



Second Session — Thirty-Second Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

31-32 Elizabeth II

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable D. James Walding
Speaker*



MG-8048

VOL. XXXI No. 138 - 10:00 a.m., MONDAY, 8 AUGUST, 1983.

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Second Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

Name	Constituency	Party
ADAM, Hon. A.R. (Pete)	Ste. Rose	NDP
ANSTETT, Andy	Springfield	NDP
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BANMAN, Robert (Bob)	La Verendrye	PC
BLAKE, David R. (Dave)	Minnedosa	PC
BROWN, Arnold	Rhineland	PC
BUCKLASCHUK, Hon. John M.	Gimli	NDP
CARROLL, Q.C., Henry N.	Brandon West	IND
CORRIN, Brian	Ellice	NDP
COWAN, Hon. Jay	Churchill	NDP
DESJARDINS, Hon. Laurent	St. Boniface	NDP
DODICK, Doreen	Riel	NDP
DOERN, Russell	Elmwood	NDP
DOLIN, Hon. Mary Beth	Kildonan	NDP
DOWNEY, James E.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert	Emerson	PC
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
EVANS, Hon. Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
EYLER, Phil	River East	NDP
FILMON, Gary	Tuxedo	PC
FOX, Peter	Concordia	NDP
GOURLAY, D.M. (Doug)	Swan River	PC
GRAHAM, Harry	Virden	PC
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry M.	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HEMPHILL, Hon. Maureen	Logan	NDP
HYDE, Lloyd	Portage la Prairie	PC
JOHNSTON, J. Frank	Sturgeon Creek	PC
KOSTYRA, Hon. Eugene	Seven Oaks	NDP
KOVNATS, Abe	Niakwa	PC
LECUYER, Gérard	Radisson	NDP
LYON, Q.C., Hon. Sterling	Charleswood	PC
MACKLING, Q.C., Hon. Al	St. James	NDP
MALINOWSKI, Donald M.	St. Johns	NDP
MANNES, Clayton	Morris	PC
McKENZIE, J. Wally	Roblin-Russell	PC
MERCIER, Q.C., G.W.J. (Gerry)	St. Norbert	PC
NORDMAN, Rurik (Ric)	Assiniboia	PC
OLESON, Charlotte	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald	Pembina	PC
PAWLEY, Q.C., Hon. Howard R.	Selkirk	NDP
PARASIUK, Hon. Wilson	Transcona	NDP
PENNER, Q.C., Hon. Roland	Fort Rouge	NDP
PHILLIPS, Myrna A.	Wolseley	NDP
PLOHMAN, Hon. John	Dauphin	NDP
RANSOM, A. Brian	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Burrows	NDP
SCHROEDER, Hon. Vic	Rossmere	NDP
SCOTT, Don	Inkster	NDP
SHERMAN, L.R. (Bud)	Fort Garry	PC
SMITH, Hon. Muriel	Osborne	NDP
STEEN, Warren	River Heights	PC
STORIE, Hon. Jerry T.	Flin Flon	NDP
URUSKI, Hon. Bill	Interlake	NDP
USKIW, Hon. Samuel	Lac du Bonnet	NDP
WALDING, Hon. D. James	St. Vital	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 8 August, 1983.

Time — 10:00 a.m.

MR. ASSISTANT CLERK, G. Mackintosh: It is my duty to inform the House that Mr. Speaker is unavoidably absent and would ask the Deputy Speaker to take the Chair, in accordance with the statutes.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Deputy Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, P. Eyer: Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . . Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . . Oral Questions . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, in keeping with our commitment to the honourable members of the government to restrict our question periods to two a day during the Speed-up Motion, we forego the question period this morning, Sir.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the adjourned debate on second reading of Bill 55.

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON SECOND READING

BILL 55 - THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ACT

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General, Bill 55, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been a while since we dealt with Bill 55. We, in the opposition, have expressed some specific concerns about the bill. There are, of course, the provisions that pertain to the Speaker himself in this bill. I'll refrain from making the kind of comments that perhaps could be made in that regard. Having some knowledge as to why the specific sections are in the bill, it does set out some limitations on the additional allowances available to the Speaker, and I think only appropriately so, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the problem that particularly rural Manitobans have with the bill is, of course, the change in the additional allowances for constituency expenses from the current flat allowance of some \$2,500 down to \$500 with an additional \$2,500 being made available upon receipt of constituency expenses, specifically, I suppose for our city cousins' constituency offices.

Mr. Speaker, in rural Manitoba constituency offices often present a problem. Most rural members have the kind of situation in their rural constituencies that make it difficult to place a central office in one's constituency. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, having been a rural politician for some time, it can lend to problems that are counterproductive. Where do you place that office when you have communities like Lundar, Stonewall or Stony Mountain, Oakville in the your offices?

It lends itself to understandable jealousies, if you like, within the constituency as to which community, which town does the MLA, does the politician consider most favourably to locate one's constituency office in. For most of us in rural Manitoba the present method of allowing additional allowance dollars to be used by the MLA to travel throughout his constituency, to meet the costs that he incurs in servicing his constituency - and again I remind my city cousins - that most of my constituents have to phone me via long distance or I have to phone them via long distance which, of course, isn't the case for most of the urban MLAs, whether they reside in Winnipeg or places such as Brandon, Portage, Dauphin, Thompson, so it's not out of order at all for local MLAs to have phone bills that can become excessive.

I appreciate the fact that over the years there have been efforts and changes made that make it possible for constituents to call in on toll free lines, particularly to this building, but with the possible exception of this year where we're running into the longest Session on record, we do try to spend five, six, hopefully seven months a year sometimes, and under more normal circumstances, in the constituency itself. So, Mr. Speaker, I have trouble with the changes because I think they are not fairly applicable in terms of the geography, in terms of the kind of constituencies that compose the 57 members of this House.

I really see no reason for making the change. I have absolutely no objection, of course, to an MLA who wishes to use his current allowance to help pay for an office expense, help pay for a space where it's his judgment that serves his constituents and himself, or herself best. But the kind of umbrella suggestion that it has to be the way these dollars are spent, does not fit any more. — (Interjection) —

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member of Springfield, of course, is correct when he says from his seat that there is no compulsion to spend it that way. But the difference is this that the kind of verifiable receipts that a person would very quickly have if he were paying rental charges of \$100, \$200, \$300 a month on an office as compared to the kind of more general costs that a rural politician runs up in travelling through his constituency.

I put 100 miles on my car every day just coming to the Legislature and I do appreciate the additional allowances for travel back and forth to the Legislature that's contained in this bill and I support that bill. The difference though being, that the additional miles that I travel, the wear and tear on my vehicle, the kind of

miscellaneous expenses that a rural politician runs into in the number of fairs and the number of calls that he makes throughout the year in his constituency office, are not the kind that one necessarily gets receipts for at all times.

So, Mr. Speaker, of course what will happen is that the item that's in here, we will find some way of finding receipts for these expenses. But on a Monday morning, having enjoyed a Sunday away from this place, I do like to approach this kind of legislation with candor, with integrity. I say to honourable members opposite that the figure mentioned here, the \$2,500, is of course a bottom line, and that will very quickly become the allowance that is paid. But it's not, in my judgment, any great improvement over what we have right now.

All in all, what I object to in the bill - and it's referred to here in several instances - it's referred to when you're talking about the mileage allowance. It refers to putting us on a more similar basis with that of the Civil Service. There is, of course, a tendency to equate the job that we're doing here with the Civil Service. I always object to that. We are quite different and ought to be different and ought to continue to be different. The whole system calls for us to indeed be the lay representatives of the system as compared to the professionals, for want of a better word, that are charged with the responsibility of administration. We don't and should never begin to think of ourselves, and in that way make the kind of rules and regulations for ourselves that make sense and are appropriate for the career civil servant in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the other item in this bill that I have some difficulty with is the extended printing costs that will now be covered by government expense. Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you add up what this government is doing in this bill; when you add up what the government is talking about in Bill 48 which calls for the general public, the taxpayers of Manitoba, to begin to pick up half of my election expenses, we're talking about an expansion of services and monies under this bill to offset some of the costs that MLAs have, all in all, it becomes quite a human greed bill for MLAs, Mr. Speaker. I ask honourable members opposite, is this really the time, circumstances, where this kind of legislation should be put forward? We hear from the Minister of Finance that he may well have to ask hospitals, educational facilities and others to restrict themselves to increases of zero to 5 percent. We are only too well aware of the overall fiscal position of the province as we face, upon conclusion of this fiscal year, perhaps the greatest deficit in Manitoba's history.

We cannot be overly encouraged by the economic recovery which admittedly is showing some signs of being there, but allow me to report to my city cousins if they are not already aware of it, what could have well been a good harvest, certainly an average harvest is under the heat that we've experienced in the last few weeks, rapidly deteriorating to a below-average harvest which does not augur well for the finances of this province.

It means that farmers will again put off decisions to purchase equipment; it means that major capital purchases made by those people in our society that often spend first and worry about how to pay later, aren't going to be spending those kinds of monies, so I think we should be more than concerned about the

overall fiscal position that the province is in. While these figures in themselves, in their aggregate number, are not substantial or substantial to the amount that it would have any significant impact on the overall deficit problems of the province, they do, Sir, I suggest, surely suggest an attitude and more importantly, fail to demonstrate to the general public, who we may well be asking in the next fiscal year, to do with less.

If one believes, and we certainly on this side support the government's belated recognition of the fact, that some fiscal responsibility is going to have to be exercised by members opposite. If you believe the Minister of Finance when he stood up just a few days ago and talked about the fact that institutions, government agencies, governments themselves may have to be working within a parameter of zero to 5 percent increases in the coming year, then I have some difficulty in looking at the total package of benefits that is being suggested by the government under Bill 55 and I include Bill 48 - Bill 48 being the more substantial one of course - Bill 48 calling for an expenditure on the part of the public of upwards to \$1 million at least, if you take the expenses of 1981 which ran very close to \$1 million for either major political party and we could surely expect those expenses to be the same, if not more, in June of 1986 when the next provincial election will be called.

