniface

mentioned home care facilities. My gosh, all he has to do is take a look at the figures, home care is up some 44 percent in the last two years by this government.

Now who is kidding who, Mr. Speaker? It's certainly not the Minister, and it's certainly not me; I have the facts in front of me. I honestly don't understand the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, why they would take such a dim view of the bill that the Minister is trying to pursue, this Interim Supply? Why they would take such a dim view of this province; why they cry crocodile tears everyday, and take this terrible dim view of the province, unless it's because of the problems they're having within their own party; the problems at the leadership level, nobody leading them; the problems because three members walked out and maybe some more are going to walk out; the problems they have with the Constitution; the problems they have with Broadbent; the problems they have because four Federal Members walked out of the Caucus in Ottawa over the Constitution. You don't think those aren't big problems for the New Democratic Party and they have the courage to say they're ready to go to the people. Mr. Speaker, they'd get slaughtered in this province. You'll get slaughtered just like you did in Ontario and I am looking forward to the day that we meet you on the hustings. I am looking forward to the day on those issues alone and nothing else. I doubt if you'll come back with more than six or eight, if you're lucky, and if you don't get a Leader you may not even get eight because the eight . . . over there.

I suspect the policies already being espoused by the Member for Inkster are much more palatable to the people in Roblin constituency than the policies of —(Interjection)— I'm not, the rural NDP people that I talk to, are on line with the Member for Inkster much more than the policies over there. So I suspect that if there is going to be a threat in the election, the threat that I fear is the one from the Party that is now being lead by the Member for Inkster, not the group that's lead over here by the Leader of the Opposition.

I do, Mr. Speaker, urge the members opposite to move this bill with haste. We're not tearing the country apart, we're not ripping up the Constitution of this country. We're just asking you to approve a few dollars, so we can move the province ahead and get ready for the Election.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. BRIAN CORRIN (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I want to discuss something that is much more immediate to the people of Manitoba, something that pertains to that government's responsibility, something which is down to earth, which affects people in every walk of life, outside this building and around us.

So if I can ask the member to descend from his flights of fancy and reverie and come back to earth, I want to talk about the Greater Winnipeg Gas Company, and the situation of hardship which prevails with respect to striking employees and consumers in this city.

Mr. Speaker, we have now for some two months had a situation where a major public utility has been

in a situation of strike. During the course of this time, Mr. Speaker, we have heard various calls for intercession, intervention on the part of the Minister of Labour, the Minister responsible for Consumer Affairs, and, Mr. Speaker, during the course of that time, we have not had one affirmative response or effort on the part of members opposite.

There seems to be a deliberate attempt to stonewall any recommendation, any constructive suggestion that emanates from this side, and, Mr. Speaker, now we have a virtual chorus of persons throughout the province and throughout the city, calling for some sort of government action.

We have on the one hand, Mr. Speaker, we have the host of a hot-line show, a prominent figure in the news media, Peter Warren, carrying on legal action in a provincial court attempting to obtain some redress and I think more importantly trying to make a point about the inequity perpetrated by this government and perhaps by the Gas Company as a result of this situation.

Mr. Speaker, as members here know, I have as well made certain efforts by way of an application to the Public Utilities Board in order to have them investigate certain circumstances and situations relative to this subject matter.

Mr. Speaker, I am now advised that the Ombudsman of this province has approached the Public Utilities Board and implored it to intervene and to make investigations and inquiries on behalf of the consumers that they are supposed to protect.

So, Mr. Speaker, the government is being assailed not by just the Opposition now, but also by members of the press, by the Ombudsman of this province and, Mr. Speaker, we still have a situation where the government is intransigent and refusing to respond, refusing to take any sort of positive direction with respect to this problem.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Consumer Affairs has taken the position that the Public Utilities Board is an independent body outside of his jurisdiction. He has noted in the press and in the House that the board does not report to him, that he has no control with respect to decisions made by that body. Mr. Speaker, I wish the Minister was in his chair this evening. The fact of the matter is that the Honourable Minister has really demonstrated, I think to some degree, his incapacity to handle this portfolio. Harkening back to the events of the past few days, Mr. Speaker, this Minister has been involved in the Flin Flon affair. He has for some reason unknown to members on this side, decided to deliberately intervene and override and vary a recommendation made by the Clean Environment Commission of this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there he recognized his authority, there in order to protect the private interests of a very large corporate entity he recognized very quickly as a matter of fact, with some degree of alacrity, recognized his jurisdiction and his authority and, Mr. Speaker, he exercised it. We say, Mr. Speaker, that he exercised it in error.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Greater Winnipeg Gas matter he refuses to recognize his jurisdiction and his authority and that rejection, repudiation of authority, flies in the face of the enabling legislation which constitutes the foundation of the authority of the Public Utilities Board.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that Section 64(1) of the Public Utilities Board, clearly and unequivocally sets out the authority and I believe the responsibility of the Minister of Consumer Affairs in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is worth considering the actual wording of the section in order to consider the Minister's responsibility and the abrogation of that responsibility that's been evidenced by his inaction. The section is entitled, "Investigation of Excess Charges," and it says, "where it is made to appear to the board, upon the complaint of an owner of a public utility or of any municipality or person having an interest," and I am paraphrasing because there is some legalese, "in respect of which the complaint is made that there is reason to believe that the charges demanded by any owner of a public utility exceed what is just and reasonable, having regard to the nature and quality of the service rendered or of the commodities supplied, or where the board is requested to do so by the Minister," and that bears emphasis and repetition, Mr. Speaker, "where the Public Utilities Board is requested to do so by the Minister, the board may proceed to hold such investigation as it sees fit into all matters relating to the nature and quality of the service or the commodity in question, or the tolls or charges demanded therefore."

