

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, 23 April, 1982

Time — 10:00 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. D. James Walding (St. Vital): Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . .

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. JERRY T. STORIE (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Gimli that the report of the Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. VIC SCHROEDER (Rossmere): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I have a statement to make and I have copies.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am rising today to announce a major change in school tax assistance for pensioner homeowners. I am announcing the change at this time in advance of the 1982 Budget, to ensure that the improved benefits will be available to pensioner homeowners with respect to this year's school taxes.

As members are aware, our government has already provided some \$14.4 million in supplemental and special grants to school divisions, over and above the Education Support Program.

These grants were intended to enable school divisions to provide the needed quality of education for children throughout the province without undue reliance on the local special levy school tax.

Members may also be aware that overall, the supplemental and special grants are equivalent to about 4.5 mills of property taxation. As a result and looking at the province as a whole, school taxes will average about 4.5 mills lower than they otherwise would have been.

Despite the success of these grants the government recognizes the necessity of providing further help to pensioner homeowners and more particularly to those on low and moderate incomes, generally those who reside in more moderately assessed homes.

Accordingly I am pleased to announce that for 1982 school taxes over \$162.50 will qualify for school tax assistance. Last year the extra provincial help was available only on school taxes over \$325.00. The maximum level of assistance will remain at \$175.00. This change is expected to broaden assistance by extend-

ing eligibility to an additional 17,000 pensioner homeowners for the first time, and by increasing the assistance already available to another 12,000 pensioner homeowners. It is important to note that all these homeowners reside in more modest homes and in general have lower than average incomes.

Pensioners eligible for assistance include all those age 65 and over, and those between the ages of 55 and 65 who rely on pension income as their main source of support.

As an example of the assistance provided under this change a pensioner residing in a home assessed at \$5,000 in Winnipeg School Division No. 1 faces total school taxes of \$399 this year, an increase of \$63.00. Last year such a homeowner qualified for \$11.00 in pensioner school tax assistance. With this change such a homeowner will qualify for \$175 in pensioner school tax assistance, an increase of \$164 and benefit from an actual net school tax reduction of \$101.00. More generally in the Winnipeg School Division all pensioner homeowners eligible for assistance under the expanded program with assessments under \$6,250 will experience actual reductions in their net school taxes this year. Additional examples are included in the table distributed with the text of these remarks.

In our view the change deals directly with the particular problems, lower income pensioner homeowners face in meeting their school taxes. Pensioner homeowners who received the maximum \$175 assistance last year will continue to receive that \$175.00. They will also benefit along with all school property taxpayers from the tax effects of the announced supplemental and special grants to school divisions.

I should add as well that the lowering of the eligibility threshold to \$162.50 will also ensure complete parity between the property tax assistance benefits available to homeowners and those available to tenants. The current program for tenants uses 10 percent of the rent as the proxy for school taxes and provides school tax assistance on the school tax proxy amount over a threshold level of \$162.50.

In summary, then the change will:

1. Provide assistance for the first time to a large number of low-income pensioner homeowners facing school taxes under \$325.00.
2. Provide increased health to pensioner homeowners with school taxes between \$325 and \$500.00.
3. Provide the same maximum benefits as last year.
4. Provide low-income pensioner homeowners with fair and equitable treatment on the same basis as tenants.

The change will require supplementary spending authority of \$2.9 million which will be included in the Budget later this Session.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

MR. GARY FILMON (Tuxedo): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We on this side of the House, of course, welcome any assistance that the government is putting forward to pensioners with respect to their school and general property taxes. I think it's a continuation of the kind of thing that we did in our term of office

where pensioners under our government paid less in school property taxes in 1981 than they had in 1977 because of a series of moves that we had made, a series of measures that we had taken in order to assist them in coping with the ever rising property tax burden.

Obviously, we would like to see the details of the program. We'd like to see exactly how it's going to take effect and have some time to study it. But in general terms, we know that the program that we've brought forward in terms of assistance both to homeowners and tenants was a good one and it's obvious that this government in response to the move that it has made in adding 4.2 mills to the education support levy across the board throughout the province, is having to take account of the negative effect that's having on all property tax owners and particularly the pensioners who can ill afford it.

So, I'm glad to see that they recognize at least that portion of it, and they are at least hoping to assist the homeowners who are pensioners and on fixed income, in dealing with the unfortunate problems created by their Education Financing Program that they announced this year. We note that they haven't increased the maximum benefits because, of course, they're recognizing that the many increases that we've brought forward were very helpful to pensioners and we recognize that the government is moving very cautiously and prudently, and the additional assistance that they are providing will no doubt be welcome and we certainly join them in supporting this program.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. DON SCOTT (Inkster) introduced Bill No. 24, An Act to Grant Additional Powers to F.G. Holdings Ltd.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we reach Oral Questions may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery on my left where we have 80 students of the Fargo High School under the direction of Mr. Ray Schellenberg.

On behalf of all the honourable members I welcome you here this morning.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. STERLING LYON (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the First Minister could answer this question, could he confirm, Sir, the statement that he apparently made to the press yesterday that he still hopes that the government won't have to lift the freeze on Hydro rates?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. HOWARD R. PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, we not only hope, but we have not intention at this stage of increasing Hydro rates.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I didn't catch the last part of the First Minister's comment.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, what was indicated is that we have no intention at this time of increasing Hydro rates.

MR. LYON: Well, that being the case, Mr. Speaker, I take it then that the First Minister is confirming what the press reports, that his government intends to keep in place the Hydro rate freeze.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, what, indeed, was said is that we have no intention to increase Hydro rates, that at the present time, if, indeed, the situation pertaining to Manitoba Hydro deficit wise, which we were made aware of yesterday as to it's deficit deteriorated greatly, that might very well demand a change in circumstance. I do not foresee that at this point.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, do we take it then that the First Minister is saying that he intends to keep the hydro rate freeze in place?

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have to turn to you to ask you if that last question is not indeed repetitious —(Interjection)—

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, the hydro rate freeze, Sir, as you will recall, is a statutory rate freeze. Does the First Minister intend to keep that statutory rate freeze in place?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. WILSON PARASIUK (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I'm surprised that the former Premier of the Province of Manitoba isn't aware of what he in fact brought in. What was brought in was a statutory provision of exchange financing but, Mr. Speaker, there was no statute bringing in a hydro rate freeze. In fact there was never even a formal communication to the Hydro Board, informing them that they should bring in a hydro rate freeze. That was done, Mr. Speaker, by Hydro but there was no statutory requirement of that, with respect to the rate freeze and, Mr. Speaker, I'm surprised that the Leader of the Opposition now is suffering from what I term his selective amnesia.

MR. LYON: Well, Mr. Speaker, using the terminology of the Honourable Minister of Mines and Energy, could I direct another question to the First Minister? This may perhaps be thought to have to do with selective amnesia.

I'm referring to the First Minister's comment when he was Leader of the Opposition, on the 9th of April, 1981 when he said, and this is Report from the Legislature No. 12, signed by Howard Pawley. "The Tory freeze on Hydro construction has hurt the Manitoba

economy. Time has shown that the phoney Hydro rate freeze is needlessly hurting Manitoba taxpayers."

Mr. Speaker, is that an example of selective amnesia on the part of the First Minister, or has he turned about 180 degrees, now that he's in office?

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, what we are seeing on the part of the Leader of the Opposition is selective reading of a news release which was issued on the date in question. Mr. Speaker, what was the situation as of the date of April, 1981, was a situation by which it was quite clear, from the profits that Hydro had enjoyed up to that stage, that a rate freeze was not anymore than but a phoney exercise — a phoney exercise, Mr. Speaker. If the government had wished of the day they could have very well not increased hydro rates; the Hydro Board need not have increased hydro rates, because Hydro was enjoying, at that particular stage, adequate surplus, in order to stabilize Hydro rates. It was a phoney exercise.

Mr. Speaker, what we have seen since then, is a change in respect to circumstance. We have witnessed an increase by way of interest rates. We have witnessed less sales than that which had been earlier anticipated. The situation of Hydro is different than it was during the first two years, two years of the so-called phony exercise that the previous government had gone through.

What we are now dealing with and what the Leader of the Opposition is, indeed, suggesting is that regardless of what Manitoba taxpayers should be required to subsidize to any major extent whether it be \$50 million or \$75 million in the future in respect to Manitoba Hydro; Mr. Speaker, I trust that will not be the case but it is clear that circumstances now are different than they were in '81. Again to repeat, we have no intent, no desire to shift, change the hydro rates in the Province of Manitoba but in saying that, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to be as totally irresponsible as members across the way might be, to say that come what may by way of cost to the taxpayers of Manitoba we will not at any point in time make any change.

MR. LYON: Now, Mr. Speaker, having witnessed the peregrinations and the perambulations of the First Minister walking all over the lot will he get back to the question that was asked him. Why did he describe the hydro rate freeze in April of 1981 as a phony rate freeze and yet say yesterday, Mr. Speaker, to the press that he intended to keep that phony rate freeze in place?

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I do have to turn to you but I can continue to draw pictures for the Leader of the Opposition. I would prefer not to because I believe this would be the third time that I will be dealing with the same question, and I'm intending to continue to give the same answer to the same questions, so I have to turn to you for advice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. A. BRIAN RANSOM (Turtle Mountain): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Energy and

Mines. In view of the fact that Alcan is now looking at another site in British Columbia, and in view of the fact that if that company was to locate in Manitoba it would mean the expenditures of hundreds of millions of dollars, the creation of thousands of jobs in the economy at a time that they are greatly needed, can the Minister update the House as to the state of his negotiations with Alcan?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, Alcan Aluminum has always been looking at other sites in Canada. They've been looking at sites in Quebec; they've been looking at site near Kitimat, B.C., and now apparently they are looking at a site in northern B.C., Mr. Speaker, so the news that Alcan is looking at different sites in Canada, is not particularly new. It may, in fact, be new to members opposite, who probably didn't do enough homework when they sat down and started negotiating with Alcan in the first instance, Mr. Speaker.

The negotiations with Alcan are proceeding very well. The joint review is well under way; we are looking at the whole range of questions relating to aluminum smelting in the middle of the country, Mr. Speaker; how it might relate to the markets in the midwest. Everything is proceeding very well in a very good technical documented manner, Mr. Speaker, and a manner that wasn't ever done before. No homework was every done before, Mr. Speaker. These people tended to do their development dealings on the back of an envelope, Mr. Speaker. That's not the approach of this government.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, since negotiations are proceeding very well in a documented fashion, would the Minister of Energy and Mines care to advise the House as to what schedule he's working on; what documentation he has, and make the status of the negotiations known to this House and to the people of the province.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, I think we are involved in a negotiation in good faith with Alcan. We don't want to jeopardize those negotiations in any way. It would appear to me, Mr. Speaker, that the Conservative Party, being a bunch of sore losers would do anything, Mr. Speaker, to try and undermine those negotiations. It's not our intent to negotiate at this stage in public. We think that is irresponsible. We will in fact file documents at the appropriate time. We have made those commitments in the past, Mr. Speaker; it is our intention to live up to those commitments, and all I can say is that we are proceeding very well in our discussions and negotiations and review with Alcan. I don't hear Alcan complaining, Mr. Speaker. I have the lost Conservative Party complaining, Mr. Speaker, that's who I hear complaining, but not Alcan, only them.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, we have one more example of how this party has changed its position from Opposition to Government. When they were in Opposition they called for public disclosure of the negotiations.

