



Second Session — Thirty-Second Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

31-32 Elizabeth II

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The Honourable D. James Walding
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Second Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

Name	Constituency	Party
ADAM, Hon. A.R. (Pete)	Ste. Rose	NDP
ANSTETT, Hon. 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	Virден	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
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KOSTYRA, Hon. Eugene	Seven Oaks	NDP
KOVNATS, Abe	Niakwa	PC
LECUYER, Hon. Gérard	Radisson	NDP
LYON, Q.C., Hon. Sterling	Charleswood	PC
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MANNES, Clayton	Morris	PC
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MERCIER, Q.C., G.W.J. (Gerry)	St. Norbert	PC
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OLESON, Charlotte	Gladstone	PC
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RANSOM, A. Brian	Turtle Mountain	PC
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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

Tuesday, 10 January, 1984.

Time — 8:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNED DEBATE ON RESOLUTION
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT RE:
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General and the amendment thereto proposed by the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs has 40 minutes remaining.

HON. J. STORIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate this opportunity to join this debate. I must say, Mr. Speaker, that I feel somewhat like Charlie Brown, coming to the Legislature each day. All of you know the cartoon where Charlie Brown goes to kick the football and every time he goes to kick the football it's pulled away by Lucy; and I come to sit in the Legislature each day and I see this magnificent edifice on Broadway and I say to myself, today there's going to be reason and logic in the debate. Today's going to be the day when we listen to each other and we recognize our faults and our accomplishments. Today's going to be the day when reason and logic will prevail; and each day I come into this Chamber and each day the opposition pulls the ball away.

Mr. Speaker, I heard the new Leader of the Opposition on the radio commenting that the time had come for leadership which ruled by way of reason, logic and common sense, a certain amount of pulling together, dealing with the Legislature in the business that's before this Legislature in the best interests of the province and I would certainly like to see that happen, Mr. Speaker, and I think that most people in the province would agree that that's what should be happening here.

Mr. Speaker, we were chided earlier today by the Member for - I can't remember which member it was, it came from some member on that side and I was going to say the Member for Lakeside but I'm not sure that's accurate - we were chided because we weren't standing up to make our remarks known.

Mr. Speaker, there are two people who have spoken thus far on this side, the Honourable Minister who introduced the amendment, the Honourable Attorney-General and the Minister of Natural Resources - that's three of the front bench who spoke - and I think spoke eloquently to the matter at hand and who attempted to deal with the issues as we saw them.

Mr. Speaker, I can't say that we can honestly say the same from some of the speeches, some of the blundering, some of the rantings that we've heard from members opposite. Mr. Speaker, we had an example last night where the Member for Arthur, who seems to believe that the louder you bellow the more reasoned your arguments. You know, I think someone should inform him that Hansard records our words, not the volume. If bluster could convince people then I'm sure that there would be more of us blustering.

Fortunately, for all of us, I suppose, there have been moments when I believe seriously that members

opposite have taken on the task of reviewing what was before us and presenting a case, as they saw it, to the Chamber for our consideration, but I think that's happened too infrequently.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Lakeside, the new Opposition House Leader, talked this afternoon about the failings of the present government and, I suppose in all honesty, there have been mistakes made, no one has ever denied that. There have been mistakes made on this issue, perhaps with the process, perhaps with our own perceptions of how this issue was going to be dealt with, perhaps we were like Charlie Browns thinking that at some point we would get a reasoned debate, and not the rhetoric and the grandstanding that has, on occasion, happened.

However, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Lakeside indicated that in all of this he wished that we had proceeded as the previous government had proceeded. He wished that we could stand back and look on our accomplishments with as much pride as he looked back on his accomplishments. He referenced Bill 2 which was passed in 1980 which did, in fact, say in its opening clause that French and English were the official languages of Manitoba, and he said, I look back with pride on that accomplishment.

Mr. Speaker, I guess we're all fallible and our memories are often too short. Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Lakeside, in responding to a question from the Member for Inkster at the hearings on Monday, September 26, of this year in Arborg, denied any knowledge of the passing of the bill that he took so much pride in today. This is an interesting twist because pride can grow so quickly.

Mr. Scott said, "Sir, in 1980, the previous government passed a bill." He goes on to say, "It is stated in the very first line that English and French are the official languages of Manitoba. Are you now saying that French is not a language in Manitoba."

Mr. Enns on a point of order: "On a point of order, no such law was passed by any previous administration."

Mr. Speaker, other speakers have commented that the Honourable Member for Elmwood has been caught in the same kind of inconsistency with respect to this issue.

MR. H. ENNS: That's a shell game that you are playing with the important question before us.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Lakeside has had his opportunity to speak and I would appreciate it if he would let me have my opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Lakeside took some pleasure in pointing out some of what he saw, or what he termed the examples of carelessness, naivety, that were exhibited by members on this side and he said that he was here with some regrets and that we were finishing up the 1983 Session. He said it was a year that he didn't look back with fondly and that it was not a year of great accomplishment. Mr. Speaker, I

don't know what Session he was attending, but he wasn't attending the Thirty-Second Session of the Manitoba Legislature, the Second Session, because we passed over 100 pieces of legislation, pieces of legislation in which I think members on this side, and I think many Manitobans, can take some pleasure.

A MEMBER: Seat belts.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Speaker, we will get to seat belts, certainly.

Mr. Speaker, I think the Member for Lakeside was at a different Session. This government introduced many programs, including the Jobs Fund, Homes in Manitoba, which have produced benefits far beyond what most people, and certainly we, expected to cost. It is no mean accomplishment that 17,000 people, more people are working today than at the same time last year.

Mr. Speaker . . .

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

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege. There has been repeated references and quotations to remarks that I made three years ago, and this was just made by the Honourable Minister and was quoted previously by the Premier and by the House Leader, and their quotation - I am now looking at a remark made by the Premier — (Interjection) — No, this is a matter of privilege, and the reason it's a matter of privilege . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. A matter of privilege has been raised and I will decide on it when I have heard it.

The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, the government has made a number of references, at least four or five, to remarks that I made three years ago, and has quoted those remarks out of context, the Premier included. He said, for example - and I have just dug the material out so I am raising it at this opportunity - the Premier said yesterday, Page 5409 quoted, he said that I said, "From this point on we will become officially bilingual and the task, in the narrow sense, is formidable."

Mr. Speaker, the problem with that is he didn't read the entire quote. I would like to put on the record the paragraph from which that remark was extracted. The point of privilege, in case the Member for River East doesn't know, is that I am being misquoted, and you are one of the Ministers who has referred to my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to read this in context, on Page 2572 of April 16, 1980, in which I made the following statement: "Bill No. 2 is a significant bill. It is one that has already had some interesting debate and no doubt we will hear from more members of the government and of the opposition parties. One of the things, I think, we have to realize when I speak directly and narrowly in the framework of the bill is that the measure before us is, in fact, expensive and costly, and I think some of us have not yet fully realized and certainly the public hasn't fully realized that it will cost

a great deal in terms of millions of dollars for such a simple measure as to bring Manitoba back to perhaps where it should have been some 90 years ago." Here is the key sentence. "Because since 1890 . . .

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

HON. A. ANSTETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Clearly the honourable member may or may not have a question of privilege, and I rise not to question that in any way. I have not yet heard his question of privilege, or whether or not there is a motion, but certainly he has not in any way suggested that the member whose speech he has interrupted has in any way impugned or misquoted him, Sir. Certainly our rules in Citation 81 and 82 should bear relevance to whether or not a member speaking can be interrupted in his speech to raise a question of privilege.