Mr. Speaker, we have a situation where the Minister of Consumer Affairs was quoted just last Saturday in the Winnipeg Free Press as indicating, when asked about my application, that he feels that — he says, and I quote, "I think there is cause for something to be done." And later on he says, "he couldn't do anything because the board is an independent body and they will make a decision on a hearing on what they will do with the application. I can't interfere because the board doesn't report to me." The lack of syntax, Mr. Speaker, is not due to my misreading, that's the direct quote.

Mr. Speaker, clearly the Minister has, and I presume innocently, I hope innocently misrepresented his jurisdiction to this House. Mr. Speaker, I think that in the circumstances and in the situation it behooves the Minister to consider his authority and responsibility in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, there are numerous people who are having to effect the repairs and make service to their gas equipment on a private basis. There are many people who because of equipment failures or breakdowns are forced to contract with private firms in order to have certain repairs effected in their homes. Mr. Speaker, they are now required to effect those repairs at their own expense. As you know that is not normally the case. The charges which the Public Utility Board has authorized were authorized on the basis of certain operational expenses which included, Mr. Speaker, included service and repair charges.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister full well knows that what in effect has been transpiring is a situation where the consumer, the Greater Winnipeg Gas customer is being put in a position of double jeopardy. The consumer is being asked to pay in the estimated charges, because the meter readers are out on strike as well, in the estimated charges that are being presented, a sum which includes the normal operational expenses of the company. Mr.

Speaker, why should that be? Why should the Gas Company be able to exact a pound of flesh for a service it is not actually providing, and why should the Minister of Consumer Affairs allow this sort of iniquitous situation to arise? Why doesn't he intervene? He has the authority, Mr. Speaker, clearly he has the authority. Moreover, Mr. Speaker, there are provisions in the Act that provide that the board and I'll read again, 76(a) of the Act which provide that the board may investigate, upon a request to the Minister, or the Cabinet, or upon complaint in writing, any matter concerning any public utility.

Mr. Speaker, there is so much enabling authority provided to the government and the Minister that the comments of that Minister in this House become absolutely ludicrous. It's simply, Mr. Speaker, absolutely absurd that the Minister should, day after day, rise in his place and suggest that he hasn't got any authority to assist. Mr. Speaker, the board has been empowered to furnish safe adequate and proper service and I'm quoting from Section 78 of the Act, and to require the utility to maintain its property and equipment in a condition to enable it to be in such condition.

Mr. Speaker, where is the government? I ask you, where is the government in this important matter? Apparently, Mr. Speaker, they would prefer to delegate this matter to their political appointees at the Public Utility Board level. Mr. Speaker, I don't know who they're trying to fool. I don't really know who this government is trying to fool. The facts as they are indicate that of recent times at least two Progressive Conservative candidates, who we must presume are fairly active within the ranks of members opposite, have had tenure and have sat on this Public Utilities Board.

So even, Mr. Speaker, if we are to believe the representations of the Minister of Consumer Affairs, if we are to accept what he says about it not interfering with this independent board, let us also be cognizant and aware of the fact that those people, at least several of those people on that board are political persons, active in the member's party, one of them is a former Premier of this province, another one is a defeated candidate in Brandon West; let us see the situation for what it is, Mr. Speaker. I, for one, refuse to believe, I simply refuse to believe that the defeated candidate from Brandon West is not in any form of communication or contact with members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, that is what the people of this city are being asked to believe. That is the sort of claptrap that is being purveyed by the Minister opposite. Mr. Speaker, it's ludicrous, it's absurd, the situation is, in fact, one that demands intervention on the part of the government.

Mr. Speaker, I defy any member opposite to justify in their own conscience, how they can stand by, knowing that the qualified service and repair personnel of this utility are on strike, and how they can sleep at night knowing that those customers of that utility may be dealing with people who are not qualified to effect repairs. How, Mr. Speaker, has the Minister of Consumer Affairs been able to establish that the repairs that are now being done to peoples gas equipment, is being done in accordance with the highest professional and trade standards? How is he able to stand in his place and sleep at night, satisfied that that danger, that jeopardy is not real?