In view of that call that the NDP Party made while they were in Opposition, Mr. Speaker, will the Minister release some information at least, to the House, as to how negotiations are going. For instance, when did they last meet with Alcan? With whom did they meet? And on the basis of the statements that they're negotiating without pre-conditions, can he advise the House whether that means that the government has, in fact, moved off the position that they would not allow Alcan an undivided minority interest in a power station?

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, I have, in fact, dealt with these questions previously in the House. We have had discussions, and very senior level discussions with Alcan at the end of last week, Mr. Speaker. Those negotiations are proceeding; they're proceeding extremely well. We don't set artificial deadlines like the Conservative government did and as they approach the artificial deadlines that they then set, Mr. Speaker, I say for electoral purposes, they then weaken their bargaining position, when they reached those artificial deadlines and found that they hadn't reached much progress. We don't negotiate that way. We believe that is negotiating from weakness, Mr. Speaker.

We know the style of the Leader of the Opposition, in terms of his negotiating style and his skills. We have the whole CFI fiasco as his direct legacy to the people of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. We have indeed learned from the mistakes of the Conservative government between 1966 and 1969, even though the Leader of the Opposition hasn't learned from his own past mistakes, Mr. Speaker. We have learned from those mistakes; we will operate in a responsible manner, Mr. Speaker, no matter how much the Conservative Party urges us to be irresponsible.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I certainly would hope that the Government would be acting in a responsible manner and no one is pressing them to act in an irresponsible manner.

In a time when the economy is suffering to the extent it is, with the number of closures and the layoffs, the unemployed people that there are in this province, surely a little hope could be offered by the government and a few positive statements about how their negotiations are proceeding would be in order. That's all I'm asking the Minister of Energy and Mines, Mr. Speaker. Will he tell the people something? When has he met; with whom has he met; has he any hope to offer with respect to the negotiations, or is he simply going to sit back and say, "We're documenting them very well; they're going very well, but we're not going to say anything."

MR. PARASIUK: The Member for Turtle Mountain keeps repeating the same questions. I said we met as late as last week, Mr. Speaker, at a senior level. I said that without being argumentative and I find that I have these people jumping up and possibly they don't hear, but I will repeat that in fact, we had meetings at a senior level; that the discussions —(Interjection)— last week I said, did you hear?

A MEMBER: We weren't listening.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, we met a senior level. That is a sufficient detail, I believe, Mr. Speaker. We don't want to raise in the short run, a whole set of expectations with artificial deadlines using false government advertising which at that time, Mr. Speaker, was patently false. We don't want to do that; we believe that's irresponsible.

We believe the people of Manitoba felt that was irresponsible, Mr. Speaker, because despite the spending of hundreds of thousands of dollars of taxpayers' money right before the election, Mr. Speaker, the people of Manitoba wouldn't believe that type of nonsense put forward by the Conservative Party and they threw them out of office. Mr. Speaker, we hope to proceed in a responsible manner.

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

MR. G.W.J. (Jerry) MERCIER (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour. In view of the allegations of the owner-president of Dawsteel Ltd. that the union succeeded in bankrupting the company, does the Minister of Labour have any information he can report to the House with respect to this matter and does he still intend to introduce first contract legislation at this Session of the Legislature?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Speaker, that problem was in existence for some time during last year and this year he, I understand, he has blamed the Free Press; he's blamed the banks; he's blamed the receiver; he's blamed the unions. I don't know whether he's put any of the blame on himself.

We are certainly as concerned as people on that side about any closure, but I think, as the member would recognize, it is not that easy to just apportion the blame to one specific act or individual. I should say as well, that particular company was charged with an unfair labour practice and was found guilty of that particular practice by the Manitoba Labour Board some months ago. I understand that was part of the concern that the owner had. It is my understanding as well that the Department of Economic Development is looking to see what, if anything, can be done by the province in this particular instance.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, in view of the election promise to provide job security, could the Minister indicate whether he's taking any specific action with respect to assisting employees of Dawsteel — and hopefully it will not be the case but perhaps Victoria Leather — in finding employment?

MR. SCHROEDER: My understanding is that the people at Victoria Leather are working and one of the reasons that they're working is the immediate direct and very active involvement of the Department of Economic Development as well as the federal department involved, it has been an activist approach.

If you would want more details on it, I would suggest that you ask the Minister of Economic Development, but with respect to the people at Dawsteel as

the member is aware, that is a bankruptcy which falls under federal jurisdiction. The people who are unemployed would be entitled to Unemployment Insurance and the benefits that customarily come through that channel.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. LYON: Mr Speaker, a question to the Minister of Mines and Energy. In view of his report to the House this morning that negotiations with Alcan are apparently proceeding so swimmingly — although he can't or won't identify the people with whom he has met, from those meetings, were — can the Minister then tell us if the Environmental Studies, which were commissioned by the previous government, and the socio-economic studies which we understand had been put on hold by his government, have they resumed now that, as he reports to us this morning, things are going so well in the Alcan negotiations?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, I find that the Leader of the Opposition and in the course of what he would assume is a factual premise, starts off by exaggerating what I had said about the negotiations.

I said that they were proceeding; I said that they were proceeding well. I said that Alcan wasn't complaining, that we have met at a senior level, Mr. Speaker; that the government is reviewing at a technical level the environmental material and socioeconomic material provided by, I'll say that now, that that's what they are doing with respect to the environmental and the socioeconomic material being put forward by Alcan.

But, Mr. Speaker, somehow the Leader of the Opposition would like to lead us on with a set of false expectations. The aluminum market is very soft and in the April 8th edition of the Montreal Gazette, Mr. Speaker, there is a statement that Alcan has shelved its Australian expansion and it very clearly says the following:

"Alcan Aluminum Ltd. of Montreal suffering from recession fever has decided to halt a big expansion project at its aluminum smelter at Kira Kira, Australia."

Mr. Speaker, the aluminum outlook is tough, the company itself has had a decline in its earnings and that was only reported yesterday, Mr. Speaker. That means that it makes it somewhat difficult to predict the exact dates of expansion but within that context, Mr. Speaker, we are negotiating in good faith with Alcan, we are proceeding. I don't want to set any false expectations as to when the negotiations might be completed because I don't think it's wise to negotiate within artificial time limits.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, gradually as we are able to extract pieces of information from the Minister, they lead to other questions.

What I asked about was not information being supplied by Alcan with respect to the environment and socioeconomic studies, I asked whether or not the studies that were under way when his government

came into office by the Environment Commission of Manitoba with respect to the environment and socio-economic conditions affecting the site in the Interlake, whether they were back on track again and my honourable friend chose apparently not to answer that. So I ask the question again, and I ask the supplementary: if they are back on track again, Mr. Speaker, does that mean that the government has now approved the site in the Interlake?

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, what we asked the government to do, Mr. Speaker, at the staff level was to review all sites, all potential sites for aluminum smelting in Manitoba. We found that the previous Conservative Government didn't do that, Mr. Speaker. We found that they did not do that type of homework, Mr. Speaker. We found that the Conservative Government in its day wasn't that pleased necessarily with that site but they said the ultimate decision is Alcan.

We in fact, are reviewing alternative sites with Alcan. We believe that is the way a responsible government should act; that they should examine all the alternatives, not just to determine whether in fact there's a good compromise between what I call the Manitoba public interest with respect to environmental concerns and Alcan's own specific interests. We think that should be the product of discussion and negotiation, Mr. Speaker. We find that the previous government didn't do that and we believe that should be done, that's what we are doing right now. We are saddened that the previous government didn't do that. We make no apologies that they criticize us for doing it right now, Mr. Speaker, because we believe that that's the way responsible government should handle it.

MR. LYON: Well now, Mr. Speaker, we're getting to some semblance of the truth.

Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend is now saying to the House and I'm asking this question, is my honourable friend saying to the House that Alcan, which had chosen and selected a site before his government came into office is now being asked to review a whole myriad of sites, No. 1?

Is he saying No. 2, that an environmental and socioeconomic study that were under way when his government came into office has now been suspended because the site question is in the air?

And is he saying, No. 3, Mr. Speaker, after all of that, that the negotiations are still going well?

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, I'm amazed that the Leader of the Opposition is trying to fabricate some type of major issue. I said some time ago, Mr. Speaker, that the whole matter of aluminum smelting in Manitoba was being reviewed, that we were talking to a number of companies, that we were launched in a very detailed joint review with Alcan without precondition, Mr. Speaker, looking at all aspects of aluminum smelting.

We want to get explanations from Alcan as to whether in fact it — because we know that the government didn't do it at that time — it has reviewed various sites to get a very good explanation from them as to why they have chosen Balmoral? Did they look

at Thompson? Did they look at Churchill? What are the implications there, Mr. Speaker? Those are the questions that we want to ask in a very detailed manner, Mr. Speaker. That's what we are doing with them. I don't hear Alcan complaining. The only people I hear complaining, Mr. Speaker, over and over again are the Conservative Party which lost the election. I hope that they don't want to continue to try and undermine negotiations that are proceeding in good faith.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend the Minister of Mines and Energy says he doesn't hear from Alcan. That's why I'm asking the questions because none of us is hearing from Alcan anymore, and he has the audacity to stand in this House and say that negotiations are proceeding well. Let him tell us, let him tell us, Mr. Speaker, the last time he met with the President of Alcan.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader on a point of order.

MR. PENNER: Yes, that is not a question, that is another one of the the Leader of the Opposition's, bad-tempered declamations and is nothing more. That is not what question period is about. It's an abuse of the privilege of the House.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, on the alleged point of order which, of course, there was not a point of order, raised by the Honourable Attorney General. I don't think that you, Sir, need any instruction from a four-month veteran as to what an abuse of the rules is.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I remind honourable members that it is the Speaker who decides whether or not there is a point of order raised. Members in asking questions, are allowed to put a preamble, hopefully restricted to one sentence which honourable members ought to be able to do.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. LYON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question, which I repeat: in the light of all of the statements that the Minister of Mines and Energy had made today about negotiations going so well, even though we've heard nothing from Alcan, there's been this funereal silence now for many, many weeks, will the Minister of Mines and Energy tell the House and the people of Manitoba the last time he had a top-level meeting with senior executives or the President of Alcan with respect to furthering this great industrial development for the benefit of all of the people of Manitoba?