Sir, I have not seen it done before in this context, unless it is a matter which has just occurred and is an interruption in the proceedings. But certainly to interrupt a speech in this Chamber, and refer back to a matter that occurred a day ago or several days ago, as is the case, is not within the provisions of Citations 81 and 82, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Opposition House Leader to the same point.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, to the same point. I'm fascinated with your ruling, Mr. Speaker. You've already suggested, Mr. Speaker, that you are prepared to hear the matter of privilege that the Honourable Member for Elmwood is raising, and then we'll rule on the matter.

MR. SPEAKER: A matter of privilege is a very important matter to come before the House. Beauchesne makes it clear that it should be raised at the earliest possible time. I am still waiting for the honourable member to bring up his point of privilege and I will then rule upon it.

The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I was reading a paragraph trying to put into context a remark that I made three years ago and I now read the key part because the government has read this on a number of occasions, and I believe the Honourable Minister just alluded to that; that's how I understood his remarks. I simply conclude with this particular quote, as I was saying, I was talking about the expense of Bill 2 and federal obligations. Then I said - and the First Minister and the Minister of Municipal Affairs left this particular section out and that's why I'm reading it because I've now had an opportunity to photocopy it - "Since 1890, in effect, Manitoba has been officially unilingual, and now, I suppose" - that's the part that was left out - "I suppose, from this point on, . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please.

MR. R. DOERN: . . . "and now, I suppose, from this point on we will become officially bilingual. And the task, in the narrow sense, is formidable."

Mr. Speaker, my point is this. By quoting without the full context it's clear what intention the members opposite intended to give, but I think that the qualifying remark of "I suppose", which I believe means it could be construed in this way, one could consider it as such, I think is a very significant point that was deliberately left out, and I think casts those remarks of three years ago in a different light.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

The honourable member did not have a substantive motion to conclude his remarks on.

Order please. A dispute as to the fact does not constitute a matter of privilege. The honourable member should be aware that he has interrupted and disrupted another member speaking in this House, and I would hope that no member would do the same in the future.

The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Speaker, . . .

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

MR. H. ENNS: Well, simply on the point of order. Having heard your ruling we simply want to make it clear on the opposition side that we certainly would be prepared to grant the speaker, who was interrupted, the additional time he has lost as a result of the interruption.

MR. SPEAKER: I don't think that permission is able to be given by the opposition. The Chair makes that decision.

The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. J. STORIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That reminds me that you can always afford to be magnanimous when it isn't going to cost you anything.

Mr. Speaker, before I was interrupted by this very important point and I certainly don't begrudge the Member for Elmwood the opportunity to clarify that for the record because I know we wouldn't want to leave it - and I suppose - off the record.

On matters more germane to the topic, the past two or three days of debate I think have led to little in terms of my own understanding of what the official opposition's position is. I read with some interest the remarks of the new Leader of the Opposition and I wish that he could have heard my remarks this evening because I would certainly like to have congratulated him on his new position. I was of the opinion, as I'm sure most of us were, that this was going to lead to a new era in the House in terms of the decorum, in terms of the stature of debate and lead to less rancour in the House and I certainly would have liked to wish him well in his new task.

I know that he came on board facing a very difficult issue and I think we all had evidence of the strain that he was under in the first few days after his election as leader, when he changed his position from time-to-time and didn't seem to have a firm grip on the question because, Mr. Speaker, I recall a remark that was made that the Leader of the Opposition seemed surprised when he had learned, when he was informed apparently for the first time, that the proposal that was before the

Legislature, and had been before the Legislature for some months, had excluded schools and municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose it takes anyone some time to come to grips with the complexities that are involved in the amendment and what it means and certainly we wouldn't want to proceed without a full understanding of what its implications and ramifications are going to be. We want to have the best judgment, the best evidence, the best information that we can gather before we proceed.

I was a little dismayed when, on a number of occasions, the new Leader of the Opposition didn't take the time that I believe we all thought the question deserved. I know that he was under some pressure and I appreciate that. I believe the last opportunity that he had to review this issue in a thorough and conscientious way was only last week when he asked for time to receive a legal opinion apart from the legal opinion that was tabled by the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs in response to a written request from the Leader of the Opposition, in response to a verbal request in the House, and the Minister tabled the legal opinion that had been obtained from legal counsel of record, Kerr Twaddle. Mr. Filmon, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, indicated that he would like to get further opinion. However, I understand he certainly tabled no new opinion that he has to indicate that he should have or he should have been led to make the kind of outright rejection of the proposal that we saw some two days ago or a day ago, whatever it was.

So I have to question what the Leader of the Opposition considers serious consideration. I suppose tossing a coin; I suppose practising saying no until he gets it right. I am not sure what serious consideration means, but I would have certainly liked to see, and I would challenge the Leader of the Opposition to table any opinion, any additional legal opinion that he has received and perhaps we would all benefit from knowing what, in the new Leader of the Opposition's opinion, is significant enough to make him reject the opinion in the manner in which he did.

Mr. Speaker, I had anticipated that when members opposite joined the debate, the Member for Lakeside or perhaps in the future the Member for Sturgeon Creek, would join the debate and perhaps elucidate what their concerns were and perhaps examine a little more seriously the proposal that was put before them.

I have to ask myself, what is the opposition? Obviously, they are very concerned about the presumed opinion of the public. They decry the fact, or they bemoan the fact that the Attorney-General tabled a report which indicated that some 67 or 70 percent supported the extension of French language services under certain circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, they talked at great length about the results of the plebiscite and bemoaned the fact again that the government has looked at the results, looked at the wording of the plebiscite and said, really that wasn't what was at issue.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is misleading and I think it is dishonest for members opposite to stand and suggest that this government has somehow rammed this thing down anyone's throat, that this government has not lived up to its commitment to listen to the people.

Mr. Speaker, this proposal . . .

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Let's have another plebiscite.

HON. J. STORIE: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Sturgeon Creek seems to rely on plebiscites to make his decisions. I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that the people that elected the Member for Sturgeon Creek, the people that elected all of us, have some confidence that when we examine issues we will be exposed to information, we will be exposed to opinions, we will be exposed to circumstances which will change our minds.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Who passed the law allowing plebiscites?

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Speaker, I have not argued for or against plebiscites and, frankly, I am simply saying to the honourable members that they have to make the decisions. They have to make the decisions, Mr. Speaker. — (Interjection) —

Mr. Speaker, the matter which the honourable members opposite seem to feel are throwing back in my face is not something that I have reposed or have commented on. Mr. Speaker, what I simply said was that members opposite continue to rely on the fact that there was a significant majority of Manitobans who voted a certain way on a plebiscite which any thinking person would have to admit does not relate to the circumstances that are before this Chamber at this time. It is a completely different set of circumstances; it is a different proposal.

Mr. Speaker, getting back to the issue at hand, and that was the question of whether this government had listened. This proposal was sent to the opposition in December of 1982. December of 1982 they knew that the government was negotiating to absolve itself of some problems - foreseen problems, perceived problems, whatever - that were on the horizon. So from that point, if they had any serious objections to the method, the direction which the government was taking, I feel that a responsible group having objections would have raised them at that time. There was no intent to keep it secret. There was no secrecy. There was no underhanded dealings. There was an openness from the beginning.