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that there is no answer to that. That is the reason that there should be an inquiry. A responsible Minister would ask the Public Utilities Board to hold a public inquiry and investigation in order to establish whether there is any danger to public safety and well-being in this regard but, Mr. Speaker, that has not been done.

Mr. Speaker, the Ombudsman of this province wrote to the Public Utilities Board in response to queries to him and suggested that this was a substantive matter. He suggested that there is a possibility of public danger and he suggested that the Public Utility Board should look into the matter. The Public Utilities Board has elected not to do so, Mr. Speaker, and the ball is now in the government's court. The government is now effectively responsible if tonight or tomorrow night there is, as a result of defective repairs, an explosion which kills or injures people in this city.

Mr. Speaker, it may be suggested that my arguments are essentially alarmist and it may be suggested that I am phantasizing possibilities, but there was, in this city, some two years ago, an explosion that took the life of a baby in Fort Garry. Mr. Speaker, did you know that there was a report in the office of the Department of Labour and the report went back many many years, it went back to the Sixties but that report indicated that a certain type of valve unit was potentially hazardous and had been barred in the United States of America. Mr. Speaker, there had been no action by the administrative officials of the government over those two decades and, Mr. Speaker, damn it, you know, it's too much when an eight month old baby has to die in order to make a point; it's simply too much.

Mr. Speaker, if that occurs as a result of this strike, if because some landlord decides to save \$100 which he would not ordinarily have to pay to repair a gas line and decides to do it himself or to bring a friend over to try and do it, or he brings in a tradesman who is not properly qualified to do the work, who doesn't have proper pipe fitting papers, Mr. Speaker, I tell you, if one person is injured or dies as a result of this government's inattention to this matter, they will never, never, never hear the end of it.

Mr. Speaker, the possibility — it may not be imminent, but there is a possibility. (Interjection)— I don't care, Mr. Speaker, how remote it is. I say there is a possibility, there is an imminent public danger and the Minister has a bloody responsibility to intervene.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. It is customary in this House for members to use parliamentary language at all times. I would suggest to the honourable member that he choose his words carefully.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Speaker, my words may be intemperate but, Mr. Speaker, it is not hard, and I apologize to you and the House if those words are somewhat unparliamentary but, Mr. Speaker, it is not difficult to become very indignant when faced with an intransigent government that week after week, month after month, flies in the face of reason, simply refuses to take any action.

Mr. Speaker, there is ample evidence to indicate, and as I suggested before, the Ombudsman of this

province does not intercede and request the Public Utilities Board to do a public investigation without some sound basis and reason. There is ample reason to believe that there is an imminent public danger as a result of this strike. Mr. Speaker, if we forget about the costs, if we forget about the senior citizens who may be paying over-estimated bills, if we forget those aspects, Mr. Speaker, and that's a problem, Mr. Speaker, I've had calls from people who tell me that they insulated their house this year, and the estimated bills simply have to be wrong, because they're not based on the insulation; they tell me that they've taken a vacation for two weeks and come back and found that because there are no meter readers that they're receiving estimated bills based on previous consumption rates that have no relationship to reality.

Mr. Speaker, you know, it makes no sense. So we have people who are being asked to pay double maintenance costs, and, Mr. Speaker, it's a serious matter. There's a housing co-op in the north end of this city. I believe that there are something like 200 units, the Willow Park Co-op. Mr. Speaker, they suffered a breakdown, all the pilot lights went out in their complex about a week ago. Mr. Speaker, you know they phoned the Greater Winnipeg Gas Company to relight the pilot lights and were told that that was impossible. Mr. Speaker, there were hundreds of people who were left without any service, without heat, without hot water and you know, Mr. Speaker, the only recourse was the Co-op Board had to go out, and they had to out of their own pockets pay for 200 pilot lights to be relit. Mr. Speaker, that was a very very expensive process, and I understand, Mr. Speaker, that a law suit is imminent.

Mr. Speaker, there is every reason, there is now every reason for this government to intercede and call on the Public Utilities Board to have a hearing. The legislation is as clear as clear can be. The Minister has a responsibility, it says right in the Act that the Board is empowered to investigate upon requests of the Minister; that's Section 76, Mr. Speaker, Section 64.1 again reinforces that. It says, that the Minister can request investigations of excess charges.

Mr. Speaker, this Minister is either very naive, ingenuous, perhaps new to the job, inexperienced or, Mr. Speaker, I'll say it, somewhat partisan. He's partisan in a very strange way. He seems to be anti-consumer, anti-public. It's the Flin Flon experience all over again.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one would think that when the Minister had his, and I would hope that he realizes that he's had his fingers burned with respect to his variance of the Clean Environment Commission recommendations in the Flin Flon matter. I would believe, Mr. Speaker, that at least he would take some action on this other matter, that he would realize that he has a certain responsibility to the people.