Mr. Speaker, the responsibility is that of government to proceed with the legislation as it sees fit. I voiced my objections to the two specific parts of the bill. I don't particularly feel that the change in the members' special allowance makes a great deal of sense.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me be the first one to acknowledge it's better for me; it's better for all of us. Our current expense allowance is taxable to begin with; the one being proposed is not, so there again we are finding a way to get around the contributions that members should and do make to the treasury in the form of taxes. We ask that of our general public, to make that, but we now choose this particular time to find a way that we can sweeten our pie a little bit by changing the method of paying allowances to members. Up to now it was taxable, this particular allowance, and now it will not be taxable.

A MEMBER: But accountable.

MR. H. ENNS: But accountable, Mr. Speaker. In my candor this morning, I indicated precisely how accountable it will be, of course. It will be a minimal expense that all members will very quickly arrive at.

Mr. Speaker, the other concern I have with the honourable members is the additional printing privileges that will fall to us, as members. We have, I think, managed reasonably well with the allowance that the legislation now permits us to send out a franking piece during the lifetime of each Session. But again, Mr. Speaker, if the honourable members opposite want the general taxpayer to pay more for our activities here, we will remind those same taxpayers of that from time to time, as they are burdened with increases, taxes, to try to pay for the costs of running government.

It's all part of making government bigger and more costly. Mr. Speaker, it gets harder and harder then to generate the kind of economic activity that can create the wealth that makes this a better place to live in .

Now, this morning coming in listening to the radio and listening to our Minister of Manpower, Mr. Axworthy, give us his solutions to the problems of jobs in Manitoba really bothered me a little bit because it was so close to what my friends opposite talk about too often and what, of course, is a notable tenet of my friend opposite, the political creed and that is, we share misery rather than worrying about increasing the overall wealth.

Well, Mr. Speaker, you listen to our Federal Manpower Minister. He said we can solve the job problem; we can find the jobs for the million-and-a-half unemployed in Canada, he says we'll all share. Well, Mr. Speaker, capitalism is of course the unequal sharing of blessings and socialism is the equal sharing of miseries. That is as true today as when it was said and I forget who said it - it might have been Harry Enns who said that, Mr. Speaker. I'll be easy on my friends opposite, but we saw no better example of that than we heard from Ottawa this morning.

How is the country addressing the million-and-a-half unemployed? They had an eight-day conference out there in Ottawa on how to resolve the problem and the answer they came up with, is not to bring ourselves back into a competitive position so we can compete with our major importing firms, not that we can make our industries more competitive to create more jobs. No. In fact, we're doing just the opposite and we're doing the opposite with this little piece of legislation and with the others, because we're adding costs to doing business and to living in this country.

Mr. Speaker, if a year from now they have to increase the payroll tax to 3 percent, that means it costs Manitobans 3 percent tax to create a job. It doesn't cost that in Saskatchewan; doesn't cost that in Ontario; it certainly doesn't cost that in Alberta; and you wonder why new plant expansions don't occur in Manitoba. You wonder why new, innovative job opportunities aren't created in Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, we can create them and help to maintain the proper climate.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I say Bill 55 is not to be misconstrued as being a major contributor to that greater dilemma that I see facing modern governments, but it adds to it; Bill 27, Bill 55 add to it; Bill 48 adds to it. In fact, Mr. Speaker, if you added up the legislation that this government has introduced that is primarily designed to line our pockets a bit, to make our job a little easier, a little more comfortable but at whose expense? The taxpayers' expense. I think the taxpayers are being hit hard enough, Mr. Speaker, particularly when the overall economic conditions aren't all that great.

I'd sooner see my colleague, the Minister of Highways and Transportation get an extra \$1 million or \$2 million to build a few more roads than to have the taxpayer pay half my election expenses. I'd sooner have the Minister of Education have that \$1 million or \$2 million that is being added up in these little bills - whether it's 55 that I'm speaking to or 48 that we'll also be speaking to - I'd sooner she have the money so that she could keep taxes at a reasonable level on pensioners' homes, on farmers' land, and do something for education in the province, Mr. Speaker.

Well, I would say the same thing for my friend, the Member for Wolseley, who is unofficially designated Minister of day care, yes, I'd sooner have her take the million dollars rather than make her pay for my election

propaganda. Why should she have to pay for lovely pictures of Brian Mulroney and Harry Enns shaking hands in the next election? I don't think she should do that. I'd sooner have her build another day care centre with that money and I'd sooner make some lasting improvement to the infrastructure of Manitoba than passing these kinds of bills, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, if it is suggested that we are not being recompensed enough up here, then let's simply be honest and give ourselves a salary increase. By the way, I think a reasonably good argument could be made about that. If we think we are deserving of an extra \$2,500, then let's be up front and let's be honest about it, let's give ourselves a salary increase, but don't hide it in little passages here under section XYZ, or something like that, an extra \$2,500 here; an extra \$1,000 there for mileage; an extra \$1,200 for printing expenses, that's the kind of — (Interjection) — well, I hear underhanded. It can't really be described as underhanded because after all it's printed in the bill and now the bill is going to be printed in both languages, French and English, so technically it's there for everybody to see. But really, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how many people of the general public, how many of my constituents actually read these bills that we pass in this House?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to prolong the debate on this bill. Generally speaking, we don't take as strong a position about Bill 55 as we do about Bill 48. With respect to Bill 48, we have made it very clear as to how we feel about Bill 48.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 55 has some improvements in it. I think with the longer Sessions, the recognition that many more trips are being made to this Legislature - that's an understandable and natural improvement - I don't take great issue with the other factors that are in the bill except to say that when added up, it represents additional benefits to members at a time that we are asking most Manitobans to tighten their belts.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R. PENNER: I wonder if I could ask the member a question?

MR. H. ENNS: Sure.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, the Member for Lakeside in the full flight of his always inspiring rhetoric, said that there were three bills, as he gave examples, which would cost the taxpayer money, Bill 48, Bill 55 and Bill 27, would he please tell this House what Bill 27 is?

MR. H. ENNS: As I recall, it is one of those innocuous bills that is being passed in association with Bill 3. Am I not right? Hasn't it got nothing to do with the registered land transfers?

A MEMBER: That's Bill 23.

MR. H. ENNS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I was only out four.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Springfield.

MR. A. ANSTETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'm wondering if the member would answer a few questions that flow from his remarks on this bill. (Agreed)

Mr. Speaker, the member suggested near the beginning of his remarks, that the bill would require many rural members to open up constituency offices and do other things associated with constituency service which many of us, and I agree with him, in rural constituencies might not find a need for.

Would he concede that the actual provisions of the bill do not require a member to open a constituency office or to use that money for that purpose, that that's just one of the purposes and that instead it can be used for telephone bills, for mileage, travel about the constituency and things like that, the kind of thing the member said rural members want to spend their constituency allowance on?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I concede that that indeed is the case. I thought I had made that clear. I'm led to believe that the motivation for the change was primarily there to accommodate those who feel that constituency offices are of importance and help to them and, of course, that more often is the case in the city or urban ridings, and the suggestions or remarks are made on that presumption.

MR. A. ANSTETT: Mr. Speaker, the member referred also to telephone costs and the fact that they are eligible under this. He talked about not having receipts for telephone calls. I'm wondering if the member is aware that members who now use a Zenith service can get the costs of those Zenith calls on their home telephone paid for by the Legislative Assembly now, on the basis that these are calls that would normally be billed to the member's office number.

MR. H. ENNS: No, I'm not aware of that.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The opposition has foregone question period for today. Perhaps the government can do likewise.

The Member for Springfield.

MR. A. ANSTETT: I have one other question, Mr. Speaker. I believe the member is still willing to answer questions that flow from his speech.

Mr. Speaker, the member referred to comparisons and he called them, not necessarily the best kind of comparisons, equating members with civil servants. I think he was referring to the specific provision which compared the mileage allowance for members to be equivalent with that provided to civil servants.

My question is, Mr. Speaker, is the Honourable Member for Lakeside aware that the setting of MLAs' mileage allowances, to match the rate paid to civil servants, was made several years ago because the MLAs' allowance was quite a few cents behind that fixed for civil servants because it was locked in statute at 15 cents a mile? Is the member aware that it was his government, in which he was a Minister, that made that change equating it to civil servants in 1979?

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, it would not surprise me that, although my government that I was part of, did all big things right, that we might well have overlooked a small detail and did something wrong.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

The Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, my red light is not on. I'm in gear now.

Mr. Speaker, I don't plan to say too much on Bill 55 because I was one - I will watch the lights, Mr. Speaker, now that I'm up - because actually I made peace with him on Sunday morning so I think we're all right now.

Mr. Speaker, I was one of a committee that was in some period of negotiation for additional services for members and we had very nearly an agreement on a number of items. There were one or two items that are contained in the bill that we did not have agreement on and, namely, the \$2,500 accountable allowance to replace the flat \$1,500 amount that is paid to each member now.

That has always caused me a bit of concern, Mr. Speaker, and providing receipts for all of the expenses because I know the municipal people found a while back, when their councillors had to provide receipts for all of their expenses, that there were all kinds of games being played and things of that nature and it was just as easy to give them a flat allowance and avoid all the accountability of it. I know some of them would use probably more than their allowance and some may not even use it. There's always a danger there.

The amount is available, I suppose, to assist with constituency offices. These would not help the rural constituencies because most of us have three or four towns and you would have a problem in which town was going to receive the constituency office and this would create some problems. It is also difficult to move your location around from village to village and this would create more problems than what actually it's worth.

I realize the additional mileage, the additional trips allowed to the Legislature is going to be beneficial to my area and to most of the rural members, Mr. Speaker, because we do make a considerable number of trips weekly, and sometimes two or three times a week, when we have to go back to official functions in our constituency; so this does create additional trips to the city and we welcome something of that nature that will provide additional revenue to assist with those costs.