Mr. Speaker, from there we moved to hearings. For the members opposite to suggest that the government has ignored, rode roughshod over the opinions of Manitobans, is totally fallacious. If someone can take the proposal that's before us today and suggest that it reflects in an identical way, using the same processes, what was proposed in May of 1983, I challenge them to do that.

Mr. Speaker, over and over - and I was one of those people and I know the Leader of the Opposition wasn't and I am not sure that the Member for Lakeside attended that frequently those hearings - I was one of the people that spent hours and hours and hours at those hearings, listening, trying to interpret, trying to understand the point of view that was being expressed by not only those people who supported what the government was doing, but by those people who opposed it.

Mr. Speaker, we listened, we worked with those groups who were most directly affected; we worked with the Manitoba Government Employees Association,

the group that is going to have to live with this program. Mr. Speaker, today the Manitoba Government Employees Association say that they support 90 percent; they say that we have come a long way in terms of meeting their concerns. Mr. Speaker, that is the group that is affected in a direct way.

Mr. Speaker, we have worked; we have amended; we have sat down and listened; we have taken the opinions of and turned them into a product that is beneficial, that respects the concerns that Manitobans had - and I don't believe have anymore - and those were basically two concerns.

The first concern, I suppose, was the fear of expansion, the potential. Mr. Speaker, we have had the best legal opinion that we can get. We have heard the legal opinion of many other constitutional experts over the period of the hearing, and on the request of the Attorney-General, that the proposal that is before us today does not in any way provide the serious threat, the expansionary threat that still appears to be one of the major stumbling blocks as far as the opposition are concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I have a column from the Winnipeg Sun - I believe it was yesterday's paper - in which a member of the Grassroots organization which is funding what they believe to be a legitimate attempt to change the course of this debate, I suppose, in which a retired federal civil servant makes the comment that their group does not oppose French language service. He suggests, and I quote, "Put it in a bill. We have no argument with that and then it can be changed as needed."

Mr. Speaker, I recall members opposite using much the same debate. I recall specifically the Member for Rhineland in his contribution to the proposed amendment earlier last year saying much the same thing. I heard the Member for Lakeside take credit for the fact that the Tory Government of 1977-81 had provided for an expansion of the French Language Services by way of the French Secretariat, by way of the translation of statutes and so forth. I have never heard them say that they were opposed to that. I heard the recommendation on a number of occasions from members opposite, from people who appeared before the committee, that the government provide extension of services by way of a French language services bill.

Mr. Speaker, the real issue that was brought up by members opposite was, in virtually every statement made in this House, the objection to the entrenchment of French language services, and the recommendation was always the same, that the French language services package should be brought forward in a form that the Legislature of Manitoba could amend to fit the circumstances, and Mr. Speaker, that is what is before us. So I am interested, Mr. Speaker, to know how the Leader of the Opposition is going to present the case for the opposition when it comes time to debate that particular aspect of this problem.

Mr. Speaker, there is one other argument, I think, that has been presented by the new Leader of the Opposition, not so much by the former Leader of the Opposition. The former Leader of the Opposition is quoted as saying in his remarks, I believe, which opened the debate on the French language issue, he is quoted as saying, "Anyone who believed that cost was the issue didn't understand Manitoba or Canadian history." I think one has to heed those words.

However, the new Leader of the Opposition is of the opinion that somehow there are hidden costs here which we cannot interpret, and he seems to forget, as do many individuals and groups who have presented arguments, that there is a hidden cost in inaction, in not doing anything. So we have to ask ourselves, is there a legitimate fear about the cost, or are members opposite afraid of the dark? Are they afraid to take a stand?

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Lakeside challenged us to search our own inner selves to ask ourselves whether we support it, we support it individually, what was being proposed. Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Member for Lakeside that's been done. I would point out to the Member for Lakeside something that I find an interesting point of view.

The member was talking about integrity. Mr. Speaker, I suppose there is a certain amount of integrity involved in what is transpiring here at this particular session and this particular time. I remember an opposition who muddled through a number of months of confusion on their part over the Crow issue. I remember concerns expressed that, gosh, things were changing and it was time for a change. I know, subsequently, their opinion on that has changed.

Mr. Speaker, I remember the comments from the Member for Roblin-Russell. The Member for Roblin-Russell in the debate on seat belts was saying, my constituents don't want it, nobody wants it. Why are you doing this? Mr. Speaker, we did it because we believed it was right. We believed it was a practical, economic solution to a tremendous health problem that we face, health cost. Mr. Speaker, there was results of a poll just released that said that 68 percent of Manitobans, 68 percent of Canadians supported the imposition of seat belts. Mr. Speaker, I would rather be sending a Get Well Card or a Christmas greeting to the young woman who was saved by her seat belt the other day.

MR. SPEAKER: I would hope the honourable member is not going to start the debate on a matter which has already been concluded in this House in this Session. The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. J. STORIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, I had not intended that and I accept your admonishment. Mr. Speaker, I had digressed only momentarily to deal with a question of integrity, and to give the Member for Lakeside some understanding of what motivated, not the government but the individual members on this side.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that individual Manitobans have reservations about this, that they have fears. I think that's healthy; I think that understanding our fears, whether it be on French language services or on the entrenchment, whether it be on the amending of The Manitoba Act, I understand that. Mr. Speaker, I think that as a government and as individual MLA's it behooves us to deal with those fears in a direct and honest and open manner.

I believe that, as individuals, I know that I, as an individual, can look back and say that I have attempted to deal with this issue on that level. I know that there are Manitobans certainly who fear that the passage of

this resolution, the passage of this bill, will mean the kind of bilingualism that everyone acknowledges had many detrimental aspects, and that's federal bilingualism.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Tuxedo, the new Leader of the Opposition, mentioned throughout his speech the confusion that exists, and certainly it exists. I'm not going to attempt to define in any definitive way who is responsible for that confusion, it exists. I suppose that leaves us with the question of whether that confusion, like the dark, is something that we should be afraid of.

Mr. Speaker, the larger question, and I think the most important question which we have to establish, is whether the government listens. Mr. Speaker, I would hope the evidence is before us. Certainly the resolution, the amendment and the bill, the form in which it's before us is nothing like the form that was before us in May of 1983. The intent, the principle, the concept, remain the same, but I think that's the test. Manitobans have a right to ask themselves, was my time before the committee well spent? Is there any evidence that the government listened to what was being said to them? Is there any evidence that the government recognized that Manitobans feared an expansionary vision of the new amendment to The Manitoba Act, the result? Was there any evidence that the government recognized our fear, our desire to have the extension of French language services be a matter for the Manitoba Legislature, to be dealt with in a way that was consistent with the circumstances that faced a Legislature at a given time? The answer is, yes.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose, in retrospect we can say that there were three objectives to the long, to the bitter process that we embarked on. I guess, first of all, first and foremost, despite what members opposite have suggested, this is, was, and was intended to be a Made-in-Manitoba solution. There was no backdoor dealings, there was no - I forget the word - there was no collusion with the Federal Government, any member of the Federal Government. Despite the paranoid remarks of some members there was none. Mr. Speaker, this was a Made-in-Manitoba solution.

Mr. Speaker, the solution that's before us today has the support of the people that are going to work with it, the Manitoba Employees Association, it has the support of the group that it most directly affects. It is not a derogation of any rights of any other group. Mr. Speaker, it is a solution that is worked out, has been worked out in the best tradition of Manitoba politics; it is a solution that has been worked out in the best tradition of the New Democratic Party; it has been worked out by the hard work, by the contributions, by the thoughtful presentations of hundreds and hundreds of Manitobans, and that's the way it should be.