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, I met with the President of Alcan over a month ago. We had established a process jointly and it was agreed to by both of us, Mr. Speaker, that we would have the technical work done and that when the technical work had proceeded to a particular stage, we would have meetings. We didn't want to go through the process that the previous government had undertaken of having meetings without having done their homework so that they can never raise the proper intelligent questions that should have been raised, Mr. Speaker. That's exactly the way

CFI was negotiated, Mr. Speaker, without the proper homework being done. We are proceeding in a very straightforward way of having meetings between myself and the President; of having technical work done; then we meet again to review that at particular stages if difficulties arise. No difficulties in the technical review have arisen to date, Mr. Speaker, so that's why we are proceeding on the way we are. That we think is the responsible way of negotiating - not the way that they negotiate on the back of an envelope without doing their homework supposedly at a high level giving away things that they know nothing about, Mr. Speaker.

I would ask the people of Manitoba to go up to the Pas; take a look at huge buildings that have very little equipment in them; take a look at 11-acre buildings which now we find — (Interjection) — they say we built them. They signed the agreement, Mr. Speaker; they made a lousy job of it then; we do not want to repeat their mistakes. That's why we are reviewing their material in great depth. We learned from their mistakes even though they haven't.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: If I may interrupt the Oral Question period for a moment to indicate some visitors in the gallery to my right. There are 33 students from the Thompson Public School of Thompson, North Dakota, under the direction of Mr. Olson.

On behalf of all the members I welcome you this morning.

ORAL QUESTIONS (Cont'd)

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

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister. In view of his promise to provide interest rate relief and an economic climate to ensure that small business stays in business, and in view of the complete lack of results evidenced by the fact that no small business has yet received any assistance despite the fact that he said this should be an emergency program and the government has already been in office for some five months; in view of the fact that bankruptcies have increased in this province by some 138 percent in the first three months of this year compared to last; in view of the fact that last night the Minister of Economic Development and members of that side refused to allow us, because of our interest in the adverse affects of any increase in the sales tax refused us to ask her whether or not she would oppose any increase in the sales tax because of its adverse effect on small business; would the First Minister, Mr. Speaker, find someone who is interested in small business to occupy that post if, indeed, there is anyone interested in small business on that side?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to have the

opportunity to speak.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Would the members give the Honourable First Minister the courtesy of answering the question?

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to respond to the question by the Honourable Member for St. Norbert. I have had opportunity to sit in on some of the discussions pertaining to the Estimates of the Minister responsible for Economic Development, and I must say, and I say this without a moment's hesitation, the Minister of Economic Development is providing leadership that we have not seen in the province for the past five years.

Mr. Speaker, what is disturbing the Member for St. Norbert and his seat mate, the former Minister of Economic Development, is that finally in this province, Mr. Speaker, there is a Minister that's providing leadership; there is a Minister that in the space of five months has done more in her department to assist the small business climate, under very, very difficult circumstances brought about by Conservative monetary policy, than indeed was the case under the previous four years of stewardship by the former Premier of this province, the present Leader of the Opposition and the former Minister of Economic Development, the present Member for Sturgeon Creek. Mr. Speaker, I am not surprised that honourable members across the way are touchy; they're disturbed, Mr. Speaker; they're poor losers; they haven't still recovered from their defeat on November 17th.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that I have a Minister such as the Minister of Economic Development, that day by day is demonstrating the superiority of the economic development policies of this Government in contrast to the complete void that exists across the way, by a party which is bankrupt of ideas; by a Government that was totally discredited by the people of the Province of Manitoba.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, with that kind of leadership, would the First Minister indicate how many more bankruptcies will occur in this province, under that kind of leadership?

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, as I said during the Budget Debate of 1981, which I made reference to some months ago, I indicated that the damage that had been done 1977 to 1981 in this province was extensive. I indicated that Federal Government monetary policy had inflicted damage upon this province. The policies of Governor Bouey of the Bank of Canada had inflicted damage upon this province, as well as other parts of Canada, as other parts of this country, and I indicated, Mr. Speaker, that we would require the support of Manitobans in general, in order to bring about the appropriate, positive and progressive policies that could undo the damage.

Mr. Speaker, I indicated it would take some time, because of the extensive damage that had been inflicted upon this province. I am pleased to state, Mr. Speaker, that, indeed - in fact, I find it to be the case - more and more Manitobans are reflecting and comparing favourably, the work by this government in five months, in order to undo the damage of the

past four years.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Gimli.

MR. JOHN M. BUCKLASCHUK (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, a question to the First Minister. Yesterday the First Minister addressed a resolution on the Crow debate. I'm just wondering, in view of today's coverage in the Winnipeg Free Press, whether the Minister has changed his position in the last 18 hours, or whether the headline is a grossly misleading headline.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The Honourable First Minister.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, those that heard my speech know very well where the First Minister of this province stands pertaining to the retention of the Crow rate.

Mr. Speaker, I wish, and I say this sincerely to members across the way, that rather than whispering in the ears of those that may listen to them in the corridors of this Legislature, rather than quietly express their opinions, they would come into this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, members across the way - they would come into this Chamber and place their position on record.

Mr. Speaker, my only sadness is that rather than the whispering that takes place in the corridor, we have a void in this Chamber as to the position that is taken by members across the way. I'm pleased to know that Jake Epp, the Member for Provencher, a member of the party across the way, has made his position clear. I only wish that members across the way would be as courageous as some of the Conservative members of this province that have already spoken out in the House of Commons, pertaining to the Crow.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Robin-Russell.

MR. J. WALLY McKENZIE (Robin-Russell): Mr. Speaker, I used to be an actor in high school. I wonder if you would mind me practising my acting skills here today, like the First Minister does - flex my muscles and tear my hands out - which way to the camera? Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have a question?

MR. McKENZIE: I have a question for the First Minister of this province, Mr. Speaker. Can I ask the First Minister, Mr. Speaker, because of the fact yesterday I got a letter on the table that tells me his Minister of Economic Development has no correspondence between Rossburn and Pilot Mound cheese plants, no correspondence of any plant; can he tell me now if that is the best economic Minister that this province has ever seen?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. LAURENT DESJARDINS (St. Boniface): Now I'm convinced that he's been contaminated by the pigeon and I'll make sure that he . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The time for question period having expired, Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

HANSARD CLARIFICATIONS

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I was reminded as I was listening to the answers of the members opposite that there's an error on page 1707 of Hansard, where I had referred to the answer being given by the Minister of Finance as "bafflegab." Hansard records it as "bat-tlegab." I would ask that change be made, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The correction is noted. The Honourable Member for Swan River.

MR. D.M. (Doug) GOURLAY (Swan River): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to record another change in the Tuesday, 20th of April copy of the Hansard. Page 1679, change the name of Mr. Downey in two places, to that of myself.

MR. SPEAKER: So noted. The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. DONALD ORCHARD (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, I also have a correction in Hansard, stemming from Monday, April 19th, 1982, page 1597 in which Hansard has apparently missed a phrase that I used in metric, in the metric debate. It is followed by three dots and a question mark in two places. The phrase I used was "dick spraddle" and I'd like to have Hansard be corrected, saying that, "I'd like him to tell me how many centimetres there are in a dick spraddle."

MR. SPEAKER: So noted. The Honourable Government House Leader.

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON CROW RESOLUTION

MR. PENNER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, would you please call the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Minister of Transport with respect to the Crow rate.

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed Resolution of the Honourable Minister of Government Services, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. LLOYD HYDE (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I am not prepared at this time to speak on the issue. Mr. Speaker, I am willing and ready to listen to any further talks that may be brought forward on the floor of this House at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, we are not prepared to let

the matter stand. If there is no one prepared to speak we are asking that the question be called.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please. Is the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie prepared to proceed?

MR. HYDE: No.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. LYON: I'm rising on a point of order and a question to the House Leader. Is he saying for the first time that I know of that the government is not going to permit regular debate to take place on a resolution?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please. I'm trying to hear the Leader of the Opposition's point of order.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. LYON: I'm asking the question, is this the intention of the Government House Leader, that he will not allow a member to stand the debate today? That being the case, will he not permit the normal courtesy of a further adjournment of this debate?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, the rules are quite clear, that if there is no one prepared to speak on a motion the question is to be put —(Interjection)— that's not nonsense at all, that is a rule of the House and I'm speaking to that point of order. Our position is quite clear, that under normal circumstances from time to time courtesies are extended, but if the honourable members want to debate this resolution in the hall and not in the House, we have no choice but to call it the question.

MR. LYON: Now, Mr. Speaker, are we actually hearing from the alleged Leader of this House, on the government side, that this government, this government that subscribes allegedly to free speech, and to open government, Mr. Speaker, is the House Leader saying that an adjournment will not be permitted in normal circumstances?

MR. PENNER: The Honourable Member from Portage la Prairie stood it yesterday and he seeks now to stand it today. That is an abuse of the debating procedure in the House. Any member - we do not want to stop debate - any member opposite may now rise, or any member on this side, may now rise, we would make no attempt to stop them. So, do not have them attribute motives when we're simply drawing attention to the rules of this House. We are saying if no one is prepared to speak, we're asking that the question be called. That is perfectly normal, that is perfectly correct.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I'm asking the House Leader whether it isn't his intention to deny an adjournment of the debate on this resolution today?

MR. PENNER: There is no motion for adjournment. It's not up to me to either permit or deny an adjournment. If someone there wants to move an adjournment, then a motion for an adjournment, I suppose, must be heard and voted upon, and that is not indeed what I said. I said if there is no one prepared to speak to the motion which is before the House - and there is no motion for an adjournment before the House - then the question is to be called. That's all that I've said.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please. It is a longstanding practice and tradition in this House that if a member is not prepared to speak on a particular motion that day, that the House allow the matter to stand over with another member eligible or entitled to speak on that particular item if he wishes to do so. When no one else wishes to speak the matter stands in the name of the member who has the adjournment. However, it is the entitlement of the House if they so wish to insist that the matter be dealt with and it come to a vote if there is no one willing to speak. Those are the rules; that is the practice that we have continued.