I realize that each MLA, Mr. Deputy Speaker, approaches the work in his constituency from a different angle and I'm sure that some do a great deal more work than others. One of the strong points that we were negotiating and we have had some relief in that regard, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was the research assistance available to opposition and to government. It was readily acknowledged by members opposite that they had far more facilities available to them being government, than the opposition did, and this has been helpful with the move that was made to provide some research assistance to the opposition with some additional secretarial help.

Although travelling around on different conferences, on the Commonwealth Parliamentary or the Public Accounts Chairmen's Conferences that I've attended and talking to MLAs from other jurisdictions, it appears that we are in many cases, poor country cousins, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on what is provided to members in

other parts of Canada. I realize that maybe some additional funds are necessary to bring us up on a par with those.

But the main point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of what is going to be allowable hasn't been spelled out, what is going to be considered an allowable expense under the \$2,500 accountable allowance. I find that my mileage costs are only part of my expense. The vehicle that I must use to gather up the miles necessary to claim mileage is probably a far bigger expense than the amount of expense of putting the miles on. Is car rental going to be considered an accountable expense? If one had to rent a vehicle to travel back and forth to the Legislature or to travel throughout his constituency, would that be accountable? In the event of a breakdown of one's vehicle, if you had to rent a U-drive for a month or something like that, would that be considered there?

On many occasions, rural members are obliged in some degree to maybe take three or four rural councillors or people of this nature that come in on boards or meetings with Ministers, and then want to meet with their member. It seems appropriate the odd time to entertain them while they're in the city. Is this type of an expense going to be allowed?

We haven't had the actual regulations given to us that would indicate to us what type of expense was going to be allowed as an accountable expense. It has been touched on before with Bill 48, The Elections Finances Act. There is not the same relationship here, but The Elections Finances Act of course, is strongly opposed by members on this side of the House. It is an expense that we feel is against the taxpayer, that is not justified in any way whatsoever.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, there are many points in this bill that we negotiated at some length and we're virtually in agreement with, although we didn't have full caucus support on it. But a great number of the items contained in the bill or the research assistance that has been provided to members of the opposition is acceptable and has been very worthwhile to us, although I don't suppose you would ever reach the point where everyone was satisfied with the amount of research assistance and the amount of secretarial help that was provided.

Those are the comments I wanted to make, Mr. Speaker. My main contention was that we were reasonably happy to leave the \$1,500 unaccountable allowance intact instead of moving to the \$2,500 allowance that's now accountable. But possibly when the Minister closes debate on it, maybe he can give us a little more information on what is going to be an allowable expense. It may be a little more acceptable to us.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, as I said, we can appreciate and, speaking personally, we can accept a great number of the improvements to members' services that have been put in the bill. There are one or two sections that we don't accept fully.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for River Heights.

MR. W. STEEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I couldn't let this opportunity pass and disappoint my friend, the Member for Springfield, without commenting on this

particular bill. As I have said to the Member for Springfield in personal conversations, the bill was not necessary, that the changes that were desired by most members on both sides of the House could have been brought in without a bill.

True enough, changes to the Speaker's indemnity requires the bill and that's my understanding, but a number of the changes that are in this bill could have been orchestrated without legislation and could have been passed, either by an O/C and put into operation, such as some of the changes that were made for the benefit of members, such as additional research help and additional secretarial help in the various caucus rooms.

The Member for Springfield and my colleague, the Member for Minnedosa, made reference to the fact that a year ago a number of discussions between members of both the government and the opposition took place regarding members' services. I know that the Member for Springfield will recall that I was totally opposed to any storefront-type operations to be made available to members. I am not saying, Mr. Speaker, that that is within this bill, but that subject was discussed when we had some of our informal discussions. I, as an urban member, would feel that a storefront-type operation would be a great waste of taxpayer dollars and would not be used or implemented to any degree.

When you start from a Cadillac position like a storefront operation for members - our federal members do have such offices in their constituencies - but, as you know, Mr. Speaker, our federal members' ridings often are about six times larger than a provincial riding. I am sure that the Attorney-General, if he were to have an office in his constituency on Osborne Street or in the River and Osborne area, maybe at first a few people would make use of such an office but after a while the office would find it very difficult to justify its existence.

So I think that when we're offering services to members, we have to keep in mind at all times the taxpayer. The government constantly is talking about that we are in difficult times; that revenues are not there; that sales tax revenues are down and other revenues are down. The Member for Lakeside made reference to what looked like, two or three weeks ago, a bumper crop is now perhaps not going to be anything more than just an average crop and, in some cases, perhaps somewhat less than average because of the heat spell that we've gone through. So when members of the Legislature start looking at legislation which will assist them and assist them on a personal basis, they have to be very careful.

It reminds me of looking at a recent American publication where persons in the United States were asked, what did the Watergate scandal do in their opinion. The answer across the board was that the Watergate scandal made Americans more aware of activities of politicians and the elected persons. They were watching their politicians much more closely now than they did a decade ago, since the Watergate scandal.

I say to the members opposite that Bill 55 wasn't necessary for most of the improvements that members from both sides would like to see take place. The improvements that members on our side wanted are pretty well in place and that is, additional research staff and personnel and secretarial staff to handle the office

workload. The mailing and the workload of a member today is far different than it was 20 years ago. People communicate with their elected officials far more today than they did 20 years ago.

In the rural areas, the people have a tendency to communicate with their rural MLA, I believe, more so than they do in the City of Winnipeg with the urban member. The example has been given to me in the past that so often a person doesn't want to call the local member of the rural council, because he often is a neighbour or a person that's two or three miles away, they would prefer to talk to the member of the Legislature who might be 20 or 30 or 40 miles away, but someone that they know equally as well and it won't be held on a neighbourly basis. So this is the reason, I'm led to believe, that in rural Manitoba, the MLAs get a lot of issues brought to their attention that in the City of Winnipeg are handled by councillors.

I remember the Member for Emerson when he was making a few remarks on this bill, talking about how rural councillors in the rural parts of Manitoba would follow the grader down the road, because he was given an allowance each month that he could justify his expenses if he put in for so many miles. Because he didn't have enough to do as a councillor in looking after his constituents to use up his mileage, in order to get maximum allowance he had to follow the grader up and down the road and, therefore, justify his mileage.

If we are, through this bill, going to come in with a system where members will have to justify and submit bills for their expenses, I would hope that members of the Legislature wouldn't stoop to the level that was cited by the Member for Emerson where the councillors followed graders up and down to justify their mileage because to me that is plain ridiculous. As I have set from the outset, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that the bill was necessary and the improvements that are needed by members of the Legislature, it doesn't take legislation to implement them, and that this bill perhaps is put in place so that the Speaker's indemnity can be rearranged and brought up to a level very close to a Cabinet Minister or almost equal to a Cabinet Minister, rather than having the Speaker put in a daily allowance when the Session isn't sitting for the time that he comes in and spends in his office. This bill will grant him a yearly stipend that will change that.

I certainly do think that our rural members deserve more than the 26 trips between their constituency and the Legislative Building. In fact, with this record sitting of the Legislature, I think that we will perhaps sit for more than 26 weeks this year and if you work on the basis of one trip between home and the Legislative Buildings per rural member, he's going to use them up just coming in for the Session in itself and not for business that takes place between Sessions. An improvement above the 26 trips is certainly well worthwhile for our rural members.

Another area that I've often said to the Member for Springfield that I've thought that an improvement the rural members should have is that their living allowance should not be taxable, that the daily rate, if it were tax-free, would be more realistic than the current system of being paid a daily stipend to keep quarters in the City of Winnipeg and then pay tax on it. That would be an improvement that, I think, our rural members should have although I am led to believe by the Member

for Springfield that that is out of our jurisdiction, that that's a federal matter through The Income Tax Act.

I say, Mr. Speaker, from the outset, that Bill 55 wasn't necessary. The changes that were desired by members of both sides, in most cases, could have been implemented through an Order-in-Council in Cabinet and we didn't need this bill. The reason for the bill, in my opinion, is simply to clear up the matter with the Speaker and his indemnity, so that the Speaker is given what I understand the First Minister perhaps promised him - status in the area of a Cabinet Minister.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say that the bill isn't necessary and we could have implemented the improvements that were needed by members without the bill and there's no need for the bill. I would suggest that the government withdraw the bill and just go ahead and implement the improvements, such as trips between constituencies and the buildings for rural members without the bill. So, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that the bill is necessary.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe most of the members on our side of the House have now spoken on this bill, if not all. The Member for Springfield has been patiently waiting for the three members on this side of the House that were in negotiation with him last year regarding the benefits to honourable members in this Legislature, Sir.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we did have negotiation last year; there were presentations put forward by both sides. I recall the first one that we ever had was that we required some more research and some more secretarial staff. That was basically what we asked for and there was presentation put forth on both sides after discussion that honourable members in the rural area certainly should be compensated for more travelling expense because certainly the rural members do suffer from time to time with the problems of travelling expense. I'm a city member and I fully realize the country members have that problem, Mr. Speaker. That was put forward, there were some suggestions - I believe at one time there was a suggestion of \$10,000 a constituency and the discussions that were ranged around that particular subject were not really ever agreed to by the committee - but we took the suggestions back to our caucuses to present to them to see what the caucuses would present.

For the Member for Springfield to try and say that the members of the committee were in agreement with everything, we were not there to agree on anything; we were there to discuss and take suggestions back to our caucus for our caucus to agree on. That is the way the usual parliamentary system works and that is the way that committees work, that honourable members cannot basically commit their caucus. Well, there were occasions when there was close to commitment, Sir, I must say that. We took them back to our caucus but the caucus would not agree on it. Mr. Speaker, then that led to further negotiation.