If members opposite ask me am I ashamed, am I concerned about the direction, about why we're here; the answer is, no, because we've fulfilled that mandate. We have listened; we, as individuals, took on a responsibility to understand the issue, to deal with it in an open and honest manner, and we have fulfilled that responsibility. I wonder what the responsibility of the opposition members were. Can they say with clear conscience, I have not misled my constituents? Can they say with clear conscience, Mr. Speaker, that there has been no attempt to politicize this issue for my own advantage?

Mr. Speaker, I think members opposite know that there is no political advantage, as the Member for Lakeside suggested, in this issue. Mr. Speaker, this issue is a practical and an honourable way to deal with a pressing problem that existed long before I was elected to this Chamber, long before the Member for Lakeside was elected to this Chamber, has existed for a long time. Mr. Speaker, the question of how we chose to deal with it is a moot point at this time.

Mr. Speaker, the question of whether we had to deal with it was dealt with at some length by a constitutional lawyer who appeared before the committee one day last September and indicated that, in his opinion, the Manitoba Government was doing what was right and reasonable and what they, in effect, had to do because, contrary to what the Member for Lakeside has suggested, the previous government did not go far enough, did not conform to the original intent of The Manitoba Act.

Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the Member for Lakeside would like to believe, the evidence suggests, and the fact that Mr. Bilodeau was before the Supreme Court, suggests that they didn't go far enough. They probably knew they didn't go far enough, and that's part of the reason why this particular measure was needed at this time.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Arthur asked the rhetorical question last night, are you crazy to proceed with this? Mr. Speaker, I recall the Member for Roblin-Russell asking me the same question on seat belts; are you crazy proceeding with a measure which is just simply a matter of common sense and a matter of integrity, are you crazy to do that? Mr. Speaker, I answer the Member for Arthur in this way. Am I crazy, are we crazy, to take the best legal advice that is available, to get considered opinion from members of the legal profession, the members of the university society, to get the best constitutional opinions that we can get and then make a judgment, make a decision? Are we crazy to sit through hours and hours of hearings, to listen to Manitobans, hundreds of them pro and con and make a decision? Are we crazy to do that? Are we crazy to do what we believe, in all good conscience, to be the right thing at the right time for Manitoba? I don't think that there's very many answers you can give to that besides yes or no and I think anyone with a coin could make that decision.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think the members of the opposition can seriously suggest that anyone on this side has treated this matter with anything less than the respect it deserves. Manitobans expected us to listen and we listened.

Mr. Speaker, just in conclusion, we heard the other day someone from the nether regions at the back of the opposition seats scream down, "Sit down," to the now Leader of the Opposition. I think the Leader of the Opposition should ignore the right wing of the Conservative Party. I think the Leader of the Opposition should ignore that kind of opinion from members of the back bench and I think, contrary to that kind of suggestion that the Leader of the Opposition sit down, I think it's time that he stood up. I think it's time he stood up for a practical solution, one that contains within it the contribution of hundreds of Manitobans and one that has the support of those people who are most directly affected. I think it's time he stood up for

a practical Made-in-Manitoba solution and one which this Legislature and the members, particularly of this side, have worked hard to achieve. I think it's time he stood up.

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

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really don't want to speak to this resolution. I really don't know why we are debating this resolution. I have great difficulty with it. I've had great difficulty with it from the time that we started with this thing early on in the summer.

The Minister who just spoke indicated, are we speaking for political reasons? What are we doing? I was elected like everybody else in this Legislature here, 57 of us, to represent a certain area. It happens that the area I represent, the Emerson Constituency, has a very diverse ethnic background. We have Ukrainians, we have German Mennonites, we have Anglo-Saxons, we have French and others, we have such a variety of them, and for me it is difficult to speak to this unless I speak to it from my heart because if I want to speak to it politically, then like everybody else, so much has been said. Thousands of words have been spoken. We have filled all kinds of documents in terms of arguments pro and con, the legal aspect of it, but when are we ever going to approach this thing in terms of the logistics of it? What are we trying to accomplish?

I'd like to speak to this, Mr. Speaker, in terms of a minority group, somebody that is representing minority people, which is all my people really. I have difficulty with what has happened here during the course of this summer and now again I can perceive that, by the time we get through here, the feelings are bitter in here, and within these 57 members we have people from all walks of life, all ethnic groups and we're clawing at each other in this arena, on this stage and I think, during the course of our life, have all probably participated in play-acting somewhere along the line, and I suppose to some degree that's what happening here, play-acting.

I ask myself, why are we doing this? I look across at my counterparts in the government from all walks of life, at my colleagues, why are we doing this to each other and also why are we doing this to the people of Manitoba? Why are we doing this to the people of Manitoba? We are creating a controversy; we are creating problems. Why is it here?

Mr. Speaker, I've mentioned this before in the House and I don't . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Speaker, I've referred from time-to-time of my past, my parents past who happened to immigrate to this country from Russia, as youngsters, asking very little. My grandfather at that time brought a bunch of kids along, asked very little in this country, just the opportunity to work. They were never discriminated against. They did not understand any English language but they realized that the speaking language, the working language at that time in this country was English, accepted it, learned it, not through

school, through broken association with their neighbours and accepted it.

Other people came from other ethnic backgrounds. That's what this country is made of. All of a sudden, 113 years after Confederation we are at each others throats in this province about a language issue. My parents never had difficulty with the language. We spoke German at home. I couldn't speak a word of English until I went to school, I had to be taught and it was difficult because all we did was speak German.

Some of our neighbours spoke Ukrainian. Some of our neighbours spoke French, never spoke a word of English until they went to school, except for the fact that it was basically the working language in this country. At home we spoke German. In our church to this day we speak German. Our ministers preach to us in German.

I know that in the French religion that they speak French. I have all kinds of Ukrainian churches that speak Ukrainian - no difficulty. In our school systems we can teach Ukrainian. We can teach certain courses in German if we want, or French. Where is the difficulty? All of a sudden, here we have a situation, an issue has developed and I ask myself, why is the issue here, because we want to be realistic.

Now I'm going to go back to some of my notes to illustrate exactly what has happened. Prior to the election of November 17, 1981, when the Conservatives were defeated and the NDP Government took over, prior to that there was the Forest case, and we've gone through all the details and I want to compliment our leader who went through the history of it very precisely, he did a very nice job. At that time certain changes took place already.

The Conservative Government at that time, because of the Forest case, accepted the judgment of the Supreme Court and acted on it and actually extended, Mr. Speaker, the rights of the French-speaking people more than was demanded under the Supreme Court.

Now the question that we have to raise is, why are we here now? What are we doing here now when already we have extended the rights of the French people more so than it was in Section 23.1 initially? It was done during our administration at the time of the Forest case; now why are we here fighting with each other?

I ask my colleague, the Member for Radisson, we kid each other once in a while - we are on different sides of the fence government-wise, ethnic-wise. I can live with the gentleman, I respect his views, I know that he respects mine to some degree. Why are we in this issue at this stage, and do you know what? We can call this little stage here where we fight with each other, kid with each other - well we're doing it because of differences of political opinion - but what is happening in the Province of Manitoba at this stage of the game?

