

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
Tuesday, 25 March, 1980

Time: 2:30 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Before we proceed, I should like to draw the honourable members' attention to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have some 15 distinguished visitors from the state of North Dakota, Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, under the direction of Senator Russell Thane. On behalf of all the honourable members we welcome you here this afternoon.

We also have a particularly large gallery today. We have 90 students of Grade IX Standing from Spring Valley School under the direction of Mr. Riches. This is school is in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

We have 40 visitors from Steinbach, which is in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport.

We have 20 students of Grades IX, X, and XI Standing from R. B. Russell School under the direction of Miss Medynski. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Point Douglas.

We have 40 visitors from Red River Community College under the direction of Mrs. Baird. This college is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Logan.

And we have 12 students of Grade VI Standing from Sacre Coeur School under the direction of Mrs. LeGras. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

On behalf of all the honourable members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . .

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. ABE KOVNATS: Monsieur l'Orateur, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain Resolutions, directs me to report same and asks leaves to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Virden, Report of Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, I have a statement and I have copies. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report to the House that this morning, as most members are probably aware, I and some of my colleagues met with a group of North Dakota State Legislators and Senators who are members of the Garrison Diversion Overview Committee. Our discussions included consideration of the potential impacts of the transfer of Missouri Basin water into the Hudson Bay Basin, as well as consideration of possible modifications to the Garrison project which the Overview Committee believes will not result in damage to Manitoba waters.

Mr. Speaker, I advised the members of the Garrison Diversion Overview Committee that Manitoba remains opposed to any action that could result in the transfer of water; hence, of potentially damaging fish species and fish parasites or diseases as well as contributing to water quality problems. This position is consistent with a recommendation of the International Joint Commission, stating that those

parts of the Garrison diversion project affecting Canada not be built until this problem has been resolved to the satisfaction of Canada. Members of the House are aware that introduction of foreign species of fish, or parasites, or diseases from the Missouri Basin to the Hudson Bay Basin would result in irreversible damage to our multi-million dollar commercial and recreational fishing resources in Lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba. Manitoba's concerns can only be satisfied by the elimination of those parts of the project which would transfer water from the Missouri system across the Divide to the Hudson Bay Basin. Members of the Overview Committee gave us assurances that they, as a committee, did not wish to proceed with any part of the proposed project that could result in damage to the Manitoba environment.

Mr. Speaker, our government and the North Dakota committee both recognize and continue to adhere to the established lines of formal communication through our respective Federal Governments, but our informal meeting held this morning has contributed to a fuller understanding of Manitoba's and North Dakota's positions regarding the Garrison issue.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. HARVEY BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Minister for bringing this matter to the attention of the members of the Legislature and through us, to the people of Manitoba. I appreciate the fact that the Minister is continuing the policy which we had established as government, and that is of taking a position completely against any transfer of water from the Garrison diversion project into the water system of Manitoba. I would hope that his government will continue to do everything in their power to oppose this proposed action on the part of the United States Government, and I would hope also, that he would work closely with the International Joint Commission in that regard. It's unfortunate that since this Minister has had his responsibility of protecting the natural resources of Manitoba, that in one case, which has been brought to the attention of this House, he argued against the decision of the International Joint Commission. We said at that time we did not agree with that action. It unfortunately, I believe, reduces Manitoba's effectiveness in its establishing a position of agreement with the International Joint Commission in this case. But I want to assure the House, Mr. Speaker, that the New Democratic Party members of the Legislature are completely opposed to any transfer of water from the Garrison Diversion project into the Manitoba system and will continue to oppose any such action.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before I proceed with Oral Questions, I want to draw the honourable members' attention to the loge on my left where we have a former member of this Chamber, Mr. Russ Paulley, former Leader of the New Democratic Party and a Minister of Government for some seven years, and a long time member of this House. On behalf of all the honourable members, we welcome you here today, Russ.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, a question to the First Minister. In view of the fact that March 31st is near upon us, can the First Minister advise, in the absence of his Minister of Finance, as to when we might expect the introduction of Interim Supply?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON, Premier, (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, shortly.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Education. Can the Minister of Education confirm reports that he did indeed fail to meet with a group

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of parents, designated the Parent Coalition of Handicapped Children and Youth for Equality in Education, as had been requested by them on March 20th of this year?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to reply to that particular question. On the morning of the day that I was to meet with that particular group I realized that a matter had arisen that would prevent me from meeting with them on that particular evening. My secretary was instructed to contact the group and see if we could find an alternate date, however they were very insistent that they must meet that evening, so I communicated to them through my secretary it would be impossible for me to be there because of the matter that had arisen, and would they be prepared to meet with my Deputy Minister. This was their choice.

I regret the fact that I could not be there, I would have been very pleased to have met with them, but I think members on that side of the House realize that there are emergency situations, particularly when you are a Minister of the Crown, that arise that do prevent you from meeting all commitments, and usually we try to make some alternate arrangement. The arrangement that was made in this case was agreed to by the particular committee.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the breakdown of the intended plans by the parents' group, would the Minister be prepared to reschedule a meeting with the coalition group?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, I certainly did give the group that opportunity on the day proposed for the meeting, and having been given that opportunity, it was their choice then to meet with my Deputy Minister. However, I certainly would make every attempt to meet with that particular group again, if this is their wish.

MR. SPEAKER: Th Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Cultural Affairs. The Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra is in a crisis situation with a \$625,000 debt and failure to meet last week's payroll. Can the Minister report on what action she has undertaken to assist in the present crisis?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Cultural Affairs.

HON. NORMA L. PRICE (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, as the House well knows, the Manitoba Arts Council is the long arm of the government through which we deal with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. At this point, I'm having a meeting this afternoon with some of the members of the Arts Council in the hope that we can find some avenues that we can take to aid the orchestra. I hope that some of the technicalities that are holding back the funds of the city of Winnipeg that would have looked after these present needs are going to be solved and that they will be forthcoming. I think I would probably have more to tell the House tomorrow than I have at the present time.

MR. DOERN: Is the Minister considering providing any short-term financing?

MRS. PRICE: I can't answer that at this present moment, Mr. Speaker, but I would remind the Honourable Member for Elmwood that my department has just given \$125,000 through the Arts Council to the orchestra for the bank loan that they had. We are certainly prepared to sit down and work with them. They haven't, in essence, come to ask us for support as yet, we know that there is the problem, it's a very obvious one, and this afternoon as I sit down with the members of the Council, I think we will be able to come up with, hopefully, some options with which we can rectify the situation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood with a final supplementary.

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MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister whether she has any long-term plan of action to help put the Symphony on a firmer financial footing, because we've had recurrences of this. We had a crisis a year ago, and I ask her whether she is going to attempt a long-term plan of action and whether she actually has one in mind at the present time?

MRS. PRICE: Mr. Speaker, I had a meeting with the President, the Past President and the Treasurer a couple of weeks and it was a very fruitful meeting, and I think that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. They have some very concrete projects that they have in mind, amongst others their fund raising project, and I think that we will find, in the next couple of months, with different ideas that they have that they are going to proceed with that we will have very positive results from it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. VIC SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Education. Although he was unable to meet with the Parents Coalition last Thursday evening I'm sure he's had an opportunity to read the brief which was presented on that particular evening. I'm wondering whether the Minister could advise the House as to the response of the government to that brief?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, I think this would be better discussed under my Estimates, but I can only say that the brief, of course, addresses concerns that are dealt with within the revised School Act and I am not at liberty at this point to discuss the particular changes that may or may not have been made in that particular Act.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, to the Minister of Education, I would refer the Minister specifically to Page 6 of that brief and the last several lines of the poem of the Nobel Prize winning poet, Gabriela Mistral.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to the honourable member it was suggested to him by the Minister that these questions be asked probably in his Estimates or when a bill is forthcoming in the House. Would the Honourable Member for Rossmere care to rephrase his question?