Is there any other member to speak on the issue?
The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Speaker, back in approximately 1973 or thereabouts, my colleague - although I wasn't a member of Her Majesty's loyal Opposition at that time - the MLA for Fort Garry made a reference to the muffled cadence of jackboots in the halls of the Legislature, and today, Mr. Speaker, we have heard the Attorney-General of this province and the Government House Leader once again drag out the jackboots and try to throttle the right of the Opposition to debate responsibly an issue of major importance to all Manitobans. The muffled cadence of jackboots is alive and well in the mind and the previous political background and the present Attorney-General. Any day in this Province of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, any day in the Province . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I'm trying to hear the remarks of the Honourable Member for Pembina. If honourable members do not wish to co-operate and listen to the honourable member, perhaps they would continue their caucus meetings outside somewhere.
The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. PENNER: I'm rising on a point of privilege. Doing my duty as Government House Leader, I drew the attention of the Speaker to a rule of the House and ask for a ruling, and for having done that, and the rules of the House are developed over long years as part of the parliamentary democratic tradition and for that member to talk to me, who fought in the last war overseas against fascism about jackboots, is a breach of privilege which I will not tolerate.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. PENNER: Sir, I demand a withdrawal. I think he owes me the courtesy of a withdrawal.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Because of the lack of decorum in the House, I was unable to

hear what the Honourable Member for Pembina was saying, I will review Hansard when it comes out, to see. In the meantime I would ask the Honourable Member for Pembina to review what he has said and to take the necessary action. The Honourable Member for Pembina.

The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, will you rule on whether or not the Attorney-General had a point of privilege on the basis of the fact that he did not conclude his point of privilege with a substantive motion. It is clearly out of order.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. PENNER: If the Honourable Member for Pembina after reviewing his remarks is not prepared to withdraw, I will have a motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. There was not a matter of privilege since it was not followed by a substantive motion, but the matter was brought to the attention of the House and to the attention of the Chair. I will ask again that the Honourable Member for Pembina review his remarks and take the appropriate action.

The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Speaker, when the government of this province is represented in the House in this Chamber by the House Leader, the present Attorney-General, tries to muffle the opportunity for debate by Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, I think that is cause for concern for all Manitobans.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, when the First Leader, the First Minister of this province aided and abetted by his Attorney-General are chastising members of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition for daring to step outside of this Chamber and speak to the press on an issue of importance to all rural Manitoba, that is an issue of concern to all Manitobans.

Is the Attorney-General who has in the past spoke for the freedoms and the liberties and the rights of Manitobans, now denying Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition the right of freedom of speech to the members of the press gallery? Is that what he's saying? Is that what this First Minister is asking us to do, not to speak to the press? I think all Manitobans want to hear that kind of a stand, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Health on a Point of Order.

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, I would like to ask you to rule to see if the debate is actually on the motion that we have in front of us.

MR. SPEAKER: I believe the Honourable Member for Pembina is making some introductory remarks prior to dealing with the matter on the Order Paper.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, did I hear you correctly, and ruled that this was all right, that you can have introductory remarks and cover the waterfront?

Is that what you are saying?

MR. SPEAKER: That was my intent from hearing the honourable member.

The Honourable Member for Pembina to the Resolution.

MR. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I might have the kind attention from the Minister of Health, I might continue with my remarks on the Resolution.

Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of contributions to date on this Resolution. The notable ones, I must say, that I have heard are from my colleague the MLA for Lakeside and my colleague, the Member for Roblin-Russell who contributed to the debate on this Resolution considerable thought, considerable support and Mr. Speaker, I contrast that sharply with the contribution of some of the members of the government of this province including yesterday, the First Minister's contribution.

The basic premise on which members of the N.D. Party have approached this Resolution is the traditional, socialist harangue against the CPR. I want to paraphrase, I want to emphasize that I have no particular love for the CPR but I also have no particular hate for the CPR as is constantly demonstrated by members of the N.D. Party.

You know, this Crow resolution and the Crow debate and the issue of the Crow freight rates stems all parties. It is being spoken to by all players in the rail-freight transportation issue. It is not only CPR that is saying to the Federal Government that the revenues are inadequate to haul grain, it is the CNR.

Now seldom do we hear members of the government mention CNR's insistence that the freight rates are inadequate for hauling grain today. Do you know why they don't pick and chastise the CNR? Because the CNR is the epitome of all its socialists that the Manitoba government stand for. It is a Crown Corporation. It is owned by the people and the people's railroad, the CNR of Canada wants to have more money to haul grain to export position.

You would think from listening to their contribution that only the CPR wants more money to haul grain and that C.N. will continue to haul it at the Crow rate. That's not the case. But we never hear the N.D. Party mention C.N.'s role in the Crow debate and their proposals to the Federal Government because once again, Mr. Speaker, I stress, that is a Crown Corporation, something that these people believe holds the future of Manitoba in its hand — Crown Corporations not private corporations — their criticism will always be directed towards private corporations.

The Minister of Highways and Transportation, who I might say is absent today, whilst his Resolution is being debated and whilst his Attorney-General and Government House Leader are demanding a vote on this. His own Minister of Highways and Transportation is not here to close debate as would be a normal practice when a Resolution is coming to debate. Explain that to the people of Manitoba, Mr. Attorney-General of the Province of Manitoba, and the insolence that he dealt with this House today in trying to force a vote without the person sponsoring the Resolution being here to close debate is beyond comprehension and it only shows the extreme ignorance that

that man has of the method that this House is traditionally run on. He cannot have his jackboot way of railroading this Opposition to vote on an issue of importance to all Manitobans.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. AL MACKLING (St. James): Yes, Mr. Speaker, earlier the Minister of Health rose in his place and questioned as to whether or not remarks by the Honourable Member for Pembina were to remain and relevant to the debate before the House and those were introductory remarks. Now the honourable member, Mr. Speaker, has been returning to remarks that have no relevance to the matter before the House, the motion before the House. I ask you to instruct the Honourable Member for Pembina to confine his remarks to the matter before the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. ORCHARD: Well, Mr. Speaker, if I might get the Honourable Member for St. James' attention for a brief moment. He, along with the Attorney-General, should take a little lesson on how resolutions and bills are debated in this House.

I might remind the Member for St. James that tradition has been that he who introduces a Resolution traditionally closes debate. What I was pointing out is, why is the Government House Leader now trying to force a vote on this debate without the closing contribution by his Minister who introduced it? If that isn't germane to the debate date then I suggest the Member for St. James go and take lessons on the Rules of this House along with the Government House Leader so that they might better conduct the operations of this House in a cohesive fashion, for the betterment of all Manitobans and for the information of all Manitobans. That would be something that the Member for St. James could take a little lesson on. Now if it isn't germane that the Minister of Transportation is not here to close debate, then I suggest the whole operation of this House is in jeopardy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before I was so rudely interrupted by the Member for St. James, I would like to point out that the Minister of Highways and Transportation when he introduced that Resolution said, that it would not have been his intention back in the 1890s — if he were a member of the Federal Government of that day — to proceed with the development of the railroad linking all of Canada in the manner in which the government of the day proceeded, namely, to make land grants and money grants to a private company which later turned into CPR for the construction of that railroad. He said that he would have preferred direct government involvement. Well that flies in the face of what happened because the government directly tried on four occasions to build the railroad through direct government involvement and four times it failed, Mr. Speaker. The only time it succeeded was when they came up with a proposal to amass private capital to the building of railroad through land grants and through cash grants. That is why we have Canada as a nation today.

But the members of the N.D. Party choose that constantly to throw back and say that it has some horrid implications for Canada. Well the horrid implications it had for Canada, basis 1890 facts, is that Canada is a nation from sea to sea today and not a fractured group of provinces that would have later become part of the United States of America in western Canada. Western Canada is now part of a nation from sea to sea because of that action, an action that the N.D. Party say they would not have done. Well, Mr. Speaker, that action failed, the action that they proposed today failed on four occasions to link this nation from sea to sea with a railroad. So some of the information that's been given on the Crow rate debate by the N.D. Party is very very questionable, it's very questionable, Mr. Speaker.

Now yesterday the First Minister spoke to this Resolution. He softened his position considerably, Mr. Speaker. Well, you know, he's trying to trump up a question today from the Member for Gimli so that he can now send Hansard out to poor beleaguered Allan Blakeney in Saskatchewan who is in the process of losing an election, saying, "Allan, I didn't soften my position on the Crow rate, please believe me," and this is what this First Minister abuses question period trying to do.

Now, Mr. Speaker, he wants a vote today. The Honourable First Minister of this province wants a vote on this issue today. He wants to stifle the opportunity of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition to contribute to this debate. He wants to end it today. He wants a vote today.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the First Minister about four simple questions, and I'll make them very simple so he might be able to answer them. Why would the First Minister today want to vote on this Resolution when it is only starting next week that his own government is going to communities in rural Manitoba to present the Provincial Government's position? Does he want a Resolution to pass in this House without the reflection of the collective thought of farmers and producers throughout the Province of Manitoba which are going to be given to him in the meetings of next week?

Does he want the Resolution to go without the wisdom of the farm community of Manitoba? If that is why he wants a vote then I think that's shameful. It shows the total disregard that the N.D. Party has for rural Manitoba and the farm community. They don't care about the farm community in rural Manitoba.

I want to ask him, why he would pass this Resolution today without properly assimilating farmer reaction at his farm meetings? I want to know also, why this First Minister is so adamant about getting this Resolution passed today, when in about a week-and-a-halves time we're going to have a preliminary report from Dr. Clay Gilson who has collected the thoughts of all producer groups and affected parties to the Crow rate resolution. Why does he want to vote today when that information is coming up in 10 days time and may alter the direction of the Resolution? Well I can't answer that, maybe the First Minister can.

Well, why, Mr. Speaker, are we asking for a vote today? I suggest to you one reason and one reason only why we want a vote today and that is to try and give some grasp, some straw to save drowning Allan

Blakeney from an election coming up on Monday. He's hoping, he's hoping, Mr. Speaker, that he could get something out of this Legislature to help his socialist bedfellow in Saskatchewan get reelected when he's in extreme danger. I want to point out to him, that his socialist counterpart in Saskatchewan, Mr. Blakeney, called a provincial election hoping to fight it on the Crow rate and that election issue disappeared on him and now, Mr. Blakeney is in trouble.

His issue, his lack luster government has no other issue and he has called upon his soul mate in Manitoba, the First Minister of this province to provide him with some straw to save him from drowning. Well I object, Mr. Speaker, to the First Minister and the Leader of the New Democratic Party of Manitoba, using Manitoba farmers in such a callous way to prevent them the opportunity next week to have their opinions voiced to his travelling road show on the Crow rate and have it not reflected in a Resolution that he wants us to pass today. That callous disregard for rural Manitoba is why that government never has and never will represent rural Manitoba in this Legislature. That is a callous disregard and it's predicated simply, Mr. Speaker, on the political designs of the N.D. Party.