There are problems developing because of what we are doing in here. We are now getting people to look at each other with a different view. Over the 100 years that we worked side by side, irregardless of ethnic, we were neighbours, we were friends, we worked and helped each other out, never a question raised as to can you speak French, can you speak Ukrainian, German or English, it was never a question. We learned to live together, that's what built this country strong, what it is now, pride in our country. We never asked of our background; what can we do for each other; what can we do for the country?

Now all of a sudden, we have a different issue. We are fighting a language issue. I, personally, as indicated before, wish I didn't have to speak to this resolution. I am not happy with it. I am not happy that the issue is there. We're all playing games in this House here, but out there in the rural areas and in the city and Manitoba, it is not a fun game anymore. We can take shots at each other here, make our speeches, go back. There's information and material until the end of time, but the people out there don't realize what we are doing here.

We think we're doing the right thing on our side; the government thinks that they're doing the right legally for their side. I think we missed the point, it could have been handled differently. We have a problem, because in my area my good friends, irregardless of what their ethnic background is, are starting to look at each other because of what's happening in here, what they read in the paper. You know, we're all grandstanding, making a lot of noise about the rights of the French, of the ethnics, of the minorities. It's a bunch of hogwash, Mr. Speaker, and it's hurting this province. All we have to do is look around and see what's happened in other provinces.

No. 1, let's take New Brunswick where they have gone through this. There was a certain individual, Mr. Speaker, that wrote a letter in New Brunswick asking for information — (Interjection) —

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, P. EYLER: Order please.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate in a country that is the most desirable country in the world to live in, bar none, in my opinion, where people from all over the world would give anything to come live here, that we have got to the point where we are scratching at each other's throats, knocking each other's principles. For what? For political gain? The Minister that spoke said, nobody's going to gain politically. Then what are we doing?

This is what happens in my mind. I'm an ordinary layman, Mr. Speaker, I look at things sort of on a face value as most Manitobans maybe do, but we have so many lawyers and professional people now that say, oh this is a technical point this way. Certain laws could be invalidated, what have you. It's getting to be a problem.

Everybody here has their opinion, and we have lots of legal minds and we have the legal opinions and what have you. The public out there doesn't realize what's going on in that respect. They know though that we have flagged an issue that is touching everybody right in the gut, — (Interjection) — Right, and we've all learned to live with this situation over the past. Now, all of a sudden, we're creating controversy, we are, Mr. Speaker. It bothers me.

That is why the issue is a very controversial issue; that's why the media writes about it all the time; that's why we are at each other trying to make political points.

A MEMBER: Is that what you're doing?

MR. A. DRIEDGER: We all have our points of view in this matter. The media writes their version of it; the governments puts their version forward; we put our

version forward. I say: what has happened? Why is this issue here? I have asked myself that, I think many people ask: why is this issue here? Is it a diversion on behalf of government?

When they got elected in 1981 it was on the basis that they'd change the whole economic issue around. There was never any talk of language rights; there was never talk of seat belts, stuff of that nature. It was basically, we will turn the economy around, but that hasn't happened.

So what happens? Of course we're all political animals here so we try and create a diversion, get the heat off the real issue. Possibly this is what they've done, because they failed miserably in the economic aspect of it. They have, you know, it just hasn't washed.

We come up in the last session now that we're still in, the record-breaking Session. We have dealt with over 100 bills, and the Minister speaking just prior to myself indicated all these bills and he was going to deal with them, and I won't get into the problem of going back to the things that we have passed, but much of this stuff was very, you know, dicey stuff. But the things that they've dealt with are not the things that they got elected on, certainly the language issue is not one of them.

One thing that we should never forget, why is it here? The Attorney-General - let's look back to how this thing developed - apparently somewhere along the line negotiated an arrangement, supposedly restoring certain rights. I don't know where the demand came from, because it was already done through the Forest case. The Bilodeau case, if it had been required they could have done the same thing as we did with the Forest case, let the Supreme Court rule on it.

Now they wanted to circumvent this whole thing. That is why we are here now. Like I say, we can fight on issues; bring up issues, we'll fight them, that is our responsibility here. But when we start hurting the majority of Manitobans on this issue - and that's what is happening. What happens with the government now - and I have to fault them, they had no reason to bring this in.

The Attorney-General, I think, innocently thought that he would sort of do a little favour and do something that wouldn't be that controversial. He brought it forward; all of a sudden somebody flagged the concern on what it was going to do and bang, the fight's on. We, as opposition, allow a whole bunch of bills to be passed just so that we could deal with the French language issue, and it grates.

What bothers me is why; why would the Attorney-General do that at this stage of the game? He has accomplished basically nothing; he's got everything in a turmoil. One could be wicked in one's thinking and say, well his political philosophy is something that - you know, in the Communistic countries the thing is always, if you can agitate and divide, then if you create enough problems that way you can bring your points forward. One could think that. But the Attorney-General, in bringing this issue forward, has created many problems. So what happens during the course of a recess, the hearings, and it's been one big hullabaloo, and I don't know why the Ministers of the Crown would do that, they must have had tremendous pressure all through the course of the summer. They had a very bad session, they came out very poorly. They haven't been able to

prepare for the next one, face us again. It must be difficult, obviously.

The Minister of Finance is already trying to pat himself on the back, saying his deficit is not as big as we had said it would be. He's got other things that . . .

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Just an example of your predictions, Albert. Just another example of your foolish predictions.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: It must be difficult, yes, obviously. The Minister of Finance already is trying to pat himself on the back saying his deficit is not as big as we had said it would be. He's got other things that . . .

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Just an example of your predictions, Albert; just another example of your foolish predictions.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: What does the Premier do? Why do we have some of these problems? I am entitled to my view as well as anybody else, and I would say it is because a government that is leaderless. It is a government that has no backbone and they are fudging on issues. They are having difficulty with what they are doing right now. So what does the Premier do? He takes and shuffles around a little bit. He takes the heat off the old pro that's created the whole problem, the Attorney-General, and puts it in the hand of an eager hotshot who has now got to be a Minister, with all due respect, because I can go to official functions with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and we treat each other with proper respect, but in this House here we can say it as it is.

This Premier has picked this eager young individual who is so enthused with his responsibility and knows all the laws in this House that one wonders how this House has even been able to function all these years without him because he's got a handle on it all. He appoints this individual, and I want to compliment the Member for Springfield, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, for the move that he has made from the back over there to here. It's a good move; no, no, I want to retract that statement. It's a big move, it's not necessarily a good move, but for him it's a very egotistical move, understandable, and this individual who has been trying to spout the Rules of the House from the back seat for a long time is now in charge of piloting through the language issue that has actually already created so many problems. He gets carried away, it's understandable, he gets carried away with the issue that he has before him. I take offence at some of the things on TV, and he has got a fair amount of TV time lately, you know, when he makes reference to things like the Mennonites being exempt in the last war where they could serve as CO's, conscientious objectors. He said concessions were given to Mennonites at that time as a minority group, and we should be allowed to make concessions on TV.

HON. A. ANSTETT: I never said we gave concessions.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: So, you know, he gets a little carried away with his importance on these issues and it is unfortunate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because what is

happening here - I think I want to just refer to a letter sent out by a Mr. Charles Bigelow, where they sent out in December a letter, December, 1983. Mr. Charles Bigelow apparently is the president of the NDP Party and I just want to put this on the record - probably their propoganda for their people - and it says, "Look at French Language Services. For over 100 years no one has even tried to deal with this problem. Howard Pawley and the NDP are working for 'Made in Manitoba' solutions that don't threaten anyone's job or make anyone feel like an outsider in Manitoba. Whether you like the NDP answer or not, isn't it time we actually put this problem behind us?"