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I will then ask the Minister a question with respect to the situation in Fort la Bosse School Division. Can he confirm that the children at Elkhorn are still not back in school and that a resolution has been passed by the School Board decreasing the teachers from 3.5 to 2.5 for this coming school year at the Elkhorn School?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, I can only confirm that the School Board has rescinded their motion to remove the high school grades from that particular school and I would expect that the situation will return to normal in that area very quickly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rossmere with a final supplementary.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, again to the Minister of Education, could he confirm as well that there has been a decrease of one teacher for this coming fall at the Elkhorn School and that he expects to meet with the parents from Elkhorn and various other towns shortly with respect to this entire matter?

MR. COSENS: No, Mr. Speaker, I cannot confirm that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the honourable, the Minister of Health with respect to the matter pending before the College of Physicians and Surgeons. In view of the fact that any appeal to court with respect to the suspension or the possible suspension of Dr. Schwartz would

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not likely be considered on medical grounds, that is the court would not be dealing with the judgment of the College of Physicians and Surgeons as to what constitutes the practice of medicine, would the Minister assure himself that no prejudice accrues to Dr. Schwartz because his philosophy with regard to the practice of Medicine happens to differ from the orthodox philosophy of the College of Physicians and Surgeons?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Yes, Mr. Speaker, and I think I can assure my honourable friend that it is not just a cleavage of philosophy or a difference of philosophy that's at issue here. The question was raised earlier this week as to the positions being taken with respect to preventive medicine. It's not an issue as to whether one is free to practice preventive medicine or not, it is a question of the practice of good preventive medicine or inferior preventive medicine, and the college's role is to ensure that the public of Manitoba is protected. I'll be receiving a report later in the week and I will certainly communicate what I know to the Honourable Member for Inkster. At this juncture I've received no more information than I reported on yesterday.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health. Let me again assure him, the same as I assured him yesterday, that I don't know that I am asking the Minister to assure himself that the question upon which Dr. Schwartz is being dealt with is not simply a question of a different form of medicine and that if that is the question and if there is danger that the college is judging him on that basis, that the Minister look into it to see that the citizens of Manitoba are not going to be deprived of good preventive medicine simply because it doesn't accord with the orthodoxy of the College of Physicians and Surgeons?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to the House that repetition of questions, whether it be on the same day or succeeding days, I'm not too sure whether it serves the interests of the House or not.

The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I thought I had assured the Honourable Member for Inkster of that fact. If I hadn't, I do so now, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster with a final supplementary.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, just to the point. The Honourable Minister did indeed make that assurance but told me there was an appeal, and I ask him, that in view of the fact that the appeal would not consider that point, if it did arise, would he, on the part of the province of Manitoba, keep that particular position in mind? That's all I ask.

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. DAVID BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is also to the Minister of Health. I wonder if he could assure the House that in his negotiations with the federal government in connection with Deer Lodge Hospital that he will do so with the full consultation and discussion with the Royal Canadian Legion and other veterans groups to assure those interested parties that their needs and requirements will be taken into consideration in any arrangements with Deer Lodge Hospital.

MR. SHERMAN: Most assuredly, Mr. Speaker, and I think that I have, in my public statements, referred to the fact that nothing would be done without the concurrence and endorsement of the Royal Canadian Legion. I may have neglected to mention that in responding to a question in the House yesterday, but I want to reassure the Honourable Member for Minnedosa that the Legion will be involved every step of the way, or there will be no steps along the way.

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

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Highways. I would like to ask him whether he has any report to the House as to the whereabouts of his overdue annual report for 1978-79?

HON. DON ORCHARD (Pembina): Mr. Chairman, my overdue report on the Department of Highways will be tabled to the House shortly.

MR. WALDING: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister give the House any assurance that his report will be available before the conclusion of his Estimates?

MR. ORCHARD: No, Mr. Chairman.

MR. WALDING: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister what disciplinary action he intends to take against himself for being in breach of The Highways Department Act?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. HENRY J. EINARSON: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture and the question pertains to the movement of grain in the province of Manitoba. And I would like to zero-in particularly on one railroad and ask the Minister, as it pertains to the Morris to Hartney line, whether his office has had any contact with (1) the Canadian National Railroad, (2), the Canadian Wheat Board, (3), any officials who are responsible in the federal government as to when we're going to get some action in the movement of grain down that particular line?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, to the Member for Rock Lake, in light of the fact that I had made some comments the other day about the Red River Valley, part of that line he is referring to is a part of that area that was affected by last year's flood, and there has been move made to organize a program to move grain out of there if it's threatened by flood. I have no particular details on any other part of the line, but I will find out for the honourable member what the delivery patterns have been from the Morris to Hartney area.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. BEN HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Highways. Could the Minister indicate to the House who the publisher is who has the contract for the publication of the Highway Department Annual Report for the fiscal year ending in March of 1979?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Speaker, the printing of the Annual Report of the Department of Highways was given to the Queen's Printer who commissioned it out.

MR. HANUSCHAK: My question is to the Minister responsible for the Queen's Printer. Could the Minister responsible for the Queen's Printer indicate to the House to whom the Queen's Printer had contracted out the publication of the Highways Department Annual Report?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSON (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I'll have to make enquiries to the Queen's Printer to determine the answer to that question.

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

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MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to also direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture and ask him whether he has made representations to the Canadian Wheat Board as to the practice of having off-board grains, namely oil seeds such as rapeseed, being shipped by truck to the lakehead and thus by-passing the established quotas, the practice which could lead to congestions at the terminal elevators if allowed to expand, and also could hamper car unloadings if allowed to expand?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: No, I have not, Mr. Speaker.

MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Could I ask the Minister whether he is not concerned that this practice of by-passing the quota system, and then allowing farmers to re-assign their acres to other Board grains, thus giving an unfair advantage to large land operators. He should make his representations known to the Canadian Wheat Board committee, which he didn't do last year and maybe he'll have an opportunity to do so this year.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, in response to the Member for St. George, I would just like to say that the grain transportation co-ordinator has been dealing with this particular issue and he has made the comment, as long as it does not affect the unloading of box cars or hopper cars at any of the outlets, the port facilities, that in fact there shouldn't be any difficulties in the movement of grain by truck. And my No. 1 one concern is that with the cost of production that the farmers are faced with in the province of Manitoba and western Canada, that they are able to move grain into the cash market so that they can continue to operate their businesses.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George with a final supplementary.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister investigate allegations that have been made that rye grain is being imported from the United States to fill quota acres that have been reassigned from grain shipped outside the quota system, thus preventing other farmers from delivering their grain on the quota system, and preventing small farmers, that you say that you're a friend of, from delivering the grain that they have stored in their granaries? That's what the problem is.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I believe the question was, would I investigate grain that has been brought in to be sold? I could investigate it, but I would like to say, if there has been any I would not think it would be to any great extent or any large amount that could affect the delivery opportunities for the farmers. And again, I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that I think it's in the best interests of the producers of Manitoba that they have as many delivery opportunities as possible so that they can, in fact, continue on with the job of producing and selling grains, to help the economy of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System. Can the Minister confirm that he has been contacted by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in regard to purchases by the Manitoba Telephone System of equipment that is being constructed by AEI Telecommunications, a company that is currently being struck by members of the IBEW?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that I have received, by correspondence, notice to this effect.