As far as changing the funding to the members from \$1,500 to a different amount, submitting expenses, I don't recall it ever being agreed upon in our caucus. But what I do recall being agreed about in our caucus

is this was not the time for the members of the Legislature to take more money out of the pockets of Manitobans. That was the agreement of our caucus and it came back to this House in ways that we have said, well, there would be certain things that we could agree to as far as maybe legitimate expenses are concerned, but as far as I recall, Sir, our caucus were not about to pick the peoples' pockets of Manitoba at this present time.

Mr. Speaker, there was also the discussion about further funding towards the circulation of literature, franking pieces and what-have-you. I can say that there was very firm discussion on that but when it came back to the caucus again, honourable members on our side agreed within our caucus that we do have a franking piece at the present time. The mailing is paid for by the government or by the people of Manitoba. We have the privilege of sending out letters, almost as many as we want, while the Session is on and, Sir, we believe that the printing of literature that would be sent to the people should be paid for by the members themselves. The printing of literature, Mr. Speaker, is basically the position of that MLA and can be very close to a fine line of being political. We've gone far enough as far as paying for the mailing is concerned, but why should the people pay for the mailing of the type of literature that was sent out by the NDP during the election? "Guidelines to the '80s," I believe.

Why should the people pay for that type of political propaganda which was basically not true, was impossible to do, was impossible to say that nobody would be out of work; it's impossible to say that nobody will go bankrupt; it's impossible to say that people on farms, etc., will not have any problems; it's impossible to say that nobody will lose their jobs, but the NDP party printed it, put in a piece of literature, has the Premier sign it and sent it to the people.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, do you really believe the public should pay for that kind of printing?

A MEMBER: Never, never.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, we have said we are paying for one brochure, a franking piece, the mailing piece, you're paying the mailing only and our caucus at the present time, after seeing that piece of literature and the type of literature that was sent out by the NDP party, fully believed we should go no further because the people really shouldn't be required to pay for that kind of literature.

Mr. Speaker, our side has said, and I go back, our position last year was and still is, this is no time for MLAs to be giving themselves more benefits financially when the people of Manitoba have the largest deficit they've ever had and the unemployment that we have at the present time.

Sir, the members have looked at the expenses of the Speaker and they said, this is open-ended, they said. The members opposite said, this is open-ended. It's at \$50 a day but not up to any certain amount and because the honourable members opposite felt that it was a little excessive, the amount the Speaker had applied for last year, they felt it was reasonable to put a limit on that particular amount - it says up to x number of dollars - so, Mr. Speaker, I think that was a very very good part of this piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, really and truly we have at the present time, \$1,500 - I know that amount is taxable - but it's \$1,500 or the amount that is a benefit to the member that I feel is actually found money for all members; but all of a sudden when the NDP get into power they sit down and they start to figure out how much more the government or the people should pay these members. It isn't the case of the regular increase of indemnity. That's put in, that's agreed to and we have it there and there was negotiation on that this year, in discussion by the government I guess, to decide how they would do it; that's been accepted by this House.

Is there going to be some day a specified amount that we increase the \$2,500 by? Is it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, going to get up to the \$10,000 a year that was first recommended by the NDP party? Is it going to get up to that amount? Is this just the beginning or the thin edge of the wedge to have the constituency offices that the members opposite so dearly want?

Mr. Speaker, I said that I was on the negotiating team and our side never did agree to that, and certainly when that was taken to our caucus as a recommendation that was put before the committee, our caucus said, no. They said no, because the people of Manitoba shouldn't have their pockets picked any more at the present time - and certainly the people of Manitoba are having their pockets picked by this government - because this government is the one that has brought this particular piece of legislation in and this government is the one that has brought in the piece of legislation that says, Joe Blow, the man on the street, will now pay for my election expenses, 50 percent of my election expenses.

Now mind you, there is one person in the City of Winnipeg that will be able to afford it now and that is the new advisor to the Minister of Economic Development. Now that is the highest paid person, except for the psychiatrist within this government, and at \$85,000 a year probably he should contribute something because he can afford it.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Springfield is the one that has made all the presentations or has been the leader of what he felt the Legislature should have - they are self-serving provisions - and that's basically what the Member for Springfield has put forward. Our side of the House is going to continue to oppose this legislation and mainly because last year we said that the people of Manitoba are suffering enough with unemployment, are suffering enough with high deficits and we said, this is not the time.

Mr. Speaker, we come back in 1983 and what have they done? When we have a higher deficit than we had in 1982, unemployment hasn't improved at all, they bring in the bill after they pulled it last year. Now if they pulled the bill last year, they must have done it because they felt that the province couldn't afford it and there was no reason or no justification to give increases to MLAs because the province couldn't afford it. Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the province is in a worse position and they bring the bill back into the Legislature. What kind of logic is that, Mr. Deputy Speaker? What kind of logic is that? But that's the type of logic we get from the NDP party when it comes to benefits to MLAs.

I would like anyone of the MLAs in this room that's really desperately suffering financially to stand up and

be counted, and say that they are. I'd like any of the Ministers - and some of them have very very elaborate situations and what have you and I'm not criticizing them; I'm very proud of what I have and I wish I had more - but my colleagues and I, and I don't think anybody on that side is really going to miss their next meal.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation is not acceptable for one basic reason, that is that this province has a financial problem. There are thousands of people within the province who have financial problems. The MLAs generally don't have any financial problems. So therefore, Mr. Speaker, this is the wrong, wrong way to present this type of legislation. It's wrong to present it at this time anyway. Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, it's really wrong generally.

Mr. Speaker, I receive the \$1,500 expenses, and I can spend it any way I please. This legislation leaves it fairly well open as to how I would spend it, but I would turn in receipts. As my colleague for Woodlands said, this business of turning in receipts almost makes us like civil servants. You know, Mr. Speaker, I know that the Ministers and civil servants carry credit cards in their pockets to buy gasoline for their cars wherever they want. I don't think they have to turn in their receipts. A Minister is regarded as being a Minister 24 hours a day, and I agree with that — (Interjection) — Mind you, Mr. Speaker, I was going to say that.

The Ministers, at 8 o'clock at night, if they are driving along would probably fill their cars with the government credit card because they are working 24 hours a day. Yet when there's a demonstration against another country, the United States, where a flag was burned, they said they weren't Ministers. They were on their own time. Isn't that something, Mr. Speaker? Maybe they shouldn't be allowed to use their gasoline credit cards after 5 o'clock at night. Mr. Speaker, maybe there should be accounting of how much the government garage puts in their vehicles. Mr. Speaker, this government has some very strange ideas about MLAs.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Springfield comes up with the weak, silly argument about, didn't we make the mileage the same as the civil servants' mileage. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the civil servants' mileage cost was figured on the basis of operation of an automobile. That's all it was, and that's what it is, the operation of an automobile. They say it costs you so many cents a mile to run an automobile. So if we say that to the honourable members opposite, if the honourable members opposite agree that it costs so much to run an automobile, that's how they set the amount of expenses for personal cars and for Ministers driving back and forth to their constituencies. I think that's the logical way to set it, because there has probably been a lot of research done on that basis.

So, Mr. Speaker, just to finish up this debate - and I believe I am the last speaking on our side of the House - the Attorney-General will probably close debate and disregard everything we've said about the fact that the province has the largest deficit ever. There are thousands of people unemployed. We should not be going into the people of Manitoba's pockets as MLAs any further at the present time. We are not suffering personally ourselves, because I haven't heard anybody say they were.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think that the government should pay for propaganda literature, the printing of it. We

have one franking piece now where the mailing is paid for by the government, and we don't need to take it any further at the present time. If the honourable members want to send some more literature to their constituencies, they can use their \$1,500 expenses to do that if they so desire. It's entirely up to them. They don't have to put any receipts in or anything for it.

So, Mr. Speaker, we oppose this legislation. I heard the Minister of Urban Affairs say earlier that our speeches all sound the same. We get on The Elections Act about the money being spent. We get onto this act about the money being spent. We've talked about the deficits. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say to the honourable members opposite they will continue to be the same every time we get the chance to say so. We will bring it forward to the taxpayers, to the people of Manitoba, that this government wants the people to pay more expenses of the MLAs at a time when this province is in desperate financial trouble.

Thank you, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. A. ADAM: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would move, seconded . . .

A MEMBER: Tell them how destitute you are, Pete.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. A. ADAM: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Natural Resources, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Acting Government House Leader.

HON. A. MACKLING: Bill No. 107, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

BILL 107 - THE CHILD WELFARE ACT (2)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Community Services, Bill No. 107, standing in the name of the Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak to Bill 107, and - excuse me, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, we were operating under a schedule that was given to us on Saturday, indicating that the following bills were going to be called: 55, 3, and 48, plus the bill standing in the name of the Member for St. Norbert. Now if the Acting House Leader is breaking that undertaking or that statement of the House, let him stand in his place and say so.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Acting Government House Leader to the same point of order.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I discussed with the Opposition Acting House Leader at the time, inclination as to bills, and I indicated to him that we were prepared to deal with some other bills and look at dealing with Bill 3 later on, either this afternoon or this evening. There was no opposition to that and we confirmed together the priority of the bills that they were ready to deal with and we agreed that the bill that was under discussion was Bill 55, that we go to Bill 107 and then Bill 77. Then if others members of the opposition were in the House and were ready to go on other bills, he'd confirm other bills that we would deal with.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. S. LYON: On the point of order, if that has been discussed as I'm now told it has with the Whip of our party, then I withdraw any objection to it. But changes should be made public in the House so that we know that the government isn't playing its usual tricks.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to say some things about Bill 107, An Act to amend the Child Welfare Act (2), because it is a very important piece of proposed legislation that has serious repercussions and implications for the child welfare system in this province. I have described it in discussion outside the House which followed the Minister's introduction of it in the House for second reading and which followed a Ministerial press conference on the subject, Sir, as a mechanism for a complete takeover of the Children's Aid Societies in Manitoba by the Government of Manitoba, and I reiterate that description of it.