See, it is this kind of statement, this kind of promotion that gets the people in Manitoba upset. Over 100 years no one has even tried to deal with this problem. Now we are not supposed to be talking of people lying in this House, or accuse anybody of lying, but the deception of a statement of this nature is something that should be dealt with here, because it was in 1980, when the Conservatives, because of the Supreme Court ruling in the Forest case, already dealt with that. Now I can see, of course, where it says - "Whether you like the answer or not, isn't it time we actually put this problem behind us?" I know they want to put this problem behind them, it's a very uncomfortable problem. Just because you shift some of the players from the A/G to the present Minister of Municipal Affairs doesn't resolve the problem.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have totally fallen off course from my notes and it is not hard to do because these issues are something that one can speak better from the heart. As I indicated when I got up, I really wish that I didn't have to deal with this subject in this House. — (Interjection) — I wish, also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the Member for Inkster would come out into my area one time and get himself educated a little bit, because he doesn't really have a grasp of what's going on. He has no feeling for the matter in the rural areas where it is a much more volatile issue. — (Interjection) — It is.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I suppose we can agree to disagree and probably we will do that, but I think the one thing that has been expected of people that are elected is fairness. Be relatively fair; be fair with your people that you represent because they ask each one of us, they ask: what is this issue all about? Do we twist it to suit our purposes, or do we tell them what the issues are? The confusion is there, and no matter what, at this stage of the game it has gone so far that there is no way that we can correct the confusion, because whether the government says this is the case, or we as opposition say this is the case, or we have the legal opinions, it isn't going to change it. The confusion is there, the mistrust of government is there, and because you are government you will reap the benefits of that. You will reap the benefits. Unfortunately - you know, politically, maybe fortunate for us - but unfortunately for the people of Manitoba that is what's going to happen.

I get cards, I've got hundreds of these cards now and I would like to just read into the record. It says: "What can I do for my country, my family, my friends today?" When you look at a heading like that you instantly pay attention. It seems fair enough because I think basically many of us want to do that.

It says: "You can speak out, voice your opinion and your dissatisfaction with the Manitoba NDP Government and the Federal Government's efforts to force the French language, its inconvenience and its multimillion dollar costs upon us regardless of our wishes." Now where would an individual get that kind of information? Is it fair? Is it not fair?

You read on: "We all love our French neighbours and friends and sincerely respect their part in Canadian heritage. However, we do not wish to be forced to speak, use or be legally bound to live, work or play in any other language but English." Now that is a bias. One could almost say that is a bigoted statement, isn't it?

And it continues: "If you agree with the wishes of the majority of Manitobans and wish to help to rid Manitoba of this extremely divisive language issue, then put your name and address on this card today and mail it to your MLA and he will take up the fight for us against forcing the use of any language upon us."

HON. G. LECUYER: Do you think that's honest representation?

MR. A. DRIEDGER: No, I am not saying that. Now, just a minute, I want to continue. And it says: "REMEMBER" - in big letters - "if you are not part of the solution then you are part of the problem, so mail your voice today."

All right, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I read this into the record because I get a lot of these, and I think there is some bias involved in this.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you. I certainly can't call on your position to ask people not to make remarks from the back because I'm probably one of those that does it quite a lot. At the same time, I'm surprised when the Premier sits in the back row there and chides me about something that I feel very emotional about, but that's fair enough I guess.

When I read this into the record today, I didn't say that I had written it, I'm just saying that I'm getting hundreds of these, and when I read it as I did, I look at it and I say, there is a bias there. I have to look at it, I think there's a bias here and I wonder how is that bias established. Has it been because of r.y promotion? Has it been because of the media? Has it been because of the government? I'll tell you something, I have hundreds of these, I haven't talked to all these people. I have not put out news releases on this issue. Where did they have the bias from? Why is it there, and it's there throughout Manitoba?

When the Member for Elmwood talks about 10,000 signatures, he hasn't gone out and promoted the individual signatures to do that. That is a gut feeling that develops from among people. Why? Because we're touching on a very sensitive personal issue. It isn't just a French issue, now we're talking of every minority group, we're talking of the minority groups because they're not sure what's happening.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we could go on and we will be going on, I suppose, at length on these issues. As indicated before, I've had difficulty with this thing. I would have just as soon, initially, when we started I

indicated to my House Leader at that time I'd just as soon not speak on the issue because I was trying to be political on it. How do you ride the fence between the people that are supporting me on an issue of this nature? I think everybody is to some degree playing politics with it. It is unfortunate because we, as individuals, are not going to be winners politically and the losers are the people in Manitoba, all of them.

It would be so easy if the government - I want to just make a statement in conclusion - had left this issue alone. It was being resolved automatically because of the Forest case. You can hide behind all the tax figures and bull that's flying around, as we do as well, but you could have left it there.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: You've been asleep for four years have you Albert?

MR. A. DRIEDGER: No, but I think the Minister of Finance has been. It is most unfortunate because politically you will not be winners. There's only losers in this game and it is the people of Manitoba, and it is to some degree the French-speaking people. You've done them a bigger injustice than anybody can imagine, and that will come out in the future, because what you've done, you've created a wall of divisiveness in Manitoba among people that have learned to live together till now. You can take the credit for that and, if you don't believe that, you just call an election on the issue right now. — (Interjection) — . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

Are the members ready to proceed?

The Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. How very interesting. When you touch a nerve, the yelling of "you haven't got the guts." I'll tell you something, I'll take any one of you, including the Premier, including the new Minister of Municipal Affairs, into any public arena to discuss this in my area. In fact, I'd welcome the challenge to take you people out there. I would try and do it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in such a way that when they set up the hearings throughout Manitoba, where they picked and chose where they would have them, I would try to do it in a little fairer way than that, too. But it's interesting when they say you haven't got the guts. I'll take you on anytime.

The people in Manitoba are the losers, and you know it's interesting . . .

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: Order please.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Well, Mr. Speaker, it gives me a little justification that when some of the members are going to be speaking that it can heckle a little bit as well. It doesn't necessarily bother me, but I take certain solace in that because I give my share, I'll take my share, and I'll again give my share. We'll work on that to some degree.

Obviously I hit some raw nerves here because in conclusion the pressure is on you guys. The government is suffering right now, each one of you is squirming in your seats, and you know what the public reaction is. That's why I can quite freely say, Mr. Speaker, call an election on the issue. There wouldn't be six people left in this House on that side because of the issue and you know it, so you can camouflage it and do what you like in terms of trying to distort figures, we can use figures. Hey, look at all this stuff we have. There's thousands and thousands of words spoken. If you think you're right, call an election. Simple, very simple.

HON. A. ANSTETT: We'll consider it after we go to the meeting.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Anytime. The pressure is not on me, the pressure is on you, you are government. I'll tell you something, we have forgotten that you're government, so have the people of Manitoba forgotten that you are government because you don't know how to govern properly. You botched economic issues, you botched the French language issue, you botched every issue to date, and it is for that reason that people can't wait till your term is over so that we can root you out.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

Question before the House — (Interjection) — Order please.