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MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary, can the Minister, in that correspondence the union indicated that it would be willing and would in fact seek a meeting with the Minister at his convenience in order to discuss this situation, is the Minister now prepared to commit himself to a meeting with members of IBEW in regard to this situation at the earliest possible moment?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I think it would be taken for granted that this Minister, or indeed any other Minister of this government, is always prepared to meet with any group of citizens of this province. I should point out to the Member for Churchill that this is a matter that is, of course, of concern to the board and to the management of Manitoba Telephone Systems, a Crown corporation operating within its own areas of jurisdiction. And I further point out to the honourable member that the matters which the Manitoba Telephone System, the equipment that they have contracted for by this company, is the kind of equipment that is purchased with a considerable lead time. It is manufactured to order, it is tendered on, and it's not at all feasible for the MTS to, at this point, consider changing the supplier of this specific, custom-made equipment. I appreciate the tenor of the honourable member's question and the request of the union, that is that the Crown corporation should consider not purchasing from a plant that is being struck.

But again, Mr. Speaker, I should indicate through you to the union members that the Manitoba Telephone System cannot be unfairly judged in any way in this matter because of the length of time, the tenor of time, that is required for the order of the purchase of this kind of equipment.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill with a final supplementary.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for that answer and hope that he would be willing to relay that information directly to the members when they do meet.

I would address my final question to the Minister of the Environment. Can the Minister confirm that the provincial environment laboratory is currently handling a portion of the soil and snow samples that are being tested for vinyl chloride levels from the derailment site outside of MacGregor, and in keeping with the fact that the Minister has indicated that he wants information in regard to this derailment to be more widely and more quickly disseminated in the future, is the Minister prepared to commit himself to tabling those results as soon as they become available so that the public may indeed be aware specifically of the test results that are now being found in that area?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. JORGENSEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the snow samples and the soil samples are indeed being tested in the provincial lab, and I am quite sure, without me even telling him, that the results of those tests will be made public.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W. J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, the Member for St. George asked if I would consider an investigation into allegations made by residents of the Community of Vogar as to moneys that were solicited by the Institute of Cultural Affairs. Mr. Speaker, I have checked with the RCMP who advise that there is no RCMP investigation of any alleged illegal activity, no complaints have been received from anyone by the RCMP headquarters or the Lunder detachment of that force. I would further advise that the Consumers Bureau advises me that the institute submitted material to the Consumers Bureau and in the opinion of the Bureau met all the requirements of The Charities Endorsement Act and the Bureau has received no complaints from any member of the public.

Mr. Speaker, I can only suggest to the member that if he or any other members of the public have any information of a reliable nature that indicates grounds to conduct a criminal investigation that the complaint should be filed with the RCMP or my department; that it is neither fair nor reasonable to launch a public

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investigation without the proper foundation provided by a specific reliable complaint or complaints.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Agriculture whether or not it is his view that if all quotas were eliminated that that would be the best system in providing opportunities for farmers in Manitoba to deliver grain.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, the quota delivery system or the quotas on delivering of grain in Western Canada, of course, has been used to equalize delivery opportunities into what has been a very limited system or a system that has had very limited capacity. And applying the principle of equal opportunity to that limited capacity then, of course, the quota system has to be used.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would then like to ask the Minister whether he agrees with recent policy which has reduced that limited quota opportunity quite substantially, particularly in the last five or six years.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. I think we're getting into a debate here rather than question period seeking information.

Would the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet care to rephrase his question?

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to know whether the Minister has been made representations to the Minister in charge of the Canadian Wheat Board to the effect that they should restore the traditional fair delivery system that existed in this province and in this country for a long long time.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, the Member from Lac du Bonnet is speaking totally as his own point of view. I do not believe he has any statistical information to back that up. I think, Mr. Speaker, that the off-Board grain system, the delivery system, has been given, as I said earlier, the producer's of those grains an opportunity to deliver to the market that they so choose. And Mr. Speaker, as I said, it's a matter of his opinion. I don't believe that the system has been hurt by marketing outside the Canadian Wheat Board.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, does the Minister not agree that if one has a delivery opportunity substantially greater than another, then therefore, the equitable delivery system is virtually destroyed?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. . . Questions of agreement are debatable in nature and add nothing to the question period.

The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. BRIAN CORRIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question is pursuant to a question I addressed to the Honourable Attorney-General yesterday. I would ask again whether he has had the opportunity to advise himself as to whether lawyers trust fund interest contributions were diverted from Legal Aid to General Revenues by his government.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I took that question as notice yesterday. I have not yet received that information and as soon as I receive it I will advise the member.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Health. In view of the fact that the Manitoba Association of

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Registered Nurses conducted a survey of all agencies employing nurses in Manitoba in January of 1980 which revealed a serious shortage of nurses already, namely some 262 nursing shortages in Manitoba generally with some 151 nursing shortages in Winnipeg, would the Minister not concede that we have a nursing shortage right now and that we don't have an insipient nursing shortage, but rather one that already exists; and can he indicate why that nursing shortage exists in Manitoba at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: No, I think it's a question of interpretation, Mr. Speaker. There is, at the present time, no nursing shortage because there are nurses working in the necessary positions filling the necessary complements of our hospitals and our health facilities. But I agree with the Honourable Member that with the shortage, with the shortfall in the professional field and coming out of the schools of nursing, that we face in the immediate future that there certainly is a potential shortage and we are aware of it and have addressed it, have moved on it in terms of meeting with the health facilities and the Manitoba Health Organizations to try to determine the best way to ameliorate its effects. I can't advise the Honourable Member as to why we are at the low end of the nursing supply curve at this time. It's a cyclical professional supply field. As the Honourable Member knows, three years ago there was a surplus of nurses. The shortage is affecting almost every province in Canada at the present time.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, can the Minister confirm that the shortage of nurses that has occurred in Manitoba has resulted because of three years of ill-advised Conservative government cutbacks?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. May I suggest to the Honourable Member that the way he is presently phrasing his question it is argumentative in nature and is out of order.

Would the Member care to rephrase his question?

MR. PARASIUK: Yes. I would like to ask the Minister if he can confirm that the nursing shortage has arisen because of government cutbacks to hospitals and nursing homes which lead to a number of nurses being laid off; which lead to a breakdown in morale of nurses in Manitoba; which lead to their exodus; which further lead to high school graduates refusing to enter nursing schools to the point where their enrolment dropped; and as a result, we are reaping the legacy of this . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order, please. I suggest the Honourable Member is debating rather than seeking information. The purpose of the question period is to elicit information, rather than to make debating points. I have to rule the question out of order.

The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to take a look at Hansard tomorrow. I asked a question specifically in the form of a question, grammatically in a question, non-argumentative. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. May I point out to the Honourable Member that the question has been ruled out of order. If he wishes to challenge that he knows the manner in which he can do it.

The Honourable Member for Transcona with another question.

MR. PARASIUK: I'd like to ask a final supplementary and I did ask if you would take a look at Hansard tomorrow on this matter. My question to the Minister is, can the Minister explain why he is blaming the present nursing shortage in the Health Sciences Centre on the opening of the Seven Oaks Hospital which will take place in October of 1980, not today, why he is blaming the present shortage of nurses in the Health Sciences Centre, which is leading to bed closures, on an event that won't take place for some seven or eight months?

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MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, just let me say that the Member for Transcona has just engaged in some of the most extravagant hyperbole that's been heard in this House for some time; entirely erratic, entirely without foundation and entirely inaccurate. Mr. Speaker, with respect to his references to the morale question and the morale of the nursing profession in the last few years, I can assure him that the morale of nurses since October 11, 1977 has been substantially higher than it was prior to that date. There's never been any question about that in any discussions I've had with any nurses. Mr. Speaker, his references to the totally unfounded "cutbacks and reductions" which is sort of the rallying cry of members opposite are equally inaccurate. There have been no such reductions or cutbacks.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The honourable member has provided an answer and I hope that he . . . The time for question period . . . Order please. Ministers are supposed to provide short direct answers to questions that solicit or elicit information rather than try to score debating points. The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, as the arbiter and the protector of the rights of members of this House, I ask you to consider the questions, the three questions ruled out of order but left on the record, put by the Honourable Member for Transcona. Now in response to his last question . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. I would hope that all members had some semblance of courtesy for those that are trying to answer questions that have been asked by their own members. A member can ask a question when he rises in his place and is recognized by the Speaker. The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the last question asked by the Honourable Member for Transcona, nobody has attempted to blame any situation on the Seven Oaks Hospital opening whatsoever. What I have . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, if the semi-informed, ill-informed and uniformed members on the other side such as the Member for St. Boniface and others will permit me to answer the question.