And let me talk about that for a moment, let me talk about that. The Crow rate issue is one of extreme importance to western Canada. It is of extreme importance to rural Manitobans. It is of extreme importance to the producers of grain, special crops and livestock across the prairie provinces. Farmers want to have a rational debate on the issues of the Crow rate — and if the First Minister would quit cackling from his seat I might be able to tell him. Will you kindly give me the honour of listening? Thank you.

Now, Mr. Speaker, farmers want to undertake a logical reasoned debate based upon some factual information on the Crow rate, the implications of any change to the Crow rate on their industry and on their individual farm viability. Now, Mr. Speaker, that means that the debate should take place in as factual, in as nonpartisan basis as could possibly happen but, Mr. Speaker, that isn't what is happening.

The Federal N.D. Party in perusing issues from which they can glean extra seats in the next federal election, have said that the issue in Western Canada is the Crow rate and if we can harness the politics of the Crow rate we will be able to glean three, four, five, maybe six new seats in Western Canada.

Now farmers have never asked for the Crow rate to be an issue by which socialist M.P.s will be elected to the Federal Parliament — never. They have wanted the Crow rate to be debated and presented in a factual way, to know what may happen to it, to know what the Federal Government proposition is but that isn't what they're getting, Mr. Speaker.

They are getting from the Federal NDP M.P.s in their mailouts from Ottawa a series of questionable facts and figures about the Crow rate and they are harnessing it as a political issue. The politics of the issue can be no clearly identified than by the fact that in our neighboring province of Saskatchewan, Premier Allan Blakeney of the N.D. Party called an election on the basis of fighting it on the Crow rate, nothing more, nothing less. The N.D. Party in Western Canada is relegating the Crow rate debate to a one-line slogan of "save the Crow, don't kill the Crow," not

to entertain logical, factual and rational debate on the issue amongst the farm community, but simply to win electoral powers so they can carry on their programs of nationalizing farms, railroads and all of the facilities of production. That's what they want to do.

They don't want a logical debate on the Crow rate, it's merits, it's problems. They don't want a rational debate on the downfalls and the shortcomings of the federal proposal. No. They want to confuse the issue with slogans for crass political gain and that's the problem.

Now, that's the problem in this issue, the farmers want to discuss it. They want to know the facts. Well, what have they got for facts? They've got an election coming up in Saskatchewan where we see some of the members in this House wearing the nice little stick-on buttons, printed by the New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan which has a dead Crow. How is the Crow killed, Mr. Speaker? It's killed by an arrow which I think has some racist implications and overtones that the N.D. Party haven't considered. But, Mr. Speaker, the head of the arrow has Progressive Conservative on it and the feathers on the arrow have the Liberal Party emblem on it. If that isn't a crass political distortion of the Crow rate issue, I don't know what is. That is what is confusing the farmers in Saskatchewan right now, they don't believe the N.D. Party any more.

Now, this government in this province has chosen, with the exception of the First Minister's speech yesterday in which he softened his position and he said yes, farmers are willing to pay more — he realizes that — he's softening his position from that traditional national farmers union position that has always been part-and-parcel of any New Democratic farm policy in the Province of Manitoba. They, believe, Mr. Speaker, truly and honestly, that all farmers are represented by the National Farmers Union. They believe that the National Farmers Union policy is the one that the farm community agrees with.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the members of the New Democratic Party and I want to urge them to continue following the advice of the National Farmers Union, because the National Farmers Union is out of touch with 98 percent of the farmers in Manitoba. As long as they follow the advice of the NFU they will be a one-term government and rural Manitoba will consistently vote Conservative as they have in the past number of elections.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you exactly what the NFU represents, those less than 300 members who are so adamant against the Crow rate and the Pepin proposal and any discussion on the Crow rate. They represent in the majority less than 300 farmers, but in the majority those farmers are generally the ones that have gone broke; they're no longer part of the farming community; they're no longer actively engaged in farming; they've gone broke in the system and having gone broke, they're going to share the wisdom of their experience of going broke with the rest of the farmers in Manitoba who, thank you very much, are surviving and making money and living by the system, they want to share their secret of going broke so that all farmers in Manitoba can go broke.

Unfortunately the N.D. Party adheres to the policy admonitions of the National Farmers Union. In other

words, this government wants all farmers to go broke as better than half the members of the NFU have to date. That's the policy development they want to go to.

The big issue in the Crow rate according to members opposite I've listened to, is the fact that they don't want farmers to pay more money. They want farmers to retain the rate that's there, farmers cannot stand to spend more money. Mr. Speaker, that's fine, I don't want farmers to spend more money either. I'd like to have freight rates forever and a day at 15 cents a bushel for wheat.

Okay but, what has the National Farmers Union told the N.D. Party to do about this little goody? We have heard nothing from the N.D. party on this announcement, "U.S. Canada Seaway Toll Hikes." In 1982, this current fiscal year, seaway tolls on freight of grain in the Great Lakes System is going to go up 17 percent and it will go up 8 percent next year. Has the N.D. Party said anything about that? Have they said to the Federal Government, farmers cannot afford to pay more on the seaway where 95 percent of Manitoba's grain goes, do they say anything? No. They're dumbly silent because there's no politics in condemning seaway rates, but there is politics according to them in condemning the Crow rate changes.

Have we seen the N.D. Party in this province last spring, when the grain handlers were on strike in Thunder Bay, when the labour unions in Thunder Bay, the buddies of the N.D. Party were on strike thwarting the delivery of grains from Manitoba farmers, killing the Manitoba farm economy, losing sales, preventing the payment of operating loans through the sale of grain by our Manitoba farmers because the union, their buddies were on strike? Was there one Manitoba New Democrat that said anything about that? No.

They didn't say a word about the increase in wages that those union people took from Manitoba farmers in Manitoba because the elevator charges went up to reflect higher wage costs of their union buddies in Thunder Bay. Did they say a word about that? No. Deathly silent, Mr. Speaker, because if they said a word against the labour unions, the labour unions might not walk arm in arm down the street in solidarity forever with the New Democratic Party. Well, Mr. Speaker, it is increased cost to the farmer. Everytime a labour union goes on strike in Thunder Bay and prevents the shipment of Manitoba grains to an export market, it costs Manitoba farmers money. It's lost sales and when you lose a sale, you lose it forever. But they're strangely silent about that because their union buddies wouldn't let them talk out about those kind of cost increases to the farmer. Not a word. So I let my case stand on that, Mr. Speaker, that this issue is strictly a political issue that the N.D. Party hopes to garner more seats in the next federal election.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why are farmers in a state of some confusion over this issue of Crow rate right now? Well, I'll tell you why, Mr. Speaker, because, traditionally, farmers distrust the N.D. Party in Manitoba. They don't vote for them. They don't believe in the principles espoused by the N.D. Party such as state ownership of land, such as marketing boards, production controls and the airy-fairy statements that we heard in the Minister of Economic Development's

presentation of Estimates on Agriculture, and the way land should be held and the way land is being ruined and mined, etc. They don't believe in that for one moment, Mr. Speaker, so anything the N.D. Party says about agricultural policy is taken with a great deal of distrust and viewed with a jaundiced eye by farmers in Manitoba.

The second reason there's confusion, Mr. Speaker, is because farmers in Manitoba absolutely do not trust the Federal Liberal Government. Here we have, Mr. Speaker, a situation in the rural communities where the Federal Liberal Government is proposing a change. The Provincial NDP are saying that change is wrong. They have advice on one side from a Federal Liberal Government they distrust, and they have information on the other side coming from an N.D. Party they distrust equally as much in rural Manitoba. Hence the confusion.

Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Highways and Transportation introduced this resolution, he said, "We want it to be a non-partisan debate." And what then did the Minister of Transportation promptly follow up with? Well, it's going to be a non-partisan debate, he says and he followed up with a press release in which he says that farmers will be paying four times the Crow rate in about five years and nearly 10 times the Crow rate in 1990. He claims this information to be developed in Manitoba. He claims this to be information developed by the Manitoba Department of Transportation. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you where that information came from. It came directly out of an election brochure from the Province of Saskatchewan put out by the Honourable Gordon McMurchy who is fighting the Pepin Plan that comes from — they don't have page numbers — but it's Table 1, Cost of Prairie Transport under the Pepin Plan. That's where the Minister of Transportation's information came from in this press release. Now, do you understand, Mr. Speaker, why farmers in rural Manitoba are confused about the so-called factual information that is being presented by the N.D. Party?

It comes directly from New Democratic Party election campaign material in the Province of Saskatchewan. It's imported by that veritable stalwart of agricultural policy for Manitoba, Bill Jansen, who was imported from Saskatchewan by the Minister of Highways and Transportation at \$5,000 a month plus expenses, to write a Crow-rate position, to write a beef-income position and to ruin the bloody farm economy like he tried to do in the eight years of the Schreyer administration. Now you ask why farmers of Manitoba distrust this NDP Party over here? I'll tell you why they do. It's because of that kind of recycled, out-of-date thinking from Bill Jansen and the Saskatchewan NDP.

I want to tell you one other thing that makes the farmers of Manitoba terribly distrustful. It's the March 26th press release put out by the Minister of Highways and Transportation in which he uses the Turcheniewich Report. He says the Turcheniewich Report has identified that farmers are going to pay 3.4 times the Crow rate to move their grain. Clearly in this press release and any information he has given out so far, he leaves the precise impression that the farmer, tomorrow, with the adoption of the Pepin proposal will pay 3.4 times the Crow rate. And, Mr. Speaker, in

questioning him in his Estimates, he couldn't back that up. I understand why he can't back it up because the Turcheniewich Report has no relevance to the Pepin proposal. The Turcheniewich Report was done with the basic question being asked: what will happen if farmers have to pick up the entire compensatory freight rate? And that's when we pay 3.4 times. The Pepin proposal says it will pick up the differential to 3.4 times the freight rate so that farmers this year will pay no additional cost, but clearly the impression from this press release by the Minister of Highways and Transportation is that farmers are immediately going to pay more.