So, Mr. Speaker, we over here are suggesting that the time has come for honest political confrontation. This government simply has to put up or, Mr. Speaker, respectfully shut up. If this government, Mr. Speaker, is going to stand up and make speeches as we've just heard from the Member for Roblin about matters of state dealing with the Constitution and

other esoterics. They are also going to have to tend to the needs of people right here at home. They're so concerned, Mr. Speaker, that the rights of Parliament be recognized and be preserved. They're so concerned, Mr. Speaker, that they be vindicated and restored as they see it to a position of full authority and jurisdiction, with respect to all matters pertaining to the public interest. Well, Mr. Speaker, they have to put up or shut up.

Mr. Speaker, under The Public Utilities Board Act, there is a clear responsibility on the Minister. It is recognized within that Act that the Minister of Consumer Affairs is responsible for the affairs of that Board and through it the protection of the public. Mr. Speaker, I'm not for a moment going to listen to these reveries about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, when tonight in this city, there well may be an apartment block or a home where an explosion is imminent. You know they have no right to talk about that when they're not attending to business here.

Now I was shocked, Mr. Speaker, when I received a reply today of the Public Utilities Board. I was shocked when I received that reply telling me that they wouldn't hold a public inquiry and I was shocked when I received a copy of the letter that had been sent to Mr. Maltby, the Ombudsman, denying him the right of an inquiry. And, Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am not able to fathom the reasoning behind this seeming abandonment of public responsibility on the part of the Public Utilities Board.

Mr. Speaker, I said before, and I want to reinforce it, because it bears emphasis. I regard the Public Utilities Board as a political arm of the government. I do not regard Mr. Thornborough, I believe the former Vice President of the Party of the members opposite, or the former member, Mr. Weir, the former Premier of the province and Leader of that Party, to be people in a judicial sort of position. Now I know that Mr. Weir has recently resigned and he's not sitting, but, Mr. Speaker, the political realities are that the Public Utilities Board is not by any stretch of the imagination at full arm's length with the government. It may be an investigative body, Mr. Speaker, and I recognize that and I respect it, and I'm not suggesting that Mr. Thornborough or Mr. Weir are unable to do a job, a proper job of investigation. I'm sure they're quite able to conduct a proper inquiry and hearing.

Mr. Speaker, what I'm saying though, is that it's a sham when the government sits idly by and suggests that and shields itself behind the skirts of their political allies and friends at the Public Utilities Board and pretends that the matter is solely within the responsibility of the Board. That's nonsense. That's incredible egregious nonsense.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am looking to the government in the next, hopefully in the next few hours, if not in the next day, to reverse the decision of the Public Utilities Board. Let us have leadership, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Thornborough was not elected by the people of Brandon. Mr. Thornborough was a defeated candidate. The Member for River Heights, the Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs was elected to do a job. (Interjection)— A member opposite shouts that he's doing it. There is no evidence of that, Mr. Speaker, there is no evidence of that.

The Clean Environment Commission, Mr. Speaker, is made up of designated officials largely

representative of certain scientific disciplines and professions. That, Mr. Speaker, is far more independent, I tell you, than the Public Utilities Board. Mr. Speaker, in the case of the Clean Environment Commission, we have the Minister rushing, rushing to reverse a decision.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am now calling on the Minister to exercise his full authority and become a consumer advocate, a true public representative to engage the company in the process of inquiry, not, Mr. Speaker, to somehow debunk the company or deflate the company or make some case on behalf of the union. I'm not asking him to do that. I'm asking him, as I've said, to see to it, that the consumer's best interest is being advanced and that there is no public hazard presented by this strike situation.

I don't know, Mr. Speaker, how long it is going to take for this government to start to become more sensitive to consumer and environmental problems. The mantle has truly been passed on, Mr. Speaker, from the former Minister responsible for this department to the new one. We may have a new Minister, but seemingly we have no change in direction. It's the same old story. A continual resistance, seemingly resistance, to recognition of the rights of people to preserve the environment and to be protected from certain interests.

Mr. Speaker, in all fairness, I think everybody here would agree that if there is any situation, any situation where the consumer is at risk, if there's any commercial situation where the consumer is truly jeopardized, it's one where the consumer is virtually by legislative fiat, forced and compelled to deal with a monopoly corporation, and more important, Mr. Speaker, a monopoly interest that controls the necessity of life. A monopoly interest that's been given the sole authority to sell natural gas in this city.