It's been a known fact in the Health spectrum in this province for several years dating back to the Clarkson-Vayda report that 175 beds would close in the Health Sciences Centre when Seven Oaks opened. That is something that will occur this year. Nobody is blaming the present situation at the Health Sciences Centre on that, however Seven Oaks is out actively hiring nurses. I can't tell the honourable member where some of those who were expecting to retire from the Health Sciences Centre are going. Some of them may be going to Seven Oaks but we are going to meet that challenge within this next five weeks with all the effort and all the imagination and all the creativity that we can.

So let us wait I suggest, Mr. Speaker, till a crisis develops. We are moving to try to head a crisis off.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. Order please. I would like to refer members to Citation 358 of Beuchesne. Perhaps its time that I read it out so members might grasp some of the significance of it. In 1964 the Special Committee on Procedure recommended the following guidelines which were subsequently concurred in by the House to be used by members in asking or answering oral questions.

Such questions should:

- (a) be asked only in respect of matters of sufficient urgency and importance as to require an immediate answer.
- (b) not inquire whether statements made in the newspaper are correct.
- (c) not require an answer involving a legal opinion.
- (d) not be asked in respect of a matter that is sub judice.
- (e) not be of a nature requiring a lengthy and detailed answer.
- (f) not raise a matter of policy too large to be dealt with as an answer to a question.

Secondly, answers to questions:

Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, should deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate.

Citation 359.

A brief question seeking information about an important matter of some urgency which falls within the administrative responsibility of the government or of the specific Minister to whom it is addressed, is in order; (a)(1) It must be a question, not an expression of an opinion, a representation, argumentation, nor debate. (2) The question must be brief. A preamble need not exceed one carefully drawn sentence. A long preamble takes an unfair share of time and provokes the same sort of reply.

This goes on through 12, 13, 14 different points.

I raise it for you now. I hope that it improves the question period when we next get to the question period tomorrow.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health that, Mr. Speaker, do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply with the Honourable Member for Radisson in the Chair for the Department of Natural Resources, and the Honourable Member for Virden in the Chair for the Department of Highways.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

MR. CHAIRMAN, Abe Kovnats (Radisson): Committee of Supply will come to order. The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MORRIS MCGREGOR (Virden): Mr. Chairman, last night in a session of the Committee of Supply which was sitting after 10:00 p.m. the Member for Ste. Rose moved that the Resolution No. 80, of the Highways and Transportation Estimates be varied by reducing Item 1.(a) of that Resolution, the Minister's Salary, to \$1.00.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. It's been moved by the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose:

WHEREAS the people of Manitoba have every right to expect that Government programs and expenditure should be applied fairly to all people in all regions of Manitoba, and

WHEREAS the Minister of Highways and Transportation has flagrantly abused his position and has betrayed the trust placed in him by the people of Manitoba by introducing a highways construction program which has largely ignored regions of Manitoba which are not represented by Conservative MLAs; and more specifically the Minister has proposed that this Committee approve 142 projects in southern Manitoba of which 126 projects are allocated to constituencies represented by Conservative MLAs and only 16 projects in constituencies represented by New Democratic Party MLAs, and

WHEREAS the Minister of Highways and Transportation has proposed Right of Way acquisition of some 262.3 miles in constituencies represented by Conservative MLAs and only 6 miles in constituencies represented by NDP MLAs, and

WHEREAS the road system will not be improved or upgraded in a large part of Manitoba because of the callous policy of the Minister of Highways,

THEREFORE I MOVE that the Minister's salary be reduced to \$1.00.

Signed A. R. Adam, dated March 24th, 1980.

QUESTION put, MOTION defeated.

MR. A. R. (Pete) ADAM (Ste. Rose): Ayes and Nays, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Ayes and nays. Call in the members.

All those in favour of the motion please rise.

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A COUNTED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:
Yeas 22; Nays 28.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I declare the motion lost.

(a) Minister's Compensation--pass; Resolution 80--pass. Resolved that . . .
The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I move the question now be put.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have a motion before the House that the question be put.
The Honourable Member for Inkster on a point of order.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I believe that such a motion is supposed to specify a time under which the question should be put and I'm just looking for the Citation, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: While the Honourable Member for Inkster is looking at his section, may I suggest that it is now the time for the committee to divide into two sections and any motions that are put in connection with Highways now revert to the other room to be dealt with there and only come back into the House if there is an appeal of the Chairman's vote, so that I believe, Mr. Chairman, that the committee should now divide and Highways having been allocated to Room 254, if that's the number, should go there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would agree with the Honourable Member for St. Johns that the committee should resume into the other. I thought just to expedite matters we could have done it but I accept your point of order.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY - HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris MacGregor (Viriden): Committee come to order. We are on Resolution 80.
The Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I move that Clause 1.(a) dealing with the Minister's compensation be voted on within five minutes.

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

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Inkster on a point of order.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I would ask you, Mr. Chairman, in all integrity, to say whether you had a speaker's list yesterday and whether you have followed that speaker's list. If you had no speaker's list, then you are entitled to recognize anybody. If you had a speaker's list then I would respectfully suggest that you are supposed to follow the people in the order in which they were to be recognized on your list.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am not aware of having the Member for Inkster listed as of last night, but what I do is the same as we will in the Chamber, we go one side, because otherwise all members on this side get lined up and that wouldn't be proper. Basically I don't keep a list; I do try and recognize who is in and I signal two or three down the line, in fairness going back one side to the other. I am not sure if that's answers. . .
The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, there is quite more to be said in regard to this department. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: A point of order from the Member for Inkster.

MR. INKSTER: I accept your ruling on the point of order. Now if somebody else wants to speak on a point of order, that is fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I recognize the Member for Ste. Rose. --(Interjections)-- I don't know that, he didn't ask on a point of order. He asked for the floor and I have recognized the Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Does anybody else want to speak on a point of order? --(Interjections)-- Mr. Chairman, yesterday I asked the Minister in regard to turn signals on roadways. . .

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Chairman, is there a vote ? You have a question before you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DESJARDINS: Well, I would like to speak on a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface on a point of order.

MR. LAURENT J. DESJARDINS: I think that we have had tradition and we have had certain things that we would accept in dealing with the Estimates and it was always felt - and this is something that we need the cooperation, and the government needs the cooperation of all the members also - that the Minister's Salary was left until the end. It wasn't thought and it certainly wasn't planned that we would have closure when we came to the Minister's Salary. This is something new that is starting and we will talk about that because every time we have come to the Minister's Salary we can have that kind of Motion, and this is certainly not what the Rules Committee had in mind, Mr. Chairman, when we made these things. There is no point in doing that. We will know and we will act accordingly in the other Estimates, if that is ruled correct.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

A MEMBER: Yeas and Nays.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yeas and Nays then.

COMMITTEE adjourned to the House for a Counted Vote.