Now do you understand the confusion in rural Manitoba? And this promised by a Minister of Transportation who says he wants this to be a non-partisan debate. Now, further, do you understand, Mr. Speaker, why we want not to vote on this today, but to continue debating this, particularly in view of the fact that Minister of Transportation is going to the people of Manitoba next week with five meetings throughout rural Manitoba to listen to the farmers? I want to hear the farmers' reactions to this kind of misleading statement put out by the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

But they don't want that kind of information and feedback to come from rural Manitoba. They want to continue having their NFU buddies go to these meetings and crowd the microphones with NFU members asking the question so that the legitimate farmers, the farmers that are still in business, cannot get up and ask an honest, forthright question of the speakers there. That has happened at every — (Interjection) — and the Minister of Health is saying, "Oh, that's not right." He hasn't been to farm meetings like I have. I have seen every farm meeting I have been to on a controversial issue, they're plugged with the NFU adherents in this province and those people crowd to the microphones, ask all of the left-wing questions that favour the N.D. Party and the legitimate farmers are thwarted from getting to those mikes. And, Mr. Speaker, that's what will happen in Winkler; that's what will happen in Brandon, Dauphin and every other place that this government is taking their campaign. The NFU will be there in force; the same people, the same group asking the same questions at every meeting. And they try to mislead the news people that are there with the impression that represents legitimate farm questions. Well, nothing could be further from the truth, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, another little item that the farmers of Manitoba have been subjected to by the Minister of Highways and Transportation, is the development of what the cost per holder of shipping grain by rail would be with a scenario of up to five times statutory rate. I questioned them on that. I said, "When is this expected to happen? When do you expect Manitoba farmers will be paying five times Crow rate?" And he says he doesn't know. Well then, what is the point of this? And I submit, Mr. Speaker, the point of it is to scare and mislead the farm community, not to present them with the facts as the Minister of Highways and Transportation had said would be part and parcel of this debate in rural Manitoba; no, but rather to raise the aura of fear out there in the rural communities so that logical, rational debate

cannot take place on the issue. Press release by Mr. Uskiw: "Increased rail spending to benefit Manitoba least," and he uses that for a justification to oppose any change in the Crow rate.

Mr. Speaker, I respectfully submit that has no relevance to the issue; it has no relevance whatsoever. In fact, the way it's presented by the Minister of Highways and Transportation it is, indeed, misleading and it is, indeed, telling the people of Manitoba incorrect information because, Mr. Speaker, it says that Manitoba should not basically support increased rail investment in western Canada because only 4.7 percent of that money will be spent in Manitoba; that Manitoba's system is operating quite well, thank you very much.

There is a flaw to that argument, Mr. Speaker, and the Minister of Highways and Transportation knows there's a flaw to it but he still puts out that kind of misleading press releases. The flaw, quite simply, Mr. Speaker, is that if the money is not spent by whomever, to increase the capacities through the mountain region where most of the money is being spent, then grain shipments cannot use the limited capacity out there, so that the increase in grain movement can't go to the West Coast. Therefore, where will it go, Mr. Speaker? It will come through Thunder Bay and you know what the effect of that will be on Manitoba farmers, the producers that this government claims to protect? What will happen when increased movements, because of lack of capacity through the mountain region, throttles exports through the port of Vancouver and Prince Rupert? What will happen is shipments from Saskatchewan and even Alberta will clog the Manitoba system to Thunder Bay, and that will reduce the delivery opportunities of Manitoba farmers; the very farmers that party claims to be protecting. This press release is false, Mr. Speaker, in the impression it leaves with the people of Manitoba, with the farmers of Manitoba.

Any improvement in capacity to the West Coast will benefit Manitoba farmers because it will move increased amounts of grain to the west coast to get a higher f.o.b. price out of Vancouver which is pooled by all producers, including the producers in Manitoba so that our prices go up as more exports go through Vancouver. The Minister of Transportation knows that but he sure doesn't tell the story at this press release. So, now do you see why Manitoba farmers are concerned?

Mr. Speaker, I notice that you are giving me the five minute signal; I really regret that because there are many, many issues that are going to be discussed on the Crow rate in this Chamber over the next several weeks. I am only half way through the issues that I want to discuss today; I'm only half way through. But, Mr. Speaker, I will accept that there's only five minutes left.

But I want to just put one more point on the line. There was one press release that was missing; the press release being an analysis of what the positive impact would be on the Port of Churchill if the Federal Government succeeds in raising freight rates on grain in western Canada. The Port of Churchill will receive greater volumes of grain because it is the shortest distance that grain can travel to a salt-water port. Is there any mention of that benefit to Manitobans in the

Port of Churchill? No, there's no mention of that. There's only the negative things on the Crow rate debate as if there was only one way to go and that is negative.

Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned about this insert to the Manitoba Co-operator because it was just put out and I just received it this morning. This insert, by the Minister of Highways and Transportation of the Province of Manitoba, contains a summary of the press releases which I have said are so questionable in their factual presentation and this has gone out to every single farmer in rural Manitoba who is a subscriber to the Manitoba Co-operator.

That isn't the non-partisan factual debate that the Minister of Highways and Transportation promised us in this House when he introduced this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I want to basically close by saying that we intend to debate this resolution fully in this House. We don't intend to be intimidated by the Attorney-General, the Government House Leader, in attempting to close the debate on this very important issue to rural Manitobans. I am going to speak on this resolution again and I may speak on it a third time, and many of my members are going to do that and you know what we're going to reflect every single time we speak on this resolution, Mr. Speaker? We are going to have the opportunity to comment on the farm meetings that are going to take place next week; we are going to have the opportunity to comment on the recommendations of the Gilson Report, because I submit with all due respect, Mr. Speaker, that we are shooting at a moving target right now. One cannot be for or against the Pepin proposal because we don't know what the Gilson Report is going to recommend the changes, if any, and I stress, if any, should be to the farm income.

We don't even know what kind of use the Federal Minister will make of the Gilson Report, if any, although I fully suspect he will make some use of it, but that does not affect the N.D. Party in this province because their's is a political motive, not a motive to resolve an issue that has vast importance to the farm communities of Manitoba. Bear in mind, Mr. Speaker, the N.D. Party doesn't care about the farm community in Manitoba. They care about their political survival and longevity in western Canada and that is all. They will use any means to gain that; they will entertain lie campaigns; they will distort the truth, Mr. Speaker; they won't speak to the issue for the benefit of rural Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I firmly object to any effort on the part of the N.D. government today to bring this issue to a vote and to thwart further discussion and contribution by our side of the House, representing the farm community as we do, and when we want to reflect the feelings of the farm community as expressed at the meetings, the feelings of the farm community as presented to Gilson through the farm organizations whose memberships extend to the length and breadth of the farming community in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta — (Interjection) — the NFU wasn't at the Gilsons Report; they boycotted it, so we are hearing from the legitimate farm groups, not the NFU, when we hear from the Gilson Report.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we want the opportunity to amend this resolution because we think there are areas this government has missed in presenting this

resolution, so an amendment will be forthcoming. When that amendment is forthcoming I will guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, that I will speak again on this issue, but I will only be able to do it if the Attorney-General takes his jackboots off and allows the debate to continue in this Chamber. That is the only time I'll be able to do it.

The Minister for Economic Development is saying "shame." Did she not hear the Attorney-General trying to thwart debate on this issue today in the House? Did she not hear that; does she agree with the jackboot tactics of the Attorney-General? Mr. Speaker, I can't believe that the Minister of Economic Development would agree with that.

Mr. Speaker, has my time expired? I just have one more word. We want the opportunity to critique any recommendation that comes out of the Gilson Report. We want the opportunity to offer suggestions in addendum to the Gilson Report as representatives of the farm community. We do not want that opportunity thwarted by a government that wants to stymie and silence the opposition who represent the rural Manitoba communities.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Chairman, I rise to participate on the debate on the Resolution that is before this House with some trepidation, and my trepidation, Mr. Speaker, is that I will contain the justifiable anger that I feel within me at the way in which the official opposition in this Legislature has dealt with this Resolution.

Mr. Speaker, the vituperative outburst from the Member for Pembina underlines my concern. He said from his chair and he repeated again, the epithet of jackboot tactics and, Mr. Speaker, that is foreign to this Legislature. That belongs across the sea where the Honourable Attorney-General went to fight to protect his country and for the Honourable Member for Pembina to use that kind of slur is a disgrace to this House and a disgrace to the electors of Pembina. It's a shame.

Mr. Speaker, I have difficulty constraining my feelings when the honourable members have obviously attempted to frustrate debate in this Legislature on this Resolution.

The other day the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie adjourned the debate, he sought to adjourn the debate today again and frustrate any further debate on it. The Attorney-General as House Leader made it clear that we wanted the Resolution debated. For the Honourable Member for Pembina to suggest that urging debate in this House is muzzling debate is so far from logic that I can't understand how he could be elected to this House, to suggest muzzling debate. We have sought, Mr. Speaker, . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Does the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie have a point of order?

MR. HYDE: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member stated that I adjourned the debate, I did. I also made it known this morning in this Legislature that the debate could continue. I did not adjourn the debate this morning. The Honourable

Minister is wrong in making that statement.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. A dispute about the facts between two members does not constitute a point of order.

The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, the gyrations, the movements, the uncertainties of the official opposition confirmed what I believed to be fact, they didn't know what they were going to do because they wanted to postpone debate in this House on this issue. Why, Mr. Speaker? Why? Because of an election in our sister province. And what did they do, Mr. Speaker? They carried on the most sleazy political maneuvering on an issue that's important to the farmers of this country the likes of which we've never seen before.

The Free Press edition of April 23 quotes, and the headline is so misleading: "Pawley softening stand on Crow rate Conservatives say." I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, just as certain as I'm standing here that honourable members engineered a conversation with the press, gave them this so-called story, rushed that to their divine leader in Saskatchewan and this is the worst, dirtiest kind of politics that this province has ever seen.

Let me quote from the article. Here's the Honourable Member — the Honourable Member — for Morris saying: "The Resolution is written loosely and gives the opportunity to come away from the government's entrenched position, he said." Well, let's look at the Resolution.

"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House express its strong disapproval of the unilateral and socially and economically unacceptable proposal of the Federal Government to remove the statutory rates on grain." How is that loosely worded, Mr. Speaker? That's absolute nonsense, that's mischief, that's political mischief on the part of the Member for Morris. The fact that in their devious way they have tried to slip and slide on this issue underlines their political uncertainty in this province, Mr. Speaker.

The few speakers that have addressed this issue from the opposition side have wobbled and waddled and straddled each side of the question. They've shown their complete political cowardice on this question. The Honourable Member for Pembina in his utter arrogance, in his demeaning statements in this House talks about confusing the farmers of Manitoba. What's confusing to the farmers of Manitoba who elected a good number of members across the way, is the utter incompetence, the utter irresponsibility of the opposition in respect to this question. The silence of the honourable members, Mr. Speaker, on this question is deafening . . .

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

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on page 107 of Beauchesne, the Fifth Edition, "irresponsible" is listed as an unparliamentary term and I would request that the Minister withdraw that charge.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of

Natural Resources.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, if to call an honourable member is irresponsible, is unparliamentary, I regret that because I believe it should not be but if it is then, Mr. Speaker, it's very easy for me to substitute the phrase, that the honourable member is without responsibility. I assume that that will be acceptable to the honourable member.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I simply am drawing the rule to your attention, Sir, because I know that it's your desire that we stick as closely as we can to the rules.

MR. SPEAKER: On the same point of order, the Honourable Minister?