It is such a mechanism that paves the way for that government or any government that subscribe to this type of legislation to take over in toto the operation of the child welfare system in this province through the Children's Aid Societies of Manitoba. I don't think that that is sound government; I don't think that that comes anywhere near being democracy; I don't think that that includes one iota of recognition of the principle of public accountability, and worse than all of those things, Mr. Speaker, I don't think it's good for the child welfare system or for children at risk.

So, Sir, I've been waiting for some time to be able to enter this debate and place my comments officially on the record to members of the government so that they suffer from no misunderstanding as to where my colleagues and I stand on this proposed bill.

I have to say, Sir, that in the light of the recent and particularly alarming child abuse case in Manitoba, there is probably some difference of opinion in the minds of members in this Chamber today regardless of which side of the House on which they sit, as to the advisability and the efficacy of government moving in to take command and control of Children's Aid Societies. I

refer, Sir, of course, to a tragic and particularly shocking child abuse in Manitoba, the facts of which have recently come to light and have received considerable media attention in the last few days, a case which occurred within the jurisdiction of the Children's Aid Society of eastern Manitoba and which must have repelled all who have been made familiar with it as it certainly repelled me, Sir.

There is a clear case there in my view, requiring investigation of a possible dereliction of duty and responsibility; a possible failure to meet responsibility on the part of certain officials and social workers associated with that particular child welfare agency, that particular Children's Aid Society. As a consequence, there might be a tendency on the part of some members today, Mr. Speaker, in the light of the glaring publicity given that particularly shocking case, to say that honourable members on the government side of the House are proceeding in a sensible and necessary way by bringing in legislation of the kind before us.

There might be a tendency for members on all sides of this Chamber to say the whole Children's Aid Society system needs to be straightened out; the whole Children's Aid Society system needs to be taken by the scruff of the neck and given a good shaking and given a good review, Sir, and that if the Minister, the Honourable Member for Brandon East wishes to proceed in the way that he has proposed with legislation that would enable the government to fire the Boards of all Children's Aid Societies in this province and take over command and control of those societies, then it's perhaps not a bad thing. Perhaps we'd get more efficient, more responsible address to the issues that come before Children's Aid Societies, particularly in the child abuse field, and perhaps shocking and tragic cases such as the one to which I refer would not happen in the future.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that there is a great temptation for all of us to jump to that conclusion because of the shock and trauma surrounding that particular case, but I think, Sir, it would be a mistake to do that. I think that we would be confusing the issue if we said that because there had been that kind of fundamental violation of children's rights permitted to happen in that particular case and that there appeared to have been - and I emphasize the word "appeared" - perhaps some dereliction of duty or failure to meet responsibility on the part of the agency concerned, that we should therefore make the draconian and quantum leap to government control such as is proposed here, because essentially what is at the root of this legislation, Sir, is government takeover of the boards of Children's Aid Societies.

In the case to which I refer and which must affect our thinking in a debate on this subject today, it is not the Board of the Children's Aid Society of eastern Manitoba that has brought itself into question as a consequence of that case, it is the administration; it is the operation; it is the service delivery among the professionals in that agency whose performance comes under the glaring spotlight now of public recrimination and public concern and whose performance has brought itself into a position requiring review. So let us not confuse the issues as between the evil represented in that tragic case of child abuse within the administrative parameters of CAS Eastern, and the kind of

authoritarian takeover of all Children's Aid Societies' Boards that is proposed by the Minister in this bill.

I think, Sir, that that particular case in eastern Manitoba has impelled citizens throughout this province to demand a review of the competence of the Children's Aid Society of Eastern Manitoba. If that review re-establishes that confidence, presents facts and presents evidence that indicates that CAS Eastern, at its administrative and service delivery level, did all that it could do, then I'm sure that although repelled by the repugnant case itself, the citizens of Manitoba will be satisfied and will simply take the course that all efforts should be made to ensure that there is reinforcement for professionals working in that field in the future. But if such an investigation should reveal that there was a less than conscientious approach to that problem, that there was a less than conscientious and professional response to symptoms and to evidence of a very distinct and tragic evil taking place, then, Sir, I think a thorough housecleaning of that particular agency must be considered because it is a tragic thing that children, like those three children, should have been subjected to those terrors and those violations to which they were subjected when, according to the evidence, Sir, two of them, at least, had offered strong suggestions, strong indications to that agency, that they were being abused in their home.

I note that some of the testimony related to the court case indicates that the agency involved takes the position, that on the basis of the evidence which that agency thought was rather flimsy and rather tenuous, they did not want to take the case to the police. They regarded it as a protection case, rather than a police case. Mr. Speaker, in my opinion - and I'm not a professional social worker, I'm a layman, Sir - in my opinion, and the opinion of all laymen that I've spoken to on the subject, that was a glaring and tragic professional error.

There is a procedure that all professionals in the field should know about, if laymen know about it - and laymen do know about it - that permits those cases to go to the proper investigative and reviewing authorities and agencies through the Child Protection Unit at the Health Sciences Centre, through the Child Abuse Clinic and the Child Abuse Team that operates there.

You don't have to go to the police. If you suspect that some child of your knowledge or acquaintance, or even in your field of vision, is being abused and you are not certain that it is a matter of police intervention, or whether one just requiring protection, you do not have to go to the police with it, Sir. In this case, obviously, on the basis of the ugly facts, the police should have been called in; but even leaving that aside, you don't have to go to the police with it, you simply get in touch with the Child Protection Unit and the Child Abuse Team at Children's Hospital in Winnipeg and they send out skilled investigators. They send out people who know how to talk to children in a sensitive way in such a sensitive area as this, and know how to talk to parents and step-parents and others associated with these children, and know how to identify clear cases of child abuse.

Why a professional child welfare agency, a professional administration and service delivery team in a Children's Aid Society in Eastern Manitoba, or

anywhere, would not know that really baffles me, Mr. Speaker. I suggest to you that most Manitobans who are laymen in the field of social work and child abuse know that, would know enough to call in those experienced people to investigate that case; they wouldn't have to go to the police. Professionals should surely know that. The excuses offered - it may not be accurate, I think this whole situation has to be thoroughly investigated, but I have read the reports of the court proceedings - the excuse is offered that perhaps the case worker involved did not know what indecent assault constituted.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I think most of us inside and outside this Chamber, and we're not professional social workers, most of us would be fully competent to define indecent assault, and how much more competence should professional social workers and professional administrators be. I don't think the administration, in that particular case, has addressed itself as sensitively to this issue as perhaps the people of Manitoba deserve, and certainly as the children of Manitoba deserve.

So I say, Sir, that there needs to be a thorough going review of the situation as it unfolded in court, and as it has been reported in the public media, and if there is indication that there was a failure to meet professional responsibility, to live up properly to the duties and the responsibilities that must be met by our agencies in this field, then a thorough going review and house cleaning of that particular agency, in that particular area, would appear to be called for.

That does not say, Sir, that the Minister of Community Services should proceed with legislation that, in my view, was developed entirely to enable him to win an ongoing battle with the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, and move in dictatorial fashion to take command of, and responsibility for, and control of the boards and board members of every Children's Aid Society in this province.

Sir, I think it's clear that the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, as distinct from the Children's Aid Society of Eastern Manitoba, has had its difficulties with this current Minister, and no one on this side has argued that the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg is perfect. In fact, a year-and-a-half ago in this House I called for a review of CAS Winnipeg, to define more clearly and determine more accurately, where it fits into the child welfare system in Manitoba; just what the extent should be of its parameters of professional responsibility and professional autonomy, and just how did it dovetail with and relate to all the other agencies working in the child welfare field. Was it, in fact, building an empire unto itself, an unassailable empire? Was it living and operating aloof from the normal and conventional demands, responsibilities and requirements of other agencies operating in the child welfare system and serving the child welfare system, such as the police department?

I called for that, Sir, a year-and-a-half ago in this House. I have never attempted to argue that there are not any problems in CAS Winnipeg but it's my view, Sir, that the Minister responsible, the Minister of Community Services, Mr. Speaker, has gone way beyond responsible and intelligent criticism of CAS Winnipeg, and responsible and intelligent investigation of CAS Winnipeg to personal warfare with that agency. He has gone to the point of surrendering to the

pressures and power plays of other interest groups, and making CAS Winnipeg the scapegoat and a fall guy for all the evils and all the problems in the child welfare system in our province. He has made CAS Winnipeg the target for the brunt of his experimentation and his criticism and his acquiescence with those other pressure groups. In the light of that experience, Mr. Speaker, I have come to the defence of CAS Winnipeg, as I believe it needs and deserves defence against that kind of unfair and partisan attack and assault.

So I have said, in reference to this proposed initiative by the government, Mr. Speaker, that it is clearly designed as a weapon to help him win that fight with CAS Winnipeg, and I don't retract from that position one iota. I believe that was the rationale and the motivation for this bill, and that's not good enough for legislation; that's not good enough for the people of Manitoba, or the children of Manitoba, or the child welfare system, and it is not good enough, in terms of Ministerial responsibility, to exploit one's office to pursue a personal vendetta and win a personal battle with another agency, organization, person or component of society. That's hardly responsible Ministerial stewardship, and I believe that is what has happened in this case.

There are many many things wrong with Bill 107. It will discourage volunteerism, in fact it may eliminate volunteerism in the Children's Aid Society spectrum in this province. Why would anybody want to serve as a board member of a Children's Aid Society if he or she is living continually, 24 hours a day, under the threat of public criticism and dismissal by the Minister? That's what this legislation provides. It provides that the Minister can move in and fire the boards of every Children's Aid Society in the province if, as, and when he or she likes to, and replace them with his own appointees. Make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker, those appointees will bring hard-core politics to the child welfare system.

I am not naive enough to think that there is no politics in the system at the present time, there is politics in everything. We all know that; we all know that the Children's Aid Societies are virtually, in their entirety, funded by the taxpayer. That means funded through the Provincial Government; that means funded with the blessing of the Minister of Community Services and, therefore, there has to be some politics involved.