SUPPLY - HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION Cont'd

MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris MacGregor: I will call the Committee to order and I think the only way I can rule is to rule from the time I hit the gavel next, the five minutes. The Minister of Government Services has got the eye of the Chairman, I hope it will be shared.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, we witnessed, you know, a pretty childish display this afternoon. I'm not going to take the five minutes. I will let them reply.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Inkster is on the point of order.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, you have indicated to this committee, not more than fifteen minutes ago, that you have rotated from one side to the other. The last person who got the floor was the House leader and you have indicated and I asked you whether you had a list and you said that you moved from side to side. And on that basis and on your own statement, Mr. Chairman, I ask that you call somebody from the recognized other side. Mr. Chairman, I ask you to rule on that point of order, because you have said that's how you handle it and if you don't do it now, then we've got more to talk about than just closure.

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MR. CHAIRMAN: I recognize the Member for Inkster's point of view. I have tried to be fair at all times and maybe, in that point of view, I will go to the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, I believe this is the first time, without question, that we have observed a situation by which closure has been imposed after one speech by the member of the opposition pertaining to the Minister's salary. Never before have we witnessed such arrogance on the part of a government as we have this afternoon. Mr. Chairman, there was desire on the part of my colleagues to raise a number of questions of this Minister. We wanted to raise questions pertaining to the continued inability on his part to explain the lack of failure on his part and his department to file the annual report. There was a desire on the part of my colleague from St. Vital and from Ste. Rose to provide information to us that this Minister promised and committed himself to provide during his Estimates. We have not received that information, Mr. Chairman.

In addition, there were many others that wish to speak. Mr. Chairman, if we are to fully and properly evaluate the performance of a Minister it must be done during this period, not during the line-by-line detailed discussion and observation that takes place. An opportunity must be provided for a full and comprehensive evaluation of a Minister's performance during the Ministerial Salary.

Mr. Chairman, we can only conclude that this government wishes to protect a flagrant and irresponsible, a program which is so disreputable to Manitobans, that they did not wish to give their Minister an opportunity to provide what would have been a weak defense. Otherwise, Mr. Chairman, there is no reason for the imposition of closure this afternoon in this House. Why did this government not provide to their Minister an opportunity to provide a defense to one of the most flagrant, pork-barrelling programs that we've witnessed in a long time pertaining to highway construction in this province? The reason is, Mr. Chairman, that they knew that such an effort would be indefensible on their part. There is no question on that part, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, there has been few occasions when we have observed such a total, such a flagrant abuse of the democratic process as we have observed this afternoon. We've had no opportunity to evaluate the Minister's performance. We've had no opportunity to obtain information from the Minister. Mr. Chairman, we have indeed, a government which is interested in assaulting the democratic process by imposing closure so that a Minister can be protected from answering questions from members of the opposition. And let me serve notice, Mr. Chairman, that we intend to oppose these types of irresponsible, heavy-handed and arrogant moves every time that they occur on the part of this government. If this continues you will see continued efforts on our part to expose that and to fully evaluate the work of weak Ministers, weak Ministers that don't even deserve, Mr. Chairman, the \$1.00 that we were prepared to award them.

I have not witnessed such a weak performance, such an inability to answer questions as I have witnessed during the period of these Highways Estimates discussions, Mr. Chairman, and we leave here as members regretting what has taken place, regretting the moves on the part of this government, the assault on the democratic process within in this Chamber to protect a weak Minister who presented a flagrant program to this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. Order. Maybe we could come to order.

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding, \$1,573,600 for Highways, Transportation General Administration--pass. The Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, we're on a new item. We are on a new item, Mr. Chairman, a new resolve, and I want the floor and I wish to speak to it.

We have finished the Minister's Salary, we are now on the line, it is resolved, it is a new item and I wish to speak to it.

Mr. Chairman, we saw what kind of closure was wanted here. We wanted, Mr. Chairman, to move closure, then take up the last five minutes and when the last five minutes, Mr. Chairman, were taken up by the Leader of the Opposition it was evident that closure was not wanted, because the Minister of Public Works immediately decided that he had to, in opposition to all of the Rules, Mr. Chairman, to make another speech. And he did, Mr. Chairman, he made his speech;

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he gave us his performance; and he was well applauded for it. And, Mr. Chairman, he deserved the applause.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would like to say something about this entire item, which is the resolve that is presently before us. There is resolved now that it is \$1 million, excuse me, --(Interjection)-- \$1 million, 75 hundred --(Interjection)-- Isn't that the entire item of the Department? That is General Administration. And, Mr. Chairman, I would say with respect to this item that obviously there must be some problem on the part of the Ministry in order to have witnessed what we have witnessed happen this afternoon.

Now, Mr. Chairman, let me say that I believe in the Rules. I believe, if I have to say it, in closure. I believe that a minority of the members in the House cannot stop, and should not be in a position to stop, the process of responsible government; that that is the reason why it is possible for a member of the House to put a Motion that something be done within a certain period of time, and the vote to take place. When we were discussing the Rule, Mr. Chairman, there was no argument on my part and no argument indeed on the part of the Member for Morris that this should not take place. But we all said at the time, Mr. Chairman, that the government or the party in power would give notice if they were reasonable people; that when they came, and I understand that there was a good discussion on the Minister's Estimates, that when they came to the Minister's Salary that that would be permitted to be discussed and if that discussion apparently was being used to filibuster, then somebody from the government side could say, look, there will be "X" number of hours left to discuss this item, get your best licks in because that is going to be the end of it. And, Mr. Chairman, the government would have got away with that, it would have been accepted by the people of the province of Manitoba that they did that.

That is not what happened. The Government House Leader got up and said that it be now debated. Then he looked at the Rule and said there has to be a period of time, so the period of time was five minutes. Then when we got into the House the scenario was that even the opposition is not going to be even able to use this five minutes, the Minister of Government Services is going to use the five minutes. Mr. Chairman, that is exactly what happened. Mr. Chairman, that is exactly what occurred.

I say, Mr. Chairman, that had the Government House Leader come in and said, look, we have been long enough on this item, that there is a motion now that the item be discussed for another hour, or two hours, or one and one-half hours, enough time to discuss the Minister's Salary. Because, Mr. Chairman, the fact is that at Rules Committee this morning, which I wasn't able to attend, apparently the opposition agreed to take both Administration and the Minister's Salary and put them at the end. I thought that was a fairly decent concession. What is going to happen when that is now introduced in the House if it is suggested that on the Minister's Salary this government intends to impose closure without debate, because that is what they intend.

Now what are they trying to prove, Mr. Chairman? Are they trying to prove that they are stupid as we say they are? I mean one would think that they would not be trying to give credence to the position that is being put in this area. But this particular motion, Mr. Chairman, on this particular Minister, on any minister, is an unjustifiable use and, Mr. Chairman, it was agreed by everybody who sat on that Rules Committee that the people who did it will have a right to do it, they will have a right to vote for it, but they will also have to accept responsibility for it.

What I am doing now, Mr. Chairman, is to say that on this Minister's Salary and on this item which is now being voted, the people who say that a Minister's Salary should go through without debate, without allowing speeches from members of the opposition, because that is what is happening, and it used to be the Minister's Salary first so that it wouldn't happen. Mr. Chairman, I am willing to let the public judge whether anything that I have said is a distortion. I am willing to have that judged. The honourable member will start to scream --(Interjection)-- Oh, he doesn't scream. Well, Mr. Chairman, I am willing to let the public decide as to whether . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The time of 4:30 having arrived, I will leave the Chair to go to Private Members' Hour and will return at 8:00 p.m.