MR. MACKLING: No, I'm not. I'm waiting.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm referring to Beauchesne and the reference given to me by the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain. I find that "irresponsible" appears to be the title drawing the readers eye to the fact that the words "irresponsible members and irresponsible reply were deemed as unparliamentary" in the past in Ottawa. I am a little uncertain whether the use of the particular word in the phrase used by the Honourable Minister constituted the use of unparliamentary language. Since it's been drawn to the attention of the House and to the Minister, perhaps the Minister could continue with his remarks.

The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the concern of the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain, he's concerned to interrupt my speech and he has done that but that action does not confuse me or dissuade me from telling the truth in this House. Something that I think honourable members sometimes are concerned about . . .

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Turtle-Mountain on a point of order.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources has imputed a motive to me that I raised the point of order because I wanted to interrupt his speech. Sir, I believe that drawing the rules to the attention of the House is something that is entirely acceptable especially on the part of the Opposition House Leader. I had no motive to interrupt the Minister of Natural Resources and I ask that he withdraw that charge that I was in fact drawing the rules to your attention simply to interrupt him.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The rules make it clear that all members have a duty to bring lapses of order to the Speaker's attention. We also have a practice that members should not impute motives to other

members. Perhaps the Minister will reconsider his remarks in that regard. Does the Honourable Minister of Health wish to speak to the point of order?

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I heard you say that we have a duty to bring up if there's any breach of rules. So therefore following that advice I would like you to rule on a member calling somebody else a snake. This was done from the seat. If we're going to have the rules let's have them for everybody and I would like to have you rule, Sir, on people talking about jackboots, or calling people communists, in that across the rules, in front of children. Sir, if we're going to have the rules, if it is our duty to bring it to your attention, I'm doing so and I'm asking you to rule on it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order. It is indeed the duty of members to draw the rules to the attention of the House and I believe, Sir, that it must be done at the time that the alleged infraction occurs. That is why I raised the issue at the time the Minister of Natural Resources made his statement. I think it's out of order for the Minister of Health to try and raise issues on points of order that took place sometime ago.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health on the same point of order.

MR. DESJARDINS: In the spirit of co-operation I'll agree with the House Leader from the Opposition. But I might say to him that this gentleman here, if I can call him loosely a gentlemen, Mr. Speaker, I am addressing my remarks to you and I can point like it has been done so often here and the remarks were made when my honourable friend was standing and I got up immediately after and I'm saying, Sir, bring it to your attention that like he always does the Member for Pembina has been calling people snake, communist from his seat and he thinks it's a very big joke. I ask you, Sir, the same thing, to rule and we will try to obey and conform to the laws what we feel are the rules and regulations — the House Leader thinks it's a big joke now, the House Leader of the Opposition — I say the rules are made for everyone, Sir. If you're going to rule I think you should rule for all the House and all the members.

MR. SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Minister of Health for bringing that to my attention. I would ask all members to consider whether remarks they make from their chair which do not appear in Hansard actually contribute to the level of decorum in this House or whether they detract from it.

The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources may continue.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, the actions of the Members of the Opposition and the words that they speak are abundant record for their position on this matter. What they have indicated in debate is that they — (Interjection) —

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain on a point of order.

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources imputed a motive to me in drawing the point of order to your attention. I ask that he withdraw that statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw the suggestion that the honourable member rose on a point of order to interrupt my speech. The effect of his rising was to do that. What his intent was we will not know, therefore, I am not in a position to impute the motive that a reasonable, rational, normal, common-sense assessment might make of his action. However, I cannot know his motive and therefore, I accept the fact that I cannot impute that motive to him.

Mr. Speaker, when I was speaking last on the motion I indicated that the concerns that the Honourable Member for Pembina was raising about the confusion that existed in the hearts and the minds of people most interested in this question was as a result of the inadequacy of debate in this House by the Members of the Opposition because many farmers, Mr. Speaker, in the Province of Manitoba voted for members opposite but they have been awaiting a response from them in this House on this issue. What have we heard?

Well, we've heard two or three of their members say well, it's a bit early for us to say anything because we want to hear what Mr. Gilson has to say and there are problems with rail in Canada and the rates must change. We don't like the Federal Government but then again, we don't dislike the railways either; poor railways and so on. They have not indicated whether or not they agree with the clear-cut principle that's embodied in this Resolution. Why are they silent, Mr. Speaker? Why are they silent? Surely, it's proper for me to impute political motive to them. What have they done? They have talked outside of the House, distorted the debate in the House and for political purposes in Saskatchewan, that is obvious, Mr. Speaker. The documents speak for themselves.

But it's fortunate that not all Tories carry on in the same way. Just recently in the same newspaper one of their peers, that is, he is an M.P., appeared in a public forum and he had the political fortitude to indicate his position and he firmly endorsed the concern that is embodied in this Resolution — and that's the Honourable Member for Provencher — he attended a meeting with the honourable member, the author of this Resolution, the Minister of Transportation.

The caption says, "That over 200 area farmers" — this is from the Free Press, April 21, 1982, Mr. Speaker — "Over 200 area farmers attend Manitoba Pool-sponsored meeting on the Crow issue." They issued a resolution. "The resolution that was resolved at this meeting supports the position of the Manitoba Government and the M.P. for Provencher in their opposition to any change in the present statutory rates by a producer for transporting grain." The pool was waiting. Some pool members were waiting to hear what

honourable members opposite were going to say, Mr. Speaker, but they got tired of waiting. All they heard was a deafening silence. Why, Mr. Speaker, did they want to continue with this cat and mouse game with their policy, if any, on this issue? Because, Mr. Speaker, that it would have a divine influence west of us. That's the reason, Mr. Speaker.

But what about the issues themselves? The Honourable Member for Pembina whom I can't suggest is . . . well, he suggested other things about other members in this House including the author of this Resolution but I won't be as indecent as he. Let me say what he talked about in his concluding remarks, Mr. Speaker. He revealed some concern that there had been nothing in these press releases that the Honourable Minister of Transportation had released that indicated about the great benefit that might accrue to the Port of Churchill and questioned, in effect, why there shouldn't be more support for the principle involved in the Pepin proposal. Then, he indicated that there had to be some benefits and we should be looking at the benefits.

Well, you know that indicates the sympathies of the Honourable Member for Pembina. He's for change; he's for an increase, despite the fact that the farmers of Manitoba are facing an economic crisis. Farmers, like small businessmen, are in great difficulty in Manitoba but the honourable member says well, he's implying that some increases justify. We'll have to go along because the Tyrchniewicz Report, a report authored, sponsored by the members opposite, which they suppressed for how many months. Talk about openness on issues. They had a report that they'd received and they put it under the table, Mr. Speaker. Why did they put it under the table? Because they were sensitive about it, Mr. Speaker, they didn't like it being critical of the position that they had adopted, adopted in support of the railways and against the interests of the farmers of Manitoba. That's the position of the honourable members opposite. They're for the railways. —(Interjection)— Well, the honourable member spouts from his chair, balderdash. That is how I would characterize everything that I heard from the honourable member in his waffling on this issue, Mr. Speaker.

The honourable member wants to fudge the issue about the railways and our position in respect to them, Mr. Speaker. He says that we continue to focus on the CPR; and then he says what about the CNR and their role in this issue. What about the CNR? You see, the honourable members opposite have such dogmatic political blinkers that they won't recognize the validity of what's happened in the history of Canada. What about the CNR? The taxpayers of this country have been paying for incompetent private enterprise from Day One. The CNR was picked up by the taxpayers of Canada to run because private enterprise had failed and the only way that private enterprise succeeds, under private enterprise-supporting governments opposite, is when they make extensive grants of land and money and continual subsidies to make sure that the private shareholders succeed. That's the way they operate, Mr. Speaker. They don't believe that the taxpayers can run enterprise in Canada; all they believe is the taxpayers can be milked by subsidies and land grants.

Mr. Speaker, you know honourable members think it's all past history and it's dead history but, what do we have here? I have something in my hand, a photo copy. It's Order-in-Council No. 995 and it's from the Department of Mines and Natural Resources. It's a photo copy of an Order-in-Council passed by the Government of Manitoba. What's the date of the Order-in-Council? October 17, 1979, signed by the Honourable, apparently Mr. Craik, and signed by the Honourable, former Minister for Natural Resources, the Member for Turtle Mountain. What does this do, Mr. Speaker? It conveys further land to the Canadian Pacific Railroad pursuant to agreements that were made back in the 1800s. It continues, Mr. Speaker, it continues that we have as taxpayers to continue to subsidize inefficient private enterprise. But, that's all right, that's politically acceptable to them.

So, when the honourable member accuses not being strong about the CNR, what is the CNR? The CNR is bankrupt private enterprise that the taxpayers of Manitoba had to pick up and organize and rebuild again and that's being done. But they won't recognize the CNR as any valid case. Mr. Speaker, that's the kind of dogmatic, narrow, partisan, warped idealism that the members opposite use day after day in their addressing issues in this House and in this country.

Mr. Speaker, what about the issue?. The honourable member says he tries to fudge the issue. He says what's going to happen is that the west coast ports are going to be clogged and, therefore, the grain is going to have to move east. Clogged with what? Clogged with coal movement and that's what the resolution speaks to but the honourable member doesn't refer to that. That's in the resolution; that's the cause of the west coast ports being plugged and the rail system being jammed; it isn't grain movement. So, why should the grain farmers in Western Canada have to pick up the costs to alleviate the plugging movement of coal movements to western ports. The honourable member doesn't address that issue; he ducks it. He just says well, there's going to be a problem with grain moving west and then that problem is going to be shifted to the grain movement east. Now, that's the kind of fudging of issues, Mr. Speaker, that is deceitful, that is deceitful of the farmers of Manitoba. It's improper and untrue.

But, what about the position of a spokesman for farmers within this country. They're upset and they're concerned. They've spoken out on this issue, at least, some of them have. But it's annoying, it's frustrating. It's a confusing, yes, even to people on this side of the House that people who are elected by farmers in this country are sitting there silent or fudging on this issue. For example, Wheat Board official, that's Mr. Gibbings, Commissioner Charles Gibbings, he had the intestinal fortitude to lay it on the line. Here's what he said in a release, he said he wouldn't go to the meeting - he's referring to going to a meeting with Pepin - "I wouldn't go because if you voluntarily go to be raped it's consent he told about 200 cheering farmers at the Wheat Board's first district meeting this winter." I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the eloquent silence of members opposite indicate consent and that is a legal maxim that has been used many, many times. They are consenting to a rape of the farm industry in Manitoba by their inaction, by their silence.