The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seeing as how we're into the year 1984, I guess it's proper that we should once again pay some respect to various people in the Assembly. I want to assure you, Sir, that I wish you the very best in the coming year in your position as the chief custodian of this Assembly, and I sincerely hope that we'll look forward to a better quality of debate, less interruptions from the Minister of Finance and others that may feel so inclined to interrupt from time-to-time. I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that things do carry on on a much better plane in the near future.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay my congratulations to the Member for Springfield who has been rather singularly honoured by the First Minister and given a responsibility that is rather unique, coming as it does in the sequence of events that have occurred in the last nine, 12 months. I wish him well, because I believe that it's the Premier who has tried to place the attention on individual members of his Cabinet and, in doing so, try and draw attention away from his own role in this sorry mess that we are debating in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I have been in this Assembly for a few years, served on a few committees, taken part in a few debates; and I think on the other side of the House there is probably the Member for Elmwood, the Minister of Small Business, the Member for Concordia and the Member for St. Boniface, who probably have more seniority in this Assembly than myself. On this particular issue, Mr. Speaker, aside from the Member for Elmwood, they are very strangely silent on this issue. Those are the people who have the experience of this

Assembly and have seen things happen, and have seen what has caused these things to happen.

I think it's rather significant and I think it's worth noting at this time that in 1971 in the Province of Manitoba, the Minister of Municipal Affairs at that time was a man who now holds the office of Premier of this province. At that time there was a very significant change in municipal boundaries in the largest urban area of Manitoba. It was rather strange at that time, but the Minister of Municipal Affairs didn't shepherd the bill through the House at all. That was left to a gentleman, the Honourable Member for St. Johns at that time, Mr. Cherniack. There were a lot of people that had different names for him. I refer to him as the honourable member.

Mr. Speaker, at that time the problems that have developed in this particular debate that is going on today, the seeds were sown at that time. The Minister of Municipal Affairs was one who condoned the whole thing, because at that time the City of St. Boniface was destroyed, and the promises that were made to the residents of the St. Boniface area were not lived up to by the government bureaucracy that was put in place in the City of Winnipeg.

They set up a council, I believe, of 49 members, a tremendously-sized council, and this was the thing that caused the very issue — (Interjection) — I'm sorry if the honourable member doesn't want to listen to the sorry story of NDP fumbling and bumbling. This is what has caused the whole French issue from the very start. The Forest case was caused by the former NDP Government and their mistakes in setting up the City of Winnipeg. That was what caused the Forest case to begin with but, Mr. Speaker, that's history.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs at that time was strangely silent. The Premier of today, dealing with the present issue that's before us, has been strangely silent in this debate. How many have heard the Premier talk in the present debate at this time? How many have heard him? Maybe members in caucus have heard him say something, but I would suspect that even in caucus the Premier doesn't talk. He allows somebody else to do the talking for him on this subject. I suspect that, but I have no way of knowing.

Mr. Speaker, that is the leadership that is presently the only leadership that this province can expect until another election is held, or until the New Democratic Party, in its collective wisdom, decides to change that leadership . . .

HON. G. LECUYER: At least he's not wasting everyone's time like you are.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Radisson says, it's a waste of time.

HON. G. LECUYER: No, no, you're wasting time. You're a waste of time.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. H. GRAHAM: The honourable member has a right to his own opinion, but I want to compare the honourable member's record in this thing to my own. I know his own personal interest in this, but I know his

record of attendance at all the hearings that were held throughout the province, and I'll put my record against his anytime on that particular issue.

Mr. Speaker, we have been asked over the nine months since May to pass a resolution in this Assembly that will be forwarded to the Government of Canada for passage in the House of Commons and the Senate to change The Manitoba Act. Now that resolution and the change that would occur would be a constitutional amendment, and it deals with language issues. I want everyone to know, Mr. Speaker, that the Prime Minister of Canada brought forward an Official Languages Act in the House of Commons in 1968. That Official Languages Act to this day has yet to be incorporated in the Constitution; it has yet to be incorporated. It took 14 years to put forward that and it was not incorporated.

The Prime Minister of Canada talked about a Constitution for our country, and talk went on for years and years and years. There was no change made until there was almost unanimous agreement. I say, "almost," because it was not unanimous, there was one province disagreed.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that it is very important, whenever a Constitution is changed, that there be a substantial degree of agreement that that should be done. If that agreement is not there then the government should not proceed. I suggest to the government today to remember that and think carefully about it, because I would hope that any move towards constitutional change would be a move that would have, hopefully, the support of all members in this Assembly; if not, at least a large portion of this Assembly. I think that could be achieved if members on the government side were honest in their proposals and their endeavours.

I listened to the Honourable Attorney-General the other night, I listened to him very carefully when he talked at great length that the purpose of this whole exercise was to validate statutes, or else there would be sheer chaos. That's his opinion, and I expect it, I think he has a right to his own opinion. I also would say to the Honourable Attorney-General that if that is his case I may even buy it. He put forward a very valid argument, and I might even buy that argument and say, fine, let's go ahead then and validate the statutes. But that isn't what the Attorney-General had said before, that isn't what the resolution says, because if that is the only case that is necessary then you don't need Section 23.1, as you have proposed. You don't need it if you want to do what the Attorney-General has asked this House to do, and that is to validate the statutes, because he has, right from the very beginning in May, again in June, in the hearings, all the way through, the Attorney-General has been fairly consistent on this, that this No. 1 concern is his fear of a Supreme Court case. I suppose by constantly voicing the fear of that threat he probably, by doing this constantly, might very easily have jeopardized his own position when that case does go to court. I don't know whether he has weakened or strengthened his case should it go to the Supreme Court. Personally I don't think he has enhanced his position as the Attorney-General of this province by making constant references to that.

However, be that as it may. If that is his No. 1 concern, I would suggest to the Attorney-General, dealing through the member who has been charged with the

responsibility of bringing this through the House, if that's his only concern, then express it in the resolution and let us deal with it in that way. However, he has put some riders on.

HON. R. PENNER: It's all a package, Harry.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Oh, now he's talking about a package. He's talking about a package. So when you start talking about packages, then you have to look for what other little goodies are in the bag. But he says the No. 1 concern, and he has always said this has been the No. 1 concern, is to validate the statutes.

Now if that is the case, I suggest to the Honourable Attorney-General that he bring that forward as a separate proposal. I suggest to him right now, bring it forward as a separate proposal, take it out of the package and put it on the table here so we can deal with it and then we will see how we do.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: You wouldn't get your federal party to support it, Epp told you that.

MR. H. GRAHAM: I have a great deal more faith in humanity than the Honourable Minister of Finance. I would hate to have such a sour outlook on life as the Minister of Finance.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: I have a happy outlook, pretty soon your speech is going to be over Harry.

MR. H. GRAHAM: I see, I see. If he considers his outlook to be a happy one, I would hate to see him when he's had a bad, bad day . . .

HON. V. SCHROEDER: I have a happy outlook. Your speech will soon be over.

MR. H. GRAHAM: . . . because the Honourable Minister of Finance, you know, Mr. Speaker, if he says it's a happy one, then I would suggest that he has been a joke in this House then for quite some time.

Mr. Speaker, we're talking about proposal . . .

HON. V. SCHROEDER: We've heard all your predictions, Harry, they've always been wrong, and they'll be wrong on this one. You predicted the deficit would be higher; you predicted the wish list was nothing; you predicted the Jobs Fund was nothing. You were wrong on all of those things, you'll be wrong on this.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Speaker, I've listened to the wind coming from the honourable member. I have heard it before, it's a broken record. Whenever he's in trouble he shouts with sound and fury and tries to leave the impression that he knows what he's talking about. It's unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that people in this province are rapidly seeing through him and know him now as nothing more than a windbag. But that's unfortunate for him and for his party because it doesn't do the party any good, nor does it do the province any good.