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SUPPLY - NATURAL RESOURCES

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would direct the honourable member's attention to page 78 of the Main Estimates, Department of Natural Resources, Resolution No. 104, Item 5. Parks, (a) Administration, (1) Salaries. The Honourable Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, I've been given to understand that last night the Minister indicated that he would be bringing forward the Water Resources Program of Maintenance and Construction for the fiscal year 1980-81 and that we would have an opportunity to look at that and be able to, if not at this point in time before we go into Parks, we could do it later at the end in the Capital Estimates of other projects in item 13 on page 84, to debate and ask questions with respect to the drainage program that he didn't bring forward yesterday.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I should first point out of course that it has not been normal practice to bring them forward earlier but that I have agreed that as soon as I have the information available for all of the Capital program that I will make it available and by agreement then we will finish whatever items we're on and deal with Acquisition and Construction, and I may have it available tonight, if not tonight we'll have it available tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item 5.(a)(1) Salaries. The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, there were 10 staff man years in this section in 1979-80. There are two deletions, vacant positions, leaving with us 8 staff man years in the Estimates before us. I think the question of what falls under that item is probably self-evident in terms of the Director and his support staff.

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

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder, Mr. Chairman, whether the Minister, whether he has already done so and I don't believe he has, is prepared to give an overview in terms of what he foresees in terms of the Estimates and the spending of the Parks Branch in the totality of this Resolution.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure that this is the way that you had intended we proceed. I don't believe it's the direction that we had gone with the other branches we dealt with. The Capital program, of course, is the one that is perhaps of most concern in terms of the spending. I think it's fairly evident to the honourable members from the comparison of last year's budget with this year's budget that we are essentially carrying on the same level of maintenance and staffing, with some small reductions as I just pointed out, as we had last year. If, when we get into individual sections, the honourable member would have some questions, I would attempt to deal with those.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister indicate the staff that have been transferred from the Department of Tourism to Parks Division of it, whether or not some of the staff within that division are being utilized by other branches of the Mines and Resources Department, whether or not the staff that had moved over from the earlier department, whether they will remain in the Park section or whether their duties will be transferred throughout the department into different areas?

MR. RANSOM: The delivery of programs, of services in the field, that is by the field staff, the park rangers, as well as by the engineering people, now are found in the Estimates and in the organization separately from Parks Branch as such. As I pointed out previously in discussing the Estimates, we have an engineering and construction group which handles all of the engineering and construction, whether it deals with parks engineering and construction or water, drainage engineering and construction. And within the Regional Services, we have still identified both the park rangers and the conservation officer service, but

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there is some overlapping now, some greater overlapping than existed in the past in that we attempt to utilize park rangers to cover off some of the work of conservation officers when there is requirement in the areas that conservation officers normally are concentrated in and park officers may be less busy due to seasonal shift in workload, and vice versa.

There may have been some adjustment, there was some adjustment in that the Parks division previously had some of its own expertise, for example in the area of wildlife biology, wildlife management, the technical expertise for wildlife management is located in the branch responsible for wildlife management.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)--pass - the Honourable Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Could I use the example of the Riverton offices. You have a provincial park of Hecla, and you have a number of staff within the Parks Branch in the community of Riverton, and you have what I presume would be called a regional or district office of your Mines and Resources where you have a number of conservation officers, there may be one, I'm not sure if there's a biologist, but some resource specialists or resource technicians in there. How will their roles be melded, or will they be continued on as separate functions in relationship to the amalgamation of the two departments, because you have two separate offices in the community, you have two separate functions in terms of the provincial park and its administration, and yet you have a fairly, I believe a staff in the resources office of maybe five, maybe more, I'm not certain of that, the Minister can indicate that. How will their functions be carried on in this melding? How does the Minister see their functions carried on?

MR. RANSOM: Without dealing with that situation specifically, Mr. Chairman, because I'm not familiar with the numbers of people and the staffing at the various offices, but the intention is that at the higher levels of the regional structure that we have one integrated management group, and as we get down to the lower levels that we attempt to get more people at the operational level. We hope there will be some efficiencies in handling it in this way.

MR. URUSKI: If I understand the Minister correctly then, in terms of policy direction and involvement of procedures of the department, that amalgamation will take place, it's direct delivery of services in the field. They still may be separate operations, carried out separately as they have been and will continue to be. Is that correct?

MR. RANSOM: There will still be recognizable park rangers dealing in the parks and conservation officers dealing outside, there may be some overlap. Engineering and Construction will handle engineering and construction.

(PROCEEDINGS INTERRUPTED for Department of Highways vote in the House)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MCGREGOR: Mr. Chairman, in the Committee of Supply, the Honourable House Leader moved that the question with respect to Resolution 80, Item 1.(a) be put in five minutes time. In accordance with Rule 65.(16), a count-out in the whole committee was requested following a voice vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favour of the motion please rise.

A COUNTED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas 28; Nays 20.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I declare the motion passed.

SUPPLY - NATURAL RESOURCES cont'd

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are on item (a) (1) Salaries, under 5. Parks.
The Honourable Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the Minister's comments with respect to how he foresaw the middle and upper management of the department working with respect to the administration in terms of parks and the staff in the field of both sections of the department still carrying on their day-to-day activities. Mr. Chairman, what I'd like to ask the Minister, as to who in the Parks Branch, or in the department, will be determining what kind of services, what kind of parks will be sought for, and the direction in parks development, and how will this be borne out, when, if I understand the Minister correctly, that the resource people that he mentioned, the specialists who may have resource specialties, have been moved into the areas directly out of their specific area of endeavour dealing with the development and planning of parks, how will they be able to function in an area where they are completely separate and in another branch not dealing with the Parks Branch at all, Mr. Chairman, who will develop the priorities within the department as it relates to parks?

MR. RANSOM: Last night, Mr. Chairman, I referred to the overall recreational strategy which will be developed in the resources allocation group, and there will be an identified area within that overall strategy that will be the responsibility of Parks to plan for. Now, within the operation of park system, the Parks Branch will be responsible for doing the planning. They will determine what services should be delivered and what programs should be carried out, and to what ends a given park is going to be managed. This is through our master planning process. The delivery of the programs will be the responsibility of Field Services and of Engineering and Construction. When advice is required of a technical nature for the management of forests or wildlife within the park, then that advice will be provided by the respective branches, but it will be through the planning of the Parks Branch that they will have determined that the wildlife, within a given park, will be managed towards a certain objective. The role of the specialist then becomes, how do you achieve the objective, not establishing the objective.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, the Minister is then indicating that the objectives will be established by the Planning Division of the Parks Branch within that section of the department? If so then, Mr. Chairman, I see, or at least I can envisage a bit of a problem in terms of the delivery of services that are recommended by the planners within the department, specifically in the engineering and construction divisions, which as I understand have been amalgamated with Water Resources and the other areas.

How is it envisaged that the workload shall be split up between the two areas of Parks development and Water Resources within the combined department? Do you not see a power struggle evolving between the various engineers and their expertise as to who will be doing what when, in terms of their priorities. You have the engineers in the department, each having their own expertise in their respective areas, however, not having direct access to their specific areas because that branch of Planning is removed. They are no longer tied to the direction they're accustomed to take. They will have to be taking orders from somewhere else. And how will the program be carried on in that area? Will that not cause a problem of, if not duplication, but a problem of really not knowing who does what when kind of a syndrome within the department.

MR. RANSOM: I would not want to say, Mr. Chairman, that any system is without potential difficulties, but I don't see that as being a problem that can't be overcome. I think what the honourable member is saying, really, is that there might conceivably be funds budgeted within the Parks Branch, or the Capital Works relating to Parks, and then there not be a system in place to deliver those services. I don't think that is likely to be the case, I think it's something, of course, that the senior levels of management in the department would have to prevent from happening. And also I would anticipate that some engineering services will be sought outside of government, because there are varying levels of activities undertaken from year to year and I would envisage that the department would have an ongoing capability to deliver engineering services, and that when there was some requirement beyond that ongoing capability, then they might seek engineering services outside of the engineering and construction branch. So I

accept the honourable member's comment that it's an area that might have some difficulties and would bear watching but I don't think that they'll be too difficult to overcome.

MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I should raise for the Minister what I have encountered in the last year or so with just what I am speaking about. The Department of Northern Affairs had an engineering staff of their own to carry out works and projects in the Northern Affairs area dealing with the building of roads and drainages for the community committees in central and northern Manitoba. There was a change in policy and direction very much similar to what is happening here, only the staff were not moved. What government did was that they said yes, we have the same amount of money as we had in the budget last year for the building of roads, but now the procedure is not that the engineering staff of Northern Affairs shall do it, all the approval mechanisms and the whole process has to go through the Department of Highways.

Well, Mr. Chairman, what happened? The Department of Highways has a very large budget for construction, they have their own priorities, and what happened was while there was an ample amount of money in the budget for the construction of roads and services to those communities, nothing got done. Because the system was brought about that nothing really happened or was able to happen because of the long process of approvals that had to be undertaken within the two departments that were supposedly supposed to speed up and streamline the services to the people, instead it ground services to the people to a halt. That's the reason why I raised this, Mr. Chairman. I urge the Minister to be very careful in this area and to make sure that if there is that kind of . . . I mean, this change, Mr. Chairman, this change can certainly be a change of, if the government and if the Minister wishes to put a lower priority on one branch of government, certainly this kind of a change would adequately achieve that.

The Minister can certainly say that yes, we have a new thrust in the way we have restructured the department, but that thrust, Mr. Chairman - and I want the Minister to indicate or at least indicate his position as to the thrust in the parks area - that it will be of a profile at least equal to or on a continuing basis, based on the increased cost that the province, or the costs that will be incurred by the province.

While the budgetary amounts can certainly show that there is a lot of money, but this system that is being put into place can certainly point out that not much will be done. And I would like the assurance of the Minister that, given any unforeseen circumstances, the program delivery will be carried on as it has been in the past and there will be no move, as has been done in the Department of Northern Affairs with their road budgets, a year or so ago because that kind of a change certainly brought about . . . While the Minister could get up and say, yes, there's lots of money, we can do those works, but nothing was done.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I'll assure the honourable member that not only will services be delivered as well as they have in the past, they will be delivered better than they have in the past, and I can assure the honourable member that if I had a desire to downgrade a given area of the department I would do so by a matter of policy and certainly not by making the system more difficult to work with. I would do it as a matter of policy and by reducing the amount of money to be spent. That is not the case in Parks, as the honourable member will see when we get to deal with the Acquisition and Construction item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)--pass; (2)--pass - the Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: No, Mr. Chairman. I was standing on (1).

Mr. Chairman, the Minister's comments that he will do things by matter of policy causes some humour on this side of the House because, as we have seen with this Minister and this department, he has very few, if any policies. In fact it's particularly glaring in the area of park development, when one considers that parks have been passed from one Minister to the other since the Progressive Conservative government was elected in 1977, and I believe he's the third Minister, as my colleague mentions.

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Mr. Chairman, the department has been operating since the Fall of 1977 without any policies under this government. They've announced an intention to develop a policy in this past summer, and not through any direct action by the Minister but through his contracting out of that particular concept to a private consulting firm.

Mr. Chairman, there were people in the Department of Parks, responsible for parks, who I believe had the capability of developing proposed policies for discussion with the general public without having to go to that kind of expense. And Mr. Chairman, the disappointing thing is even after all of this expenditure of money and two or three Ministers having had the responsibility for this department, there still are no concrete, definite policies regarding park development in Manitoba.

The Manitoba Naturalists Society and other groups have expressed concern over this problem, and as of this day, there are no distinct, definite policies. If someone has a cottage in the Whiteshell Park for example, or has a business in the Whiteshell Park, or uses the Whiteshell Park for recreational activities, they do not know what this government's intentions are with respect to that park, how that park will look 10 years from now or 20 years from now, or even how it'll look one year from now, because this Minister and this department and this government has no policy to announce to the public.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour is 4:30; I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour and I will return to the Chair at 8:00 o'clock this evening.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We are now under Private Members' Hour. There are no private or public bills, so we will proceed to Resolutions.

RESOLUTION NO. 13 - COMMERCIAL FISHING REGULATIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. RONALD McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Rupertsland:

WHEREAS without being requested by the fishermen of Manitoba, the Minister of Resources has announced "A new Manitoba government policy on commercial fisheries will be in effect commencing June 1, 1980.", and

WHEREAS the commercial fishermen have almost totally rejected these proposed regulations, and

WHEREAS the Minister has stated he would proceed with these regulations regardless of what the fishermen said, and

WHEREAS on January 29, 1980, the Minister announced that implementation of commercial fishing policy has been suspended and that there will be some relaxation of the current licencing freeze, and

WHEREAS this suspension is only temporary and it appears that no licences have been unfrozen, and

WHEREAS these regulations will result in fewer and fewer people controlling commercial fishing in Manitoba, and

WHEREAS it will force many commercial fishermen onto the welfare rolls, and

WHEREAS the uncertainty caused by the Minister's contradictory statements is creating apprehension and confusion among commercial fishermen,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the proposed new regulations for commercial fishing be completely withdrawn and that those who qualify for commercial fishing licences now be issued same.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been moved by the Honourable Member for The Pas and seconded by the Honourable Member for Rupertsland. I have perused the Resolution and I have been unable to ascertain whether or not the various Whereas' are correct or not. I think that is probably a debatable point. However, the Resolve

part of the Resolution does appear to be in order and I will let the Resolution go as it is.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. MCBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, the Resolution arises out of a number of happenings that began on October 9, 1979, and Mr. Speaker, one aspect of the Minister's handling of these proposed changes, I think, reflects what happened in the committees this afternoon, and that is, Mr. Speaker, the Minister and the Conservative government of Manitoba proceeded in a dictatorial and arrogant way in trying to impose these new regulations on the commercial fishermen of Manitoba, the same way they acted in a similar manner this afternoon in cutting off debate on the salary of the Minister of Highways.

Mr. Speaker, on October 9, 1979, the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, a Brian Ransom, sent out the following letter to fishermen: - "Dear Fishermen: A new Manitoba government policy on commercial fisheries will be in effect commencing June 1, 1980."

Mr. Speaker, that sentence is very important in light of the Minister's statement since that time when he said that these were just proposals for discussion for the fishermen, because the Minister said in his letter to fishermen, Mr. Speaker, which members of the opposition got from fishermen, not from the Minister himself, "A new Manitoba government policy on commercial fisheries will be in effect commencing June 1, 1980." And then, Mr. Speaker, this letter to the fishermen goes on to say that the new fisheries policy principles will be achieved by:

1. Distributing the fisheries resource according to an established process where specific resources are devoted to specific uses
2. Developing and putting into effect a system of fisheries resource distribution through a long-term lease.
 - (1) This lease will ensure access to the fishery resource for a 20-year period.
 - (2) This lease will allow the holder to sell it or to assign it to another individual if he so chooses.
 - (3) This lease will be cancelled if the holder does not fish or does not comply with conditions of this licensing.
3. All current license holders will be included in the leasing system.
4. A royalty system will be developed and phased in to provide a fair return to the Crown for the use of the fisheries resource.
5. The formation of the Manitoba Commercial Fishermen's Association will be encouraged and supported.

Now, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I, when we received this letter from fishermen, were somewhat concerned, and basically, our concern was with Item 2(2) in the Minister's letter. Well, two parts, Mr. Speaker, one is that the Minister said it will be into effect. The main part that would come into effect that concerned us was Section 2(2) which said, "this lease will allow the holder to sell it or to assign it to another individual if he so chooses". Now, Mr. Speaker, in order to understand our concern on that item you have to be aware of the history of the commercial fisheries development and the coming into effect of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation in the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, what the situation was in the past was that there were basically a number of fish buyers in the Province of Manitoba, and oftentimes, what would happen was that the fish buyer, or the agent on behalf of the fish companies, would hire fishermen, would supply the fishermen with equipment and the fishermen would go out and fish for an hourly wage. Or, the fisherman would have his own equipment and his own license, but the fisherman would fish for a fish company and sell his fish to them.