So, Mr. Speaker, the government has to accept the fact that it has a responsibility. You know one wonders, several years ago, I remember the former Premier of this Province, Mr. Schreyer, used to often talk about the possibility of nationalizing that corporation, and he didn't do it, Mr. Speaker, but he used to publicly talk about it and it was a matter of some serious concern to him. Mr. Speaker, in the 1980s, in the 1980s with energy costs rising as they have, and with people's real incomes being reduced steadily, Mr. Speaker, by those rising costs and others, you'd think, Mr. Speaker, when confronting this sort of situation, you'd think that if there is no will on the part of government to regulate and to administer the public interest in this respect, you'd think that perhaps it's time again for some serious discussion of the alternatives. Because you know, Mr. Speaker, if this is the way it's going to be, if Conservative Government means less government, means generally irresponsible government, then there is little point to the whole exercise. We're fooling the people, we're fooling ourselves. Perhaps it's time to put the lid and the muzzle on the whole thing and draw it into the public orbit and make it a real public, political issue, and government will be responsible for the doings and affairs of the utility and that'll be the end of it. It'll be like Hydro. Now the government wants it both ways, government wants to be able to regulate it to some extent, but when it's not convenient to regulate, when it's not convenient to become involved for reasons unknown,

government wants to be able to put it at arm's length and buffer itself from it.

Well, that doesn't wash. I'm not going to have Mr. Thornborough or the likes of Mr. Weir, if that sort of person is on the Board, running political interference for that government.

Mr. Speaker, it's not a question of who they appoint. I respect their right to appoint these people. I even respect the people. I'm not suggesting that the people are unethical, I'm not suggesting that the people are unable to do the job. I'm suggesting that the responsibility as to who makes a decision, whether there should be an investigation, should lie with the government, not defeated candidates of that government.

Mr. Speaker, they will do their best to defuse this argument; Mr. Speaker, they will attempt to bait us when we discuss it; Mr. Speaker, they will attempt to through red herrings across our path; Mr. Speaker, they will attempt to suggest that I am alienated and all off by myself; they will suggest a million things, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, the one thing they will not suggest is that they are wrong. Mr. Speaker, I simply take it as being inferred in that sort of hyperbole that there is a recognition that they have been irresponsible.

Mr. Speaker, they can tell me to sit down and they can say that I'm repetitive, but on this point again, I repeat and I think I can reinforce what the Member for Inkster has said. He says that he sounds like a broken record, he says that it's a bit of an embarrassment to come back with the same questions and the same theme day after day, but dammit, Mr. Speaker, that's what this is all about. There are over one million people in this province who expect us to fight for their best interests. Mr. Speaker, until something is done, I think it's our responsibility, no matter how wearing it is, how wearying it is, no matter how repetitive it is, to reinforce this particular issue. It is an important issue. It is one that deserves the government's attention. The government will not be able to ride it out.

Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that the Minister for Consumer Affairs has not seen fit to continue participating in these Estimates. He has done so and I recognize that they have been in some respects particularly devastating for him, but he has a responsibility to discharge to the people of this province. This is the people's forum, Mr. Speaker, he has to come here and be responsible to the people. He has to do what is right.

You know, might is not right. The mere fact that members opposite happen to have a majority, Mr. Speaker, is of absolutely no import to the people of this province. It may be of some significance to members opposite that they're still riding the euphoria of that 49 percent majority and, Mr. Speaker, they may feel that by puffing up the rather ephemeral and esoteric issues such as the Constitution that they will be able to weather out another term. But, Mr. Speaker, this is bread and butter. This is a real issue. This issue is here, it's now, it's not going to go away.

We have expected, we have long expected, we have waited for this government to take certain initiatives. Mr. Speaker, they're not forthcoming. A lot of rhetoric is forthcoming about a variety of

things but, Mr. Speaker, nothing is happening. (Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, that really sums it up and if there is going to be an epitaph, it's going to be that suggested by the Member for Portage la Prairie — "We made our stand in 1977 and we're going to stick by it." Isn't that the truth, Mr. Speaker? They decided on a course of action, no matter how absurd it was, no matter how it defied logic, no matter how unreasonable it might have proven to be, they continue to march forward.

You know, I heard the First Minister on television talking about the Trudeau retreat from Moscow and I thought, Mr. Speaker, how apropos, what marvelous word magic that was. Because I don't know whether he's aware of it, but I think that he is involved in very much the same sort of process. This sense that one can never be wrong, that decisions can't be countermanded, rescinded, they can't be reversed, that one must always go forward regardless, until one is completely wiped out, until there is nothing left and then one is left to make that metaphorical retreat from Moscow, with nothing left but the tatters of an army around you. No principle, no ideology, no philosophy, nothing, just some sort of blind faith, some harkening back to some mythical better past.

Mr. Speaker, we're in the 1980s. There are 134,000 people that have gas fittings in their houses. There are 134,000 people who are liable to be blown up if those lines are not repaired properly. Can any member there stand up and assure us that that won't happen tonight? If not, they'd better have an inquiry under the Public Utilities Board Act as soon as possible and find out whether there's any jeopardy. They'd better react, not to me, Mr. Speaker, not to the Member for Inkster, but now to the Ombudsman of this province, because they're now in a far greater court, if I might say. They are now dealing with somebody who is truly impartial, who is apolitical, and they may feel that they can take me on at the polls, Mr. Speaker, but I'd like to see them take on George Maltby.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister will be closing debate.