However, Mr. Speaker, I think the member has been forcing me into a little bit of a digression so I would

resist that and go back to the proposal that has been put forward, and I would hope that there could possibly be some understanding. If there is any field at all where there could be agreement to change the Constitution, if there is any field at all, I think it should be explored.

Mr. Speaker, in order to explore you have to have men of good standing, good understanding, and men whom you can trust to do the negotiations - and women too if you want. But, at the same time, when you place a person in charge of piloting this resolution through the Assembly that person must be able to command the respect of other members, the members of the opposition. And when you hear people saying "Sh, careful, who knows what's lurking outside the door." When that occurs, Mr. Speaker, where do you get trust? The people who are placed in charge must be people who deserve the trust of members and for that I don't blame the Honourable Member for Springfield, I blame the First Minister. The First Minister is the one who has made all the mistakes and he will continue to make mistakes as long as he sits and does nothing, because that's all he has done in this House so far. He sits back and lets everybody else take all the blame and if there are any accolades to be had at some time he will then step forward and say, yes, here I am, Mr. Clean, Mr. Nice Guy, I am the Premier - Mr. Clean.

He has washed his hands of this deal; he won't have any part to do with it. He'll let the Attorney-General handle it; he'll let the Minister of Finance shout and holler; he'll let the Minister of Municipal Affairs do all the other work on it, but he will sit there and I predict, Mr. Speaker, that I would be very surprised, maybe pleasantly surprised, if the First Minister rises in his place to speak in his debate.

A MEMBER: He met with the Leader of the Opposition, what more can you expect of one person in a lifetime?

MR. H. GRAHAM: If your goals are that small that you only want to meet with one person, if you only want to meet with one person . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. H. GRAHAM: I would assume that the First Minister would like to meet more than one person in this province because the people in this province have expressed their viewpoint on this issue, and I would hope that the Honourable First Minister would probably listen to people like the Minister of Small Business, like the Member for Concordia, like the Member for Elmwood, and possibly the Member for St. Boniface too, men who have had long experience in this Assembly so that they will not make the mistakes that the Honourable Attorney-General has made because we don't know. We have seen so many proposals that we still don't know whether this is the final proposal or not.

So far, Mr. Speaker, the proposals that we have heard have not met the criteria that I figure is essential to have the basic approval. — (Interjection) — If you had been listening, I told you once.

A MEMBER: No you didn't.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Yes, I did. All right, I had suggested to the Honourable Attorney-General that if the No. 1

concern was the validation of statutes, then split it out and bring it forward as a separate issue.

HON. G. LECUYER: I asked for that at the beginning, if you recall, Mr. Speaker.

MR. H. GRAHAM: He is the man that has put that priority on and I would like to deal with that issue if they would bring it forward in that manner. I would like to take a look at it then and see what we could do with it.

One of the problems that I see so evident on the other side of the House is the constant questioning of what we would do. Mr. Speaker, if they want answers to that question then I would suggest they call an election and we will show you what we would do. It is a typical NDP ploy to constantly ask, what would you do? Obviously those questions come from a person who knows no further answers, whose knowledge is somewhat limited, who has no further proposals to put forward.

So, Mr. Speaker, when the Honourable Member for Flin Flon says, we listen to the people, I have to laugh. I have to laugh when he says they listen to the people. They heard the people but I don't think they listened to them, or maybe if they did listen they ignored the advice that the people were giving them, and that's quite all right if they want to do that. If they want to ignore the opinions of the public that's their business, but that will tell, Mr. Speaker, in the future, how far they go in public opinion.

If they want to get any answer on how far you go on public opinion just ask the honourable member who sits in the back row and offered his name to serve the people of the City of Winnipeg, he'll tell you what percentage of the vote he got.

That's an indication of the popularity of the New Democratic Party here in the City of Winnipeg where you're talking about over half of the people in the Province of Manitoba. Is that an indication of the popularity of the New Democratic Party here in Manitoba? Mr. Speaker, they weren't voting on that proposal. Those that marked their ballot voluntarily on the proposal indicated something more generous than what support accrued to the Honourable Member for Ellice. So the real effect on the public is even more damaging than the 76 percent or 76.5 percent that was indicated in the plebiscite.

So, Mr. Speaker, if this government tells me that they listen to people, then I would have to say it's a sorry day for Manitoba when they refuse to accept the advice of the people and they say, no, we know what is best. We will show you what is good for you. We know what is good for you. — (Interjection) — yes, yes, yes. I know the honourable member . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. H. GRAHAM: I heard the Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. I would ask members not to divert the honourable member in his consideration of the amendment.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that support, because I don't see that kind

of support coming from members opposite. I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that the government will bring forward still further proposals so that we can take a look at them. If that is not forthcoming then I suppose, Mr. Speaker, as a last resort members on this side will have to put some proposals of their own before this House for consideration.

I would hope that if we have to do that, that the government gives it the same serious consideration that we have given to their proposals. Probably at that time, it may be possible to have a resolution go forward from this Assembly to the House of Commons, the Government of Canada and the Senate that would basically have the support of people in this Assembly and in this province, because the changes that we are placing before the House of Commons, the suggestions that are going forward there are far-reaching, are very significant to the future of this province and its place in Confederation.

So, Mr. Speaker, I plead once again with the Honourable First Minister of this province to make every possible effort to reach an accord, something that will reach the common view that can be held. When the Honourable Minister tells us he has offered us that, I have to say to the Honourable First Minister that he is fooling himself because I haven't seen one proposal that has been put forward that hasn't been changed. Mr. Speaker . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that if there is any stonewalling in this province, stonewalling of the will of the large majority of the people of this province, then that stonewalling is being done by that honourable gentleman sitting over there. When 78 percent of the people say he is wrong, he is still trying to stonewall them. If he wants to talk about stonewalling, then I think it is time that we told the people who it is in this province that is stonewalling.

So, Mr. Speaker, . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. H. GRAHAM: The Honourable Minister says I haven't dealt with the points or the issue. I have put forward more positive suggestions in this House tonight than I have seen come from anybody on that side of the House at any time in this debate. Mr. Speaker, if their ears are deaf and they do not wish to hear, then that is not my fault, that is theirs, and the province will be all the more sad that this government will not listen; that this government will not act; that this government will stonewall the people and will refuse to listen.

So, I say with regret, Mr. Speaker . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. H. GRAHAM: . . . I say with regret that, if the government refuses to listen to suggestions from this

side, we may have to at some point in this debate put on paper some suggestions that they then cannot ignore.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say I hope the First Minister will enter this debate. I hope that he will enter this debate now and I hope that he will make a contribution that is worthy of a First Minister of this province so that the people of this province can hear the word first-hand. We can then see how far this government is going to go to comply with the wishes of the vast majority of the people in this province.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity of being able to take part in this debate at this time. I'm sure I look forward to taking part in it again as things change

and proposals are put forward that deserve the worthy consideration of this entire Assembly.

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

MR. A. KOVNATS: Mr. Speaker, due to the closeness of the hour to 10 o'clock, may we call it 10 o'clock?

MR. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House to call it 10 o'clock? (Agreed)

The time being 10 o'clock, the House is adjourned and will stand adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 2:00 p.m. (Wednesday).