I don't overlook that fact for a moment, but democracy is not perfect, we all know that. This is the way that public welfare operations, operations and services directed to the welfare of the public, directed to the welfare of society, function in democracy. There is unavoidably a tinge of politics attached, but to go beyond that and bring direct politics into the system is undemocratic, unacceptable and unworthy of any government professing to be a government of the people.

A government of the people purportedly is interested in public accountability and people participation, and to get into a situation where you've brought hard-core partisan politics into a system of this kind is a disservice to the system, to its clients, and to the people of Manitoba, generally. It represents authoritarian government, not democratic government, Mr. Speaker.

There is no question in my mind that, given a difficult situation between a Minister and a Children's Aid

Society, under the legislation proposed here by the current Minister, you would find a strong temptation to clean house where that board of that particular Children's Aid Society is concerned, and to move in your own appointees, the Minister's own appointees as, in effect, trustees of that agency. That temptation would always be there, and some Ministers would utilize it, some Ministers would act on it, some governments would act on it.

It wouldn't matter to me what the stripe of that government or that Minister was, the action itself would be destructive of the system and of the agency and of the best interests of the child. No volunteer is going to offer his or her time and dedication under that kind of a threat, where a Minister can do that.

So that I say, Sir, the proposal contained in Bill 107 could sound the death knell for volunteerism in the child welfare system. Volunteerism is the backbone of those services offered by all of us, through our governments in a democratic society, for the welfare of our societies. We cannot, must not, and do not, expect governments to do all those things, Mr. Speaker, because governments are only the agents of taxpayers and taxpayers' money. Government action or activity is only the taxpayers' money in action.

We all know, or certainly one would hope that we all know, the taxpayer can't afford professional bureaucratic government bureaucracies to provide all these services. The volunteer in our community, giving of himself or herself freely because of interest in that field, is the backbone of these services and if the volunteer's role in the child welfare system is threatened, then not only is the child welfare system threatened, but one of the best institutions in society, one of the best features in the makeup of humankind is threatened, Mr. Speaker. So I see this as a very serious and a very undesirable piece of legislation.

Further to that, Mr. Speaker, the legislation paves the way for a Minister in this case, obviously the Honourable Member for Brandon East and his senior department officials, to introduce any philosophy they want into the child welfare system, regardless of other points of view. I am not talking about political philosophy necessarily, although there is no doubt that political philosophies would creep into it, I'm talking about philosophies in the child welfare field and in the social services system, I am talking about professional philosophies.

There are in that field, in that discipline, as there are in any discipline, obviously, Sir, different philosophies, different approaches to subjects, different views as to how to operate under specific sets of circumstances or specific dynamics. The confrontation of those points of view, in a reasoned way. The reasoned and reasonable and properly contained conflict of those ideas and those points of view are what produce a sane, consensus approach. That's the basic engine of public thinking and public thought in the field of public service. It's that arena of exchange of ideas and philosophies and views that produces, hopefully, the best course of action. It distills the best out of the mix and, hopefully - and I believe in most cases - results in a consensus direction that provides the best answer to the problem.

Certainly in any responsibly run and reasonably run democratic jurisdiction, that is generally the case and

this has always been the case in the child welfare field. But once you take that opportunity away and once you set up an atmosphere in which the philosophical approach can be arbitrary then, Sir, you've lost that very constructive and very necessary dynamic of counteropinion, of contradiction, of argument and you've lost the opportunity to produce a consensus and you've lost the opportunity to leaven and control extremism.

This legislation would do that, Sir. It would deprive us of those positive dynamics; it would deprive us of that constructive nature that exists in the system right now and turn it over to those who wished, for one reason or another, to push one particular philosophy and to trample dissent and contradiction and argument wherever it reared its head.

A further thing that I find totally unacceptable about this legislation, Mr. Speaker, is that it provides the opportunity for the Minister, any Minister in this position, to break up the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg tomorrow or any CAS anywhere and replace it with units and delivery components and agents or agencies of his or her choosing. In this case, we're speaking specifically of a specific Minister with a specific grievance and a specific ambition where a specific Children's Aid Society is concerned. We are speaking, Sir, of the current Minister of Community Services and his dislike of the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg and his design to abolish CAS Winnipeg. So this legislation becomes that weapon permitting him to do that, permitting him to abolish CAS and replace it with a half-dozen smaller separate agencies, something he's alluded to several times.

As my colleague, the Honourable Member for Lakeside, suggests, it's a "torpedo" bill, Mr. Speaker. It would torpedo and sink CAS Winnipeg and allow the Minister to do something he's alluded to many times, suggested obliquely and not so obliquely in debate in this Chamber many times, replace it with half a dozen smaller and separate agencies, notwithstanding the professional arguments that say he shouldn't do so, Mr. Speaker. Now it may be that replacement of CAS Winnipeg with a half-dozen smaller separate agencies is a good thing. It might be, Mr. Speaker, but it hasn't been proven; it hasn't been demonstrated and that's what's wrong with this legislation. It goes back to what I said a moment ago about eliminating the opportunity for fair and reasoned argument, about eliminating the opportunity for fair and reasoned counteropinion and about establishing a strait-jacket environment in which the Government of the Day can push its own philosophy or the philosophy of its own officials in the child welfare field against all other ideas and suggestions and counteropinions.

This government, this Minister, have not demonstrated that replacement of CAS Winnipeg with a half-dozen smaller, separate agencies would be a good thing for the child welfare system and more important than that, Sir, they have not demonstrated that it would be a good thing for the children at risk. Let us not lose sight of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the key person, the key ingredient involved in this whole debate is the child at risk, and everything that is being considered in terms of reform, or amendment, or reinforcement in this field - and I think child welfare legislation should undergo continual review and re-

evaluation - everything must be directed and devoted to serving that terribly important ingredient, the child himself or herself, the child at risk, doing the best for that client.

Legislation in this field should not be developed or designed in some back room somewhere as a neat little bureaucratic arrangement that happens to suit the whims and the philosophy and the bias of the particular Minister of the day, Mr. Speaker. It should not be designed simply to fit some neat little bureaucratic or administrative chart or some neat little idea chart that belongs to some particular school of thought that happens to have the Minister's ear and favour at the moment. Much editorial comment has emphasized this point. It's not just me and others in the political arena saying these things, Mr. Speaker, much editorial comment has emphasized this point. It's the child at risk who is the important agent here, not the Minister of Community Services and not any proclivity that he may have for tinkering and for experimentation.

I made reference last month after the Minister introduced the bill in the House and held a press conference in respect to it, to the highly unsatisfactory, highly unacceptable components of the bill and to the fact that my colleagues and I would oppose it very strenuously on such grounds as I have described in the last few minutes, Mr. Speaker. Well, subsequent to that, an editorial comment appeared in the media here in Winnipeg and in other communities in Manitoba to support the questions that we have asked; to support the criticism that we have made thus far of this legislation. I want to just relay for the record, Mr. Speaker, a very cogent and succinct comment contained in an editorial in the Winnipeg Free Press on July 15th that I think strikes the very centre and the very heart of the issue here. The Free Press noted the following, that the Minister, "... talks community-based, but he builds or prepares to build agencies based in the Minister's office."

That, Sir, is a very important contribution to this debate because the Minister did, in offering his proposed initiatives in this field and in statements supporting those initiatives at his press conference, talked about the desirability of community-based child welfare units and agencies and a community-based child welfare system. Then he talked in the same breath about taking up some interim proposals that have come out of one of two of his task forces for eliminating CAS Winnipeg, wiping it out and replacing it with six smaller agencies, that this would make it community-based. Then, Sir, he turns around and says that he wants the power to fire every board member of every Children's Aid Society in Manitoba and replace them with his own appointees.

Mr. Speaker, as has often been offered in this House in various debates from both sides of the Chamber, you can't have it both ways. How does he square his insistence on moving in a direction that would make the system community-based with his Draconian proposal here? That particular Free Press editorial was in fact very very interesting because it represented quite an about-face in respect to the editorial opinion of that newspaper vis-a-vis the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg and the Minister's ongoing vendetta with that agency.

In recent months, in previous months, there had been some editorial comment that tended to support - or

give the impression of support - of the direction that the Minister was pursuing and seemed to be highly critical of CAS Winnipeg. But that editorial pointed out, that in moving in the way he's proposing to move the Minister has gone far beyond a reasoned and responsible approach and has ignored the child at risk, the key person, the key agent in this whole field, to try to establish a situation for himself where he builds agencies based in his own office and thus controls the system entirely out of his own office.

Considerable official comment and reaction to the Minister's policy here has been reaction of shock bordering on disbelief, Mr. Speaker, and I repeat, it's not just coming from me or from other members of the debate in the political arena, it's coming from the community and it's coming from the media. The Minister would be well advised in the interests of the child welfare system and the interests of the key person at issue here, the child at risk, to back off from a proposed measure that constitutes nothing more than a transparent weapon to help him win a fight with an agency against whom he's got some grievances.

There are things about CAS Winnipeg that should be reformed and revised, but it is not so serious, Sir, that the system and the child at risk and the interests of the child at risk should be sacrificed on the altar of political power and authoritarianism and expediency. That's what the legislation proposes, to take the system out of the hands of volunteers and out of the hands of those who are publicly accountable and turn it over to the government in such a way as to politicize it very rigidly, to politicize it very sharply. The loser in that case, Mr. Speaker, should that course of action be pursued, the loser will be the child himself and herself.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Rhineland.

MR. A. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise to speak briefly in support of the position taken by my colleague, the Member for Fort Garry. I believe that all of us on this side are quite concerned about Bill No. 107, which says that the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council may appoint, by order, the directors of the Children's Aid Society.