Mr. Speaker, I want to refer to another very eloquent, a real statesman in the history of this country, and he's a Conservative. He's not a Progressive Conservative, I suppose, he's certainly not associated with the honourable members opposite; a former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, a man with real integrity, with real understanding and with real empathy with the farmers of Western Canada, and what has he said about this issue? I quote, Mr. Speaker, from again the Free Press of March 2, 1982. Here's what Justice Emmett Hall said, a real agrarian Conservative, one that believes in the farm people. He said, "Once the Crow rate goes, the next victim will be the Wheat Board," said Hall, legal advisor to the Saskatchewan Government Grain Car Corporation and a former Supreme Court Justice. Hall told 400 people at a Town Hall meeting yesterday in this farm centre - that was southeast Saskatchewan - 60 kilometres north of Regina, he isn't happy with the move announced February 8th by Transport Minister Jean-Luc Pepin, and he goes on, "I heard one of you say, let the negotiating process go on," Hall told the meeting sponsored by the Grain Car Corporation.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, I want to digress for a minute, that's in effect what the honourable members opposite are saying. Let's hear from Gilson, let's see what kind of a deal we can make. That's what they're saying, Mr. Speaker. But what does Hall say? "I think that once you place the fixed rate for transportation on the table it can be negotiated out of existence." And that's a Conservative that I respect, one that speaks out for principle, that doesn't waffle, that doesn't try to duck an issue. He's someone that western Canadian farmers can be proud of. I question what Manitoba farmers have to say about members opposite for their activity on this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, what are the issues? The issue is that we have private enterprise that's been subsidized by taxpayers for over a hundred years, extensive grants of land and money and now they say that historic bargain is no longer valid, is no longer justified. They want to tear up the deal and they want farmers of Manitoba to take the burden; farmers in Saskatchewan and Alberta to take the burden. Why? Because they have more important products to ship like coal, like potash, so the deal is off and the farmers have to pick up the costs. The members opposite are tacitly, in their silent way, accepting that the farmers of Manitoba should be paying more for grain. Is that reasonable? Is that just?

There was an historic agreement and the historic agreement was that we could grow grain; we could develop a grain market provided we got decent freight rates. Freight rates that would make it possible, Mr. Speaker, for western Canadian grain growers to compete on world markets. Now, some honourable members scoff about that. That is the historic agreement, and is it still important? Yes it is, Mr. Speaker, because throughout the world grain farmers, farmers generally, need understandings, need agreements with governments to facilitate their ability to compete on the world market. Before we had strong government intervention assisting the marketing of grain, we had chaos. We have the Canadian Wheat Board but the Canadian Wheat Board will be in jeopardy if the honourable members had their way.

What we have seen is the development of world markets for Canadian grain but that's predicated, Mr. Speaker, on the maintenance of reasonable transportation costs. What will happen when we take the lid off? Where will these markets be? How will we compete with countries in the world that do subsidize extensively the transportation cost of grain? The honourable members are silent about that. They don't know or they don't care and that is the key to the whole question of our agricultural transportation. Where are the markets, and at what cost will it be for farmers to get their grain to market? If that cost is impossible, we'll not only lose our competitive advantage internationally but we'll be putting farmers out of business on a massive scale in Manitoba and throughout the west. But the honourable members appear to be indifferent about that. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because by and large, you see, they represent the big farmer; the corporate farmer; the farmer that can arrange the big deal; the big arrangements. They're not close to the man of the soil; they're not used to the small family farmer. What they do is try to confuse and obfuscate the issues on something like this so that maybe they can ride both sides of the fence. They can stay close to the big grain companies like Cargill and the railways and satisfy all of the interests and fudge their way through, but it won't work.

Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of referring to another noble - and I use the word noble with some respect, because this Conservative politician was someone who had widespread respect throughout the length and breadth of Canada - the Honourable, the late John Diefenbaker, and he had some concerns, Mr. Speaker; a great man — (Interjection)— well, the honourable members would do well to reflect on some of his thoughts about grain transportation.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to refer to a Throne Speech in 1960 and here's what the Throne Speech said. This is during the term of the Honourable, the late John Diefenbaker. "My Ministers have welcomed the appointment of the Royal Commission on Transportation to inquire into the problems relating to railway transportation and the inequities in the freight rates structure. My government," - a Conservative government then - "favors retention of the Crowsnest Pass grain rates and is actively opposing the request of the railways for any changes in this contract, which for so many years had been a bulwark of prairie agriculture. My government will also oppose the Royal Commission new methods for removing inequities in the freight rate structure which adversely affect the well-being of industry and agriculture in Manitoba."

Mr. Speaker, there was a Conservative that had some understanding of the historic agreement in western Canada, some commitment to the farmers of western Canada, unlike the attitude and the position that is obvious with the members opposite because they do not care, Mr. Speaker. They are content to let a federally-appointed individual determine the basis on which freight rates are going to be re-structured because in agreeing to that they are committing themselves to the erosion of that rate base.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Honourable Minister.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, what are the consequences? What are the consequences of removing the guarantee that western Canadian agriculture has relied upon, has built upon over the many many years? What are the consequences? The honourable members don't want to consider them and the Honourable Member for — I'm sorry, one of our spokesmen on this issue indicated, pardon me, it was the Honourable First Leader — asked honourable members opposite, what about their interest in the communities they represent? What about their interests? They know that if the principle of equality of rates between points in Manitoba is changed, it'll be the death knell to many of those communities.

But what are they saying about it? They're not even saying, Mr. Speaker, well we'll wait and see what Gilson has to say on this issue, but one thing we won't accept is a change in the historic pattern of equality of rates between points. They haven't even said that, Mr. Speaker. They're silent on these issues and that should mean to all of the people in those little communities that the members opposite don't care and that is the political fact.

They care enough, Mr. Speaker, about what's going on in Saskatchewan to have conversations in corridors, but they don't care enough about the people they represent to speak out on this Resolution on this issue, in this Chamber and that is a shock, Mr. Speaker. It's a shock to the farmers of Manitoba that should create political confusion, the likes of which we've never seen in Canada, in Manitoba.

The honourable member from his chair repeats "balderdash," Mr. Speaker. That is about the extent of his vocabulary very often, Mr. Speaker, because what I hear from him constitutes balderdash. It's utter and complete nonsense because he tries to shift the responsibility for his inadequacy of expression on this Resolution by somehow attacking political philosophy of members opposite.

The Honourable Member for Pembina epitomizes I think what some of us fear is the worst in parliamentary debate. He uses the vilest words to attack the honest representations of members on this side of the House. Again, Mr. Speaker, he gets close to talking about the issue of the Crow rate because he talks about grain handling, but he doesn't talk about the importance of an efficient transportation system. What he does is use that as a base to attack legitimate trade unions in Canada and that's despicable. He just keeps attacking.

Unless they're prepared to change the system — and for four years that they were in government they did nothing — unless they're prepared to change the system, then certainly respect the system. Don't attack it, facilitate it, give it constructive criticism, but don't damn trade unions in this country for their legitimate right to negotiate and when negotiations fail, to strike. If that's his position, that he damns the right of legitimate trade unions to withdraw their services, then he should say so.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, the honourable members opposite are anti-union, they're negative about the trade union movement in Canada and when they are talking about grain handling, the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain is not without exception in this. In this House he started to question the Hon-

ourable Minister responsible for the Environment and Northern Affairs the question about — I believe it was this honourable member — about negotiations at the Port of Churchill. Pardon me, it was the Honourable Minister of Labour. —(Interjection)— Oh, all right. Pardon me. I apologize to the Member for Turtle Mountain. It was the Honourable Member for Pembina again. Well, that confirms the kind of association of thoughts in that honourable member's mind because he started to question whether or not there wasn't going to be a problem in grain handling in Churchill. He was trying to suggest there was going to be an enormous problem there because that union was bargaining with its employer and that's the kind of sleazy question the honourable member puts in this House. Troublemaking. Troublemaking in a legitimate enterprise between a grain-handling company and its union, suggesting there was going to be a problem.

There was no problem, Mr. Speaker. An agreement has been settled and that mortifies the honourable member because now he can't complain about trade unionists interrupting the flow of grain in this country.

The problem that exists in this country in respect to grain transportation lies with the railways and the honourable members want to shift that. They want to shift that burden onto the backs of the farmers in Manitoba and in doing so they are a disgrace to their electorate.

Mr. Speaker, the honourable member suggested we were trying to close debate. Well, Mr. Speaker, we finally smoked out one member of that leading front bench to say something. We heard from the Honourable Member for Arthur and, Mr. Speaker, if you read what his remarks were in Hansard, he said nothing. He said absolutely nothing about this Resolution. He had a sale of words. He did a lot of thumping and he sold a lot of words in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, but he never addressed the issues in this Resolution.

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

POINT OF ORDER

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe the Member for Arthur has spoken on this Resolution and I wouldn't want the record to show that he had and perhaps deny him the opportunity to speak later.

MR. SPEAKER: My record does not indicate that the Honourable Member for Arthur has spoken on the debate thus far.

The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, if your records so indicate, I withdraw the inference. I'm sure though that the honourable member, in speaking —(Interjection)— well maybe he was speaking from his seat, but I know the honourable members in the front bench have been eloquent in their silence and that has been a shame.

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

MR. HARRY ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, having made considerable effort and contributions to the debate on this Resolution, I resent the implication of the honourable member suggesting that I was very silent on this Resolution.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, I think any fair-minded reader of Hansard looking at the honourable member's remarks would say that he was silent on this resolution. He spoke of many things but he didn't speak about this resolution, Mr. Speaker; he didn't tell us where he or his party stood on this resolution. Mr. Speaker, the record is clear. Members opposite are waffling; they want it both ways; they want to indicate to the public outside that we are weak on this resolution. We are strong in this resolution; the words of this resolution are clear and decisive as were the remarks of the First Minister on this resolution. Standing, Mr. Speaker, in favour of defence of the farmers' interest in Manitoba. Not so the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, that is the record of this debate in this House to this day.

Now the honourable member threatens that he will have opportunities again and again to speak on this resolution. Well, Mr. Speaker, if he does have a further opportunity to speak, may it be a speech in which he says something decisive and in defence of the interests of the farmers of Manitoba. Let the records show that the speakers from the government side on this resolution stand behind the farmers of Manitoba in their fight to protect their economic interest and to assure that statutory rates on grain protect those interests.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I think I'll make a speech on aid to private schools, I think that's what you want.

Mr. Speaker, may I suggest that you call it 12:30 before I move the adjournment of the House. I think there is an understanding that there will not be Private Members' Hour this afternoon. So, I would move seconded by the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources that the House be . . .

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

MR. RANSOM: Yes, I have the understanding that the resolution will be standing in the name of the member for Portage la Prairie, is that correct?

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, that's acceptable to us.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. According to the rules the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie would normally lose his right to speak on this item but if it is the will of the House and has the leave of the members it can stand in the name of the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m. on Monday afternoon