The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. VIC SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've listened to —(Interjection)— I heard a little bit of mumbling from the back benches of the government side, Mr. Speaker, and I hear some reference to game playing. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the game playing is on that side, that the Member for Emerson was not prepared to stand up and speak unless a member from this side stood up to speak. When I stood up then he tried to stand up and gain your attention and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that in recognizing me you did the correct thing and the member in the back —(Interjection)— okay? Then let's be quiet and listen; let's just be quiet and listen if you want me to get on with it. I'm quite prepared to do it.

We've heard a fair amount of smoke coming from that side dealing with the Constitution. We heard the Member for Elmwood talking previously about the Tory election kit and he indicated that every time we start talking about the real issues of the day, the concerns of our people, the economy of the province, those people would start talking about the Constitution. They would start blowing smoke all

over the place and of course if that wouldn't work then they would try the old red paint brush, and the retreat from Moscow business, and the speeches that we've just been listening to this evening are very clear indicators of the strategy of the government side of the House. The reflections of the Member for Elmwood were very clearly right on.

The government does appear to be having some problems. (Interjection)— The government does appear to be having some problems though, even with its constitutional stand. Several weeks ago — (Interjection)— several weeks ago . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Could we have one speaker at a time?

The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: . . . we had a fellow by the name of Epp, Jake Epp. You people know him, he's a Tory Member of Parliament for Provencher and he's telling people in Montreal, on the Charter, you can't have opting out, and Epp said, Manitoba Premier Sterling Lyon, a Conservative, and the staunchest opponent of a Rights Charter was willing to compromise and accept a binding charter on certain conditions. That's what they're saying in Montreal. They're going back to the Two Nations theory. Remember the Two Nations theory of 1968?

MR. SPEAKER: Orer please. Order please. We can only have one speaker at a time. At this time I recognize the Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you. I'm obviously touching a sore spot. We see what these people are saying in Montreal, they're back to their Two Nations theory, one story in the prairies and another in Montreal, they know that the young Conservatives support a Charter of Rights, and when they are talking to the young Conservatives they say, we support a Charter of Rights. We have David Crombie saying the same thing at that very same meeting. He's quoted as saying, a Charter of Rights is essential to the future of Canada, therefore I support it. He goes on to say that Lyon's concern about giving the courts more power could be overcome by having the courts, in ruling a violation of rights, place the burden for correcting the law back on the Legislature. He said it was one area of compromise Mr. Lyon is willing to look at.

Well, I suggest and the Member for Inkster is saying, that's okay, I suggest that it has never been the case that if the courts would rule a certain law ultra vires, that the Legislature could not come along and change the Charter of Rights along with — (Interjection)— well, certainly it's an entrenched charter. The Honourable Member for Inkster says it's not — —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, an entrenched charter can be changed by way of an amending formula. It may require seven Legislatures, but certainly once those Legislatures agree to the amendment, then the rule, the law which the Legislatures want to impose will be imposed on the courts. The courts are there to interpret the law, not to make it, and if the Legislatures make the law clear, then there is no question that the courts are not there to make the law. (Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. There can only be one speaker at a time.

The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'll try again. The Honourable Member for Inkster is referring from his seat to the matter of eight judges and you have five saying one thing and three saying another thing right now, certainly, on an issue on which Parliament and the Legislatures have not legislated; on an issue where they have been given no direction by the Parliaments and Legislatures of this country. That is why they are saying we are not exactly sure what the amending formula is. I'm not sure what the amending formula is; I believe that nobody else in this House, other than some fool, could stand up and say, I believe definitively that this is what the law is, based on the confusion that we have with The British North America Act. There is doubt, and it is not surprising that some judges say it's one thing and other judges say it's another thing because there is certainly room for interpretation. But once Parliament and the Legislatures say that it will take seven Parliaments, seven Legislatures, then that will be what the law will be and it will not be a matter that will again require testing.

Now, we heard from those two people, Epp and Crombie, they're telling the people in Montreal that people in Manitoba, the Conservatives in Manitoba are prepared to compromise, then recently, March 19, 1981, there's a headline in the Star and Times, "Gourlay Defends Individual's Right," and he states, "The P.C. Party believes that the Constitution should be brought back to Canada with an acceptable amending formula, then the provinces and Federal Government could agree on a Charter of Rights. We want the Charter of Rights to protect Canadians right to own property."

That's the report from the Legislature of a member of the Cabinet of the Province of Manitoba — "We want the Charter of Rights."

Now, they are telling us that we are confused? They're telling us that we don't know what we want with respect to a Charter of Rights? I suggest that they don't have a clue where they're coming from and if they do, if they do they better start deciding amongst themselves which direction they do want to go in. Or are they saying one thing here and another thing back home on the farm?