I know many of these directors who have given so freely of their time to run the Children's Aid Society. I know that these people, these directors, are well-informed, responsible people who have done an excellent job for many years. Problems may arise from time to time, but I have all the confidence in the directors who are elected by the people, who have concerns about homeless children. They're elected by foster parents and I am certain that all these people have confidence that the people that are elected are capable of coping with the problems that the Children's Aid Society faces.

The present directors volunteer their time, proving that they have genuine concern for the problems under the jurisdiction of the Children's Aid Society. This bill places a cloud of suspicion on the directors and their activities, it places a cloud of suspicion, it says that this government really has no confidence in the work that these people have done before and, Mr. Speaker, I must say that many of us resent this. Rather than

working with this group of concerned volunteers, this government is going to appoint directors and we must ask, at what cost? How will the government improve service with appointees when so many capable, knowledgeable, concerned volunteers are serving us at the present time?

It seems that the Minister is interested in politicizing the Children's Aid Society so that he can appoint New Democratic Party supporters. This will not improve the service, Mr. Speaker, that we receive presently, rather, the Children's Aid Society will become another political football to be kicked about when governments change. This will serve no purpose and the sufferers will be the children who come under the jurisdiction of the Children's Aid Society and for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I must oppose this bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, as Acting Minister of Community Services, I rise to conclude debate on the bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. Does the Member for Pembina wish to speak before the conclusion of debate?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe a number of us wish to make contributions to this debate. Is adjournment of debate being accepted? I'm sorry I missed the earlier Session.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the MLA for Fort Garry, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, before I call the next bill for debate, which will be Bill 77, which will continue to stand in the name of the Honourable Minister for Consumer and Corporate Affairs, allowing anybody over there who wishes to speak to do so, I'd just like to ask, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you can advise the House when we might expect the ruling of the Speaker on the point of order raised with respect to the new sub-amendment?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I contacted the Speaker this morning. The ruling has not yet been made. When the Speaker has made that ruling, he will advise me and I will relay that ruling to the House.

The Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: On that same point, I wonder if there has been any indication and we all appreciate that the Speaker is attending the Commonwealth Conference and will be there all week. My only concern would be that that does not preclude us from having a ruling on that matter at the earliest convenience. In other words, I don't think the opposition would be at all happy with the prospects of waiting for a ruling on this for a whole week. I would urge the Deputy Speaker to contact the

Speaker and indicate that, at his earliest possible convenience, he do come back to the House and make that ruling.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will relay the concerns of the House to the Speaker.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

BILL NO. 77 - THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ACT

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Education, standing in the name of the Minister for Consumer Affairs, with the understanding that it will remain in his name.

The Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to put a few things on the record that may already have been said, and a few things that possibly have not been, about the sections in this particular bill that deal with tenure. Whether the Minister wants to call it by any other name, that is exactly what it is.

I, along with three other of my colleagues, attended the meeting that the Manitoba Association of School Trustees called for July 1st at the International Inn. There were 46 Divisions in attendance, and all had great concerns. The Minister's letter was read in full, and it was fully understood by all there. I would like to put on the record the brief that St. James-Assiniboia School Division No. 2, presented to that committee. I will read it.

"The St. James-Assiniboia School Division has many concerns about the proposed changes to Section 92(5) and (6). This presentation briefly mentions some of the concerns that our school division has.

"1. Teachers are the key to giving good quality education to children. Teachers need time to develop as professionals before final decisions are made about tenure or termination. Making less time available for school divisions to assess and develop teachers seems unfair to both teachers and students whom they teach.

"2. Our administrators believe in training and coaching inexperienced teachers to help them develop their abilities; yet, the time change gives teachers no second chance, they have one September start only. If a second September start is given, tenure is in place. This means that our administrators are not able to evaluate whether improvement has taken place in a teacher's second year of teaching. This just doesn't seem to be a just approach to teacher evaluation.

"3. With the proposed time changes, decisions will have to be made much sooner. That is, decisions have to be made before the finish of the first year of teaching. Decisions made in such a hurry will not be of the same quality as they were when administrators were given two years to do a proper assessment.

"4. Our division feels that a new teacher should be given time to get to know our school division, its policies, its resources and its public before making a decision about tenure. One year is not enough time for a teacher to adjust to a new setting and develop programs for the children. This proposed change places the new teacher in a very difficult situation. Assessments will have to be made, and final decisions will be made, before the teacher is given a fair opportunity to adjust to the local situation.

"5. Our division is not able to understand how teachers will benefit by not having a second year to prove their ability. Will this somehow result in teachers developing more quickly than before? Our division feels that these changes are producing an injustice to a teacher new to a division.

"6. What was wrong with the two-year time frame that existed? Why do we have this change? Our division sees no benefit to the quality of education in this change, or for the fair treatment of teachers in this change.

"7. Deals with Subsection 6, now gives tenure to a teacher who comes to us from another division. Our division can interview and check references but, after granting the teacher a contract, tenure is in place. There is no chance for observation, no opportunity for assessment and, yet, the teacher receives tenure in our system. How will this encourage our division to hire experienced teachers from outside our division? Will experienced teachers now be able to move from one division to another? Is this a step to province-wide seniority?

"8. The part-time teachers and their opportunity to get tenure has not been mentioned in the changes. Do these changes have any bearing on part-time teachers? Do part-time teachers build up to one year's experience, and then get tenure? This whole area needs to be examined.

"9. By forcing decisions into a shorter time period the quality of decisions will not be as high as they would have been in a longer time period. These decisions deal with the teacher's future and quality of education for children. Our division asks that this time frame for making such important decisions not be shortened in any way."

It goes on to say, "The St. James-Assiniboia School Division cannot support changes that will not improve the quality of education for our children. This division urges the committee to re-examine these proposed changes with education of children as the first priority. Only where divisions are given enough time to do a thorough job of teacher improvement and assessment can the quality of education for children be kept at a high level."

Mr. Speaker, quality of education came through at every opportunity where people from the different divisions came to speak. It wasn't about teachers that they were as concerned about as much, although they were because they feel that this amendment will not help the teachers in this province, it was the quality of education and our children.

This is a Minister who, time and time again, has spoken about quality of education. Mr. Speaker, I believe that she's sincere in wanting that. Why then has she caved in to the Teachers Union on these amendments, because that's exactly what it is? It's a sell-out to the Teachers Union. When the teachers, themselves, have a chance to look at this and find out what happens to them, because of declining enrolment, they try to move to another division. Believe me, they're going to have a much harder time to move, because no one is going to want to take a teacher that they haven't had a chance to look at. How then does this help the teacher?

I just want to mention some of the comments that I heard and took time to jot down at the meeting. One superintendent got up and said he would need a guaranty, an absolute guaranty, that teacher was well-

qualified before he'd hire. This is teacher portability, an absolute guaranty, because they won't have the opportunity to say, well this teacher doesn't fit our division.

The next comment was, a first year, any doubts at all, we'll terminate. How does that help a first-year teacher? Imagine the pressure on a first-year teacher knowing that they have, and in our division - and it may well be in all of them I can't quite remember - it would just be till the end of April to prove themselves, they don't get a full year. They're talking as though this is 12 months, it is not, it is seven and eight months because that division will have to make the decision on that in a shorter period of time.

The other concern - and this came from rural divisions and Northern divisions, especially - they said a person who is let go from an urban division, and in many cases wants a job, will take a chance today; to get a job they will go to rural Manitoba, they will go to Northern Manitoba. They have many problems, and especially with new teachers, to adjust to the community. Some of these teachers don't work out, not a fault of the teacher, but it's just a fault of the environment and what they are used to; they have no chance once they hire them. This is giving lifetime tenure to a teacher, and to hear someone on the other side saying, not so, of course it is so; the only thing that would stop them from having that is declining enrolment. No one wants to take a teacher and prove they're incompetent when maybe they are just mediocre and that may not be good enough for most divisions.

New graduates, what kind of pressure does this put them under? They see a continuous turnover - and this is from the Northern Divisions - and they have a hard enough time to get teachers. Another comment was that this was strictly a political decision, not education. I think that's a valid comment on this, it was not needed, and something that the Minister of Education shouldn't have put her nose into and shouldn't have got involved in, because she's causing the government more problems and she's causing the divisions. Leave that sort of thing to the elected officials at the local level. If they can't get that kind of guarantee at the bargaining table why should the Minister be stepping in? What business is it of hers to get in there? She may be looking for votes, but I want to tell you there's more parents out there than there are teachers. So this may well be the thing, there may be fewer trustees but they represent the parents in this province, they represent the children at the local level and local autonomy is what we're talking about, and this is exactly what has been eliminated by the portability of tenure. She can call it due process, anything else, it is tenure and it is lifetime tenure because any job that they go to, from division to division, they cannot, unless proven incompetent. There are not that many incompetent teachers, but there may be teachers that do not suit a certain division; they may not work in with that division, they may be fine in another one, but they couldn't get rid of them because of this, and it's not because they're incompetent, it's because they may not fit in that particular milieu. I think that that is something that should have been thought out.

The other thing is, and they expressed it about politicians, politicians have four years and, believe me, if they only had one year they considered, after this

bill they'd want to turf them all, and I don't blame them. This is interference that shouldn't happen and I don't know why it is.

The other comment was her speech at the Trustees Annual Meeting, and it was called a sham; talked about quality of education and then this bill is brought in. The Minister wishes to be everything to everybody and it can't happen. What we need is someone that'll be just looking at the quality of education. First-year teachers who are terminated, for whatever reason, they will have a difficult, if not impossible time, to be rehired. No one is going to believe or want to hire them. What kind of incentive does this give to a first-year teacher who may lose her job because of declining enrolment; who's going to take them the next time around? Believe me the Minister of Education is on very thin ice on this particular amendment and it's going to prove, for both teachers who are moving from division to division and new teachers.