You know, ten years ago the matter of a Charter of Rights for Canada was brought forth before the Legislature of this province and at that time the Conservatives, when they were sitting on this side of the House, never once, that I can find, and I've checked back on Hansard — the Member for Rock Lake is present, he was present then, I'm sure he would recall if the members of the Opposition of that day opposed a Charter of Rights, I can't find any indication that they did. They're talking about never flip-flopping, I suggest that they've flip-flopped since then. Back in June of 1971, the then Leader of the Conservative Party on several occasions asked the First Minister what the position of the province was with respect to the Victoria Charter. The First Minister at that time very specifically informed the then Leader of the Opposition, that in fact the government of Manitoba was supporting the Victoria Charter, and I would refer to the Hansard of Monday, June 28th, 1971, Oral Question Period, Mr. Sidney Spivak, "Mr. Speaker, my question is for the First Minister. I wonder whether he can indicate whether

the Government of Manitoba has indicated to the Government of Canada its acceptance or nonacceptance of the Charter of Victoria." The Honourable Edward Schreyer, Premier (Rossmere): "Mr. Speaker, I have this morning sent a communication to the Government of Canada, indicating that the Government of Manitoba will agree to recommend the proposed Charter to the Legislative Assembly for ratification in the event that proves to be a practical exercise, indicating also that if there is to be any renegotiation of all or any part of the proposed Charter, that Manitoba will want to consider de nouveau certain sections."

Clearly Manitoba, the government, and the opposition at that time took the position that the Victoria Charter would be satisfactory to this province. Nowhere, at no time, at that time, did the then opposition stand up and say we are opposed to a Charter of Rights, we are opposed to entrenched rights, and they were entrenched at that time. (Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. We can only have one speaker at a time. The Honourable Member for Rossmere. (Interjection)— Order please, order please, order please. The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: The Member for Lakeside was a member of this House when those questions were asked by his then leader and were answered by the then Premier of the province. I am sure the Member for Lakeside was well aware of what was contained in that Charter at that time and that part of it was an entrenched Charter of Rights that was being proposed by the Legislatures and by Parliament at that time, and the only reason it did not become law in Canada at that time was that the province of Quebec decided to back out.

In fact, just to indicate what kinds of rights were entrenched in the Canadian Constitutional Charter at that time, I will read from Articles 1 and 2. "Article 1: It is hereby recognized and declared that in Canada every person has the following fundamental freedoms: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, and all laws shall be construed and applied so as not to abrogate or abridge any such freedom. No law of the Parliament of Canada or the Legislatures of the province, shall abrogate or abridge any of the fundamental freedoms herein recognized and declared."

Very clear, very clear — we had a proposed Charter of Rights entrenched which could not be changed without going through the Victoria amending formula. The Victoria amending formula — I need not explain to the Member for Lakeside I'm sure — was a formula which is very similar to the formula being now proposed by the Federal Government. But there was absolutely no question that 10 out of 11 governments were in support of that particular amending formula and the Charter, the Canadian Constitutional Charter, which was the result of a number of conferences concluding in Victoria finally on June 14th to 16th, of 1971.

Now we have the government coming here and suddenly saying we have forever and ever been opposed to a Charter of Rights, when they have their

federal people saying we support a Charter of Rights. The Member for Provencher is saying we support a Charter of Rights. Mr. David Crombie of Toronto is saying we support a Charter. Many of their people are saying they support a Charter of Rights, and of course the Minister of — it's Northern Affairs is it — yes, the Minister of Northern Affairs is saying he supports a Charter of Rights.

For anyone to suggest that — (Interjection)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. We can only have one speaker on the floor at a time. At the present time that person is the Honourable Member for Rossmere. If other members wish to carry on private conversations, I would suggest they do it elsewhere.

The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I heard the Minister of Finance mumbling again from his seat as he does so often and so incapably and I will again, for the sake of edification of the Minister, read from a report made by the Minister of Northern Affairs, apparently an MLA's report, "The PC Party believes that the Constitution should be brought back to Canada with an acceptable amending formula, then the provinces and Federal Government could agree on a Charter of Rights. We want the Charter of Rights to protect Canadians right to own property." That is the complete paragraph taken out of it, a complete paragraph, and there is nothing in that article to show in any way whatsoever that particular individual opposes a Charter of Rights. So on the one hand he says I support one, certainly if he opposes it then he should so have said at the time. Incidentally, while I am talking about that particular article, he then goes on to say, "Canadians right to own property will not be protected in the new Constitution thanks to the Liberals and the NDP," and he says all kinds of silly things about the NDP position on ownership of property, and the members opposite, the Member for Rock Lake, the Member for Lakeside, you people are well aware of the fact that it was an NDP government that passed The Expropriation Act during its early years in office which was one of the best expropriation Acts in this country; an Act which provided fairness for people who were losing property.

The Member for Rhineland should be well aware of that. The Member for Rhineland should be well aware of that because I am sure that he, like all other members who were present ten years ago and more, heard a lot of complaints from people who were being expropriated, who had lands expropriated. The people at Birds Hill, for the Birds Hill Park for instance, would have certainly received more adequate compensation for their expropriation had the new Act been in effect at that time. Homeowners are more adequately protected under the new expropriation legislation, and for the Minister of Northern Affairs to suggest for two seconds that the New Democrats are people who are going to go around stealing your property, is an absolute and outrageous untruth, absolute untruth.

All you have to do to ascertain that fact is to look at the old Expropriation Act of the Province of Manitoba and compare it to the new one and you try to sell the old one to the people of the province; you try to sell the old expropriation act back to the

people of the province, you would find that you would be in trouble very quickly.

Again, as I said when I started, whenever you people are getting into any kind of trouble, instead of talking about —(Interjection)— right, the Member for Churchill indicates that is all the time, and it seems to be becoming increasingly frequent; whenever you people are in trouble, what you do, is you wind up talking about the Constitution as a smoke screen, and you're winding up — I see the First Minister is here now — you are winding up taking all kinds of positions even within your own party and then saying to us, my, my, you guys don't have your act together.

I suggest that we have our act together on this issue quite well. We do not believe, contrary to the government, we do not believe that you can just simply tell a member of the Legislature you must believe in a Charter of Rights or you cannot believe in a Charter of Rights. We find it incredible that all of the members on that side, that all of them, every single one of them, would be opposed to an entrenched Charter of Rights, and then we take their federal counterparts, Federal Tories, the same kind of people, supporting the same kinds of policies, ordinarily, except that they are in Ottawa, and somehow the Ottawa air is making those people apparently in the majority supporting an entrenched Charter of Rights.

I have to say that it is my firm conviction that on any kind of statistical basis, there must be approximately a similar percentage of you people supporting an entrenched Charter of Rights as there are in your federal caucus supporting an entrenched Charter of Rights. So I would like to hear those of you on that side who disagree with the First Minister, to also stand up and tell us what you think should be in the Constitution, what you people think should be in the Constitution of this country. Many of you people were on the constitutional committee that went across the province last fall and in the wintertime, and we heard about two-thirds of the people who appeared before us at that time, came to tell us that they believe that we should have an entrenched Charter of Rights, and they came from many organizations. They gave very good reasons for an entrenched Charter, and I find it very difficult to believe that not one of you, not one single individual was convinced at that time, that maybe those people were right, when your federal counterparts who sat in the Federal Committee were in the majority convinced by the people who came to those committees to support an entrenched Charter of Rights. Is it because you weren't listening? I think you were. I think the Member for Minnedosa was listening very carefully, and I am sure that if he could follow his conscience as the members on the Opposition are following theirs, then he would be in support of a Charter of Rights. He heard the Civil Liberties groups talking; he heard the ethnic groups supporting a Charter of Rights; he heard the groups dealing with handicapped people supporting a Charter of Rights; he heard those, in fact, those who have been discriminated against in the past, all of them, all of those groups standing up and saying we support an entrenched Charter of Rights and here we are, although you had seven or eight, or so members on that Committee, we don't seem to have one of you convinced when the majority of your

Federal PC people were convinced by similar arguments in Ottawa. I find that extremely difficult to believe, especially, Mr. Speaker, when I see newspaper reports telling us that Mr. Epp says that our Premier would support a Charter of Rights under certain conditions; that Mr. Crombie says that our Premier would support a Charter of Rights under certain conditions; our Minister of Northern Affairs says that he supports a Charter of Rights. You know, Mr. Speaker, I haven't once heard the First Minister, other than mumbling from his chair, standing up and saying that he has talked to Mr. Epp or Mr. Crombie to tell them that this is untrue, that the article which I had provided to the First Minister more than a month ago was untrue —(Interjections)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. We can only have one speaker at a time.

The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Lakeside is mumbling again, along with the First Minister, and he made a rather silly statement about the gun control laws in the United States and if he knew anything about American law, he would be well aware that in some American States they have gun control laws and in others they don't, and one of the differences between the proposed Charter in Canada and the American Bill of Rights is that the proposed Charter in Canada in no place included the right to bear arms. There has been no suggestion made in Canada that the right to bear arms should be entrenched in the Constitution.

Well, the First Minister is acting like a complete idiot again, talking about Russia. He should be the first one to understand that it's not because of the Charter of Rights or a Bill of Rights in Russia that people are being discriminated against, or are being imprisoned or are being exiled. It's in spite of the Bill of Rights. There are absolutely no remedies provided to people under that Charter. They can't go to any court and have their rights supported by the courts in the Soviet Union and that is —(Interjections)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please.

The hour being 10:00 o'clock, the House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Thursday.