Another comment was a superintendent, if he wanted to hire somebody for junior high, and there was a teacher that had been laid off from another division who taught Grade 1 and 2. She is not going to take the chance to hire a teacher who has just taught Grade 1 and 2, doesn't know if they can adapt to junior high. There are so many reasons why the sections of this bill are wrong that it must be a political move, and how sad that a Minister of Education, who has gone around this province espousing the children, the quality of education, the parents, when she can't get a consensus turns to the Teachers Union and says they must be right. There's something very wrong with this system that a Minister would cave in on a case like that.

One of the comments that we heard, and I'm not sure that anyone expressed it out loud, it was just one of the things as they were talking to one another, is that rather than hire a teacher moving from another division they will hire from out of province, because there they can have a chance to look at them. Out of province, then does that mean the Minister must, the next year, legislate that Manitoba teachers only are hired, is this what happens? Because this is exactly what they're thinking about, the divisions do not want to take a chance, so someone coming from Saskatchewan, Alberta, Quebec, Ontario will have preference over our own teachers wanting to move from division to division. If you don't think this is a reality wait and see when this bill is passed, if you force it through, it will be a reality. Then, not only won't you have the teachers, you won't have the trustees, you won't have the parents, but the teachers will be against the Minister also. Why can't we get jobs? Because this bill is going to discriminate against our own Manitoba teachers.

The other comment is that local autonomy, school trustees, have the right to hire and fire; this is what local autonomy is all about, and that's what this government is taking out of the hands of the local trustees. Mr. Speaker, the Minister has always referred to our commitment to the quality of education and she's now selling out the quality of education to the Teachers Union, and why? Some suggest because there are more teachers than trustees. I have another suggestion, and it brings us to conflict of interest. Let us take a look at the Cabinet of this present government: Minister of Government Services, a teacher; Minister

of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, teacher; Minister of Labour, a teacher; Minister of Housing, a teacher; Minister of Economic Development, a teacher.

We know just from speaking to the Minister of Government Services that his division would not give him a leave of absence, so when he goes back and applies to a division, he has instant tenure. That's what is going to happen with this bill.

A MEMBER: What about Elmwood?

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Oh, I'm sorry. I was just going through the Cabinet, and I know there are other teachers.

Now I want to know from this government . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: . . . did these Ministers and did the members say, this is a conflict and we won't discuss it? Is that what they're saying? I want to tell you, this is a distinct conflict with this bill with the number of teachers that are in that government.

The ramifications of this bill are overwhelming and the fact that there are so many teachers on that side that would put a bill in like this - this is self-protection at best, and a complete conflict.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please, order please. I am having some difficulty hearing the remarks of the Member for Kirkfield Park.

The Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I have an example in my constituency, and I know there is more than one but this is someone that I know well. She's a young graduate. Competition for jobs is tough and when she had an opportunity to take a job in a rural division, she jumped at the chance. She planned to get the experience out of town and maybe stay two years, three years before moving back. Now had she had any inkling that a bill like this was going to come forward, she would have waited and taken her chance to get a division in Winnipeg. She has lived in Winnipeg all her life and probably will want to come back here. What division is going to take a chance on this student? Here is someone who hoped to give her life to teaching and I know she is going to be a great teacher, but who is going to take a chance on her?

She is going also to a division, after living in the city all her life. She is going to have social adjustments to make. She is going to have a much harder time to adjust, and so maybe things won't go quite as well for her in the first year. Believe me, they are not going to take a chance and say, look, we've got another year to give you a chance. That's not going to happen. If they let her go, she might as well forget about a teaching career in Manitoba. I don't know if she has really thought about what is going to happen to our young people.

I know I've got many more in my constituency that are like this. I know there are a lot of kids that are in education who will go out of the city to teach and plan to come back at some time or another. Who is going

to take a chance on them? Certainly not if they don't make it the first year. The pressure on that student is just going to be phenomenal. She's moving away from home for the first time; she has to adjust to a rural setting, and she knows she only has seven months to prove herself. The pressure on her is immense. I don't know why you would want to take a chance on this.

What is the matter with two years? What is the matter with us leaving it the way it was? Not a thing. The only thing the matter is, there are so many teachers on that side of the House, that and the teachers' union. This is the most crass political move I have seen this government make. It's going to hurt the students in this province.

Mr. Speaker, as was mentioned in the St. James-Assiniboia brief, portability will probably next lead to province-wide seniority. This is another thing that's going to happen under this government. Who is protecting the interests of the children? Certainly not this Minister, or not the government.

In her opening statement, she said, "It's essential in understanding the change to the due process aspect of the amendment that it not be confused with an extension of tenure for teachers. There is no extension of tenure." Of course, there is extension of tenure. That's what this is all about.

She goes on to say, "Teachers can still find themselves without employment due to cutbacks in teaching staff." Well, everyone knows that. Tenure doesn't mean you get to stay on if the school closes. Tenure doesn't mean that you get to keep a job if you're at the bottom of the list and you get to go but, as long as that school stays open and as long as there is a job, you've got lifetime employment. Don't forget that. In due process, you cannot get away with saying, this is not tenure. It is tenure. You can call it anything you like, but it's tenure. It's tenure first day for a teacher moving from one division to another.

You know, it's not incompetence that we are talking about necessarily. I don't believe that there are that many incompetent teachers about, but there are mediocre teachers as there would be in any profession. Standards may well differ from division to division. I believe that this Minister is making a great mistake in bringing forward a bill like that.

I think the Winnipeg Free Press editorial of August 3rd, the one paragraph states it as well as anything. It just says, "But Mrs. Hemphill's acceptance of the MTS position in a matter where she had no reason for acting apart from the MTS request, shows that the teachers have a direct line to the Minister's office while the trustees and the superintendents have a permanent busy signal." What a combination of this government and the Minister, unions first and children second. That, Mr. Speaker, is what has happened in this whole issue.

I would just like to close by reading the one paragraph that came out of the letter from MAST. It was referred to, June 24, 1983, that went to the Honourable Minister. The last page indicated, "I urge you to withdraw this proposed legislation in the interest of the children, the parents, and the communities of this province," and that is what we are asking you to do on this side of the House; children first, teachers second.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to just put a few remarks on the record on Bill 77.

The excellent speech that the Minister has just heard should give her enough cause to pull this legislation so that it never sees the light of day, again, if she has any semblance of common sense and fairness about her.

The main thrust of this bill is as my colleague, the MLA for Kirkfield Park and other have said, is to provide tenure for the teaching staff in the Province of Manitoba; and I wonder if the Minister, as being part of this government which wishes so much to talk to the people of Manitoba, to listen to the people who have knowledge and background in various matters in which government involves them in this province, I wonder if this Minister took any time at all to discuss this matter with the Manitoba Association of School Trustees.

Obviously, Mr. Deputy Speaker, she didn't. Obviously, to this government, the voice of elected municipal and school board people in the Province of Manitoba means nothing because, not only are they ignoring their opposition to this measure in Bill 77, they are likewise ignoring advice provided to this government on past occasions, on such matters as the 6 and 5 as it came from the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, a structural organization representing all elected reeves and councillors in Manitoba.

The kind of blind adherence to the lobby of the Manitoba Teachers' Society by this Minister, and this government, has its roots in the fact, as mentioned by others, that this is a Cabinet that has one-third of their membership as school teachers, and there is a vested interest in that Cabinet to bring this legislation forward.

There is no desire amongst the people of Manitoba, the parents, or the children and, particularly, no desire among the elected trustees who provide a great deal of input and knowledge into the education system; I'd say, in some circumstances, more than the Minister herself does, there's no desire from any of those three groups to have this kind of legislation proceed. The only desire to have this legislation is from the Teachers' Society and this Minister, being a former president, a past president of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, has forgotten everything that she learned in that process and has caved into the teachers' lobby to bring this bill forward.

Was it that the other system was not working? The system that this new amendment will replace, was it causing the wholesale and indiscriminate firing of hundreds and hundreds of teachers each and every year? Of course not, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There was no wholesale firing of teachers because of the existing provisions in the act. There's no justification from any grounds to have this proceed in this form and to make this amendment. We have the teachers moving on this. Now I ask the Minister, with this kind of legislation, does this mean that a new teacher, coming out and employed in a school division for the first year, under

the new provisions of this legislation, will automatically be terminated at the end of the first year contract, then they are rehired by the school division next year and fired at the end of the second year, so they never achieve this tenure. Because that's what you are going to force some boards to do who have not adequately had time to evaluate the teacher, a new teacher to their division.

So what this bill has the ability to create is the kind of wholesale termination and firings of new teachers that never existed under the old system, and if this is going to provide more security, it might, for the existing teachers who are there and who transfer from division to division, if they can arrange a transfer after this legislation is passed; but new teachers will, in all likelihood, be faced with a whole new set of working conditions, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think school boards may take the unpleasant option, at the end of 10 months, of terminating all of their new teachers; advertising the jobs and possibly they'll rehire the teacher they terminated and put that person on for one more year of tenure, to further evaluate them and then allow them to stay on staff. But this is an incredible position to put elected trustees in, in administering such an essential service to the Province of Manitoba as the education of our youth.

It's uncalled for; it's not supported by the people who have to deal with education issues from the broad perspective of financing, of program provision, transportation, etc., etc., namely, the school trustees. Those people are very closely attached to the education system and what it should and should not be doing. But the Minister, in this bill, has absolutely tied the hands of every freely elected board of school trustees in the Province of Manitoba, in terms of how they may proceed to properly, adequately and competently staff their schools within their divisions.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that may not mean anything to this Minister, and particularly to a government with one-third of its Cabinet Ministers as former school teachers, and some of them will remain former school teachers for awhile because I don't think they can be rehired on the basis of the performance we've seen of them in Cabinet.

So, Mr. Speaker, what purpose is this bill here, other than as a sop to the Manitoba Teachers' Society given to them by a government that they hope will support them in the next election. That's not simply good enough if this government is supposedly interested in the quality of education.

I might ask the Minister, what would happen to a person like . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The hour is 12:30. When next we discuss this motion, the Member for Pembina will have 35 minutes remaining.

The time being 12:30, this House is adjourned and will stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. this afternoon.