Mr. Speaker, now the competition within the fishing industry was very tough and an individual to survive, to make an economic enterprise in the fishing industry, as a result, had to be very tough for the fishermen.

And Mr. Speaker, I would maintain historically, the way that fish companies and fish buyers managed to survive, was by taking advantage of the fishermen in the field. The fishermen came over the years, Mr. Speaker, to realize this was the situation and in some areas they moved to organized co-operatives. And those co-operatives enabled the fishermen to join together and become their own suppliers and become their own sales agents for their fish. And what we had at the time, just previous to the Fish Marketing Corporation, was that the fishermen who were co-op members and fished through co-op fisheries, through their own local co-operative, were able to earn a decent living at fishing. Those fishermen in the Province of Manitoba who were not so organized in co-operatives had to sell their fish to the fish buyer, to the fish companies, were unable to negotiate as a group in terms of prices, were the ones that were suffering economically, financially, from that system.

And Mr. Speaker, the previous Conservative government agreed to and brought forward legislation to create the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. That legislation died on the order paper when the election was called in '69 and the new NDP government implemented that legislation creating a Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation which was designed to work for the benefit of all the fishermen of Manitoba and to ensure that the fishermen got a reasonable return for their efforts in the area of fishing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, since the '77 election and this government coming to office, there has been a number of sounds from members opposite in terms of doing away with or bypassing the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. And then, Mr. Speaker, after that, the government then issued this policy on October 9, 1979.

Mr. Speaker, I have asked numerous fishermen, anywhere I could find a fisherman, whether or not they had asked for this proposed policy, the proposed new regulations that the Minister outlined. And Mr. Speaker, I could not find, in my enquiries, a single fisherman, a single fisherman's group, who had said this is the direction they would like to see the Minister move in. Mr. Speaker, one fisherman said, initially, our suspicion was, Mr. Speaker, that a few of the larger fishermen who could absorb other fishermen's licenses and therefore increase their size, had requested this from the minister. I understand now, Mr. Speaker, from one of the active fishermen in the fishermen's organization that, in fact, this proposal probably came through a civil servant in terms of what should be done. But Mr. Speaker, it never came from the senior civil servants responsible for fisheries, the senior people hired by this government. The recommendation never came from them, but from somebody else associated with that department.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Member for St. George and I attended a meeting of fishermen in the Fairford area, these would be Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipegosis fishermen and a few Lake Winnipeg fishermen. At that time, Mr. Speaker, those fishermen started to give the Member for St. George and myself heck for introducing this policy and we had to explain to the fishermen there that we had nothing to do this policy, that this policy came from the Minister of Resources and from the Conservative government that was being imposed on the fishermen.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister did set up a series of meetings, which was to explain the new regulations to the fishermen, and that's the way the meetings were defined by the Minister to explain any regulations to the fishermen. But what happened, Mr. Speaker, is when the departmental officials, not the Minister, when the departmental officials got out into the field then the fishermen began to tell them that they did not want these new regulations, that they were opposed to these new regulations and that, at the time, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Resources in an interview with the CBC said that these regulations would be implemented regardless of what was coming out of the meeting which was the almost total opposition, the almost total opposition of the commercial fishermen in Manitoba to the proposed regulations.

And, Mr. Speaker, I have with me a petition dated January 16, 1980, which reads as follows:

"This petition is to alter the effectiveness of the new fishing policy set by the provincial government by letter, dated October 9, 1979. We the undersigned, having attended a public meeting at Fairford Reserve to discuss the new Manitoba Government policy on commercial fisheries, do hereby reject this policy which was supposedly to be in effect June 1, 1980."

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Mr. Speaker, that petition is signed by 70 fishermen and two fisherwomen who fished Lake St. Martin, Lake Winnipegosis and Lake Winnipeg from the Interlake area of our province. Mr. Speaker, the Minister was previous to that, forwarded a band council resolution from the Little Saskatchewan bands of Indian, Little Saskatchewan Reserve, saying that the fishermen on that reserve were opposed to the new regulations and asking that fishing licences be issued again. The Dauphin River Reserve, band council resolution, dated January 17, 1980, again, Mr. Speaker, sent to the Minister objecting to the new regulations and asking that the freeze on fishing be lifted.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister has also received similar resolutions from the Fairford band and I understand that the other band councils have been indicating their opposition to these new regulations.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Minister is aware and his officials are aware of the opposition to the new proposed regulations that were being forced on them by the fishermen. And, Mr. Speaker, the Minister still said that he intended to implement those regulations in spite of the opposition coming from fishermen.

But finally, Mr. Speaker, I can only assume through pressure of Conservative candidates in the federal election campaign, the Minister did take a step backwards; the Minister did step back from the implementation. On January 29, 1980; "The Manitoba Government New Commercial Fishing Policy Change Is Suspended. Ransom says further discussions pending. Natural Resources Minister Brian Ransom has announced that implementation of commercial fishing policy changes that were proposed to take effect June of this year have been suspended and that there will be some relaxation of the current licencing freeze."

Mr. Speaker, the Minister has then since announced that the implementation, that the implementation was being suspended. Mr. Speaker, he never said the new regulations were going to be withdrawn, he said that the implementation of them would be suspended. And, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what the Minister intends to do at this point and the commercial fishermen are not sure what the Minister intends to do at this point. Mr. Speaker, at the time of drafting this resolution and submitting this resolution, I was unable to find any licences or any areas of our province where fishing licences had been unfrozen.

Mr. Speaker, last week I talked to some fishermen who had in fact, been able to obtain fishing licences, at least in the Grand Rapids area, where they were unfrozen and loosened up. So, Mr. Speaker, I would be willing to look at, to consider an amendment to the resolution which would indicate that in some areas at least the licences have been unfrozen as the Minister committed himself to doing on January 29, 1980.

Mr. Speaker, what we would like from the Minister, what we expect from the Minister, what we demand from the Minister, is that he clarify whether he intends to proceed with these new regulations in the future or whether he intends to withdraw them altogether. And, Mr. Speaker, what would clarify things for all the fishermen, that would make the fishermen believe the Minister, make them believe that the Minister was listening to them and their input into these matters, if the Minister would announce, would rise in his place this afternoon and announce that these new proposed regulations would be totally withdrawn and that any changes, any future changes, would be in full consultation with the fishermen and not imposed by the Minister on the fishermen by form of a letter and then meetings held only to explain the new regulations as opposed to getting the fishermen's input into the new regulations.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is what we would like from the Minister and that is, I believe, what the commercial fishermen of Manitoba would like from the Minister. Mr. Speaker, if the Minister is unwilling or unable, or if he feels that he has dug himself in too deeply to withdraw these regulations, if he feels that he can't extricate himself in that manner, then what we would like as a minimum from the Honourable Minister, is a willingness, before new regulations are imposed on the commercial fishermen in Manitoba, is to have a vote on those new regulations.

And, Mr. Speaker, there are times when the Minister of Resources has to make a decision that commercial fishermen do not like. There are some times when he might have to say that the quota is so much, or that the fishing season ends on a certain date, because his biologists are advising that that is necessary in order to protect the fishery. So there are occasions, there are times, when the

Minister will have to make decisions that are not always popular with the commercial fishermen.

But, Mr. Speaker, the proposal, the new proposed method of licencing, is not designed and does not affect the viability of the fishery, it is not designed to conserve the fishery resource, Mr. Speaker. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what it's designed to do, because it doesn't make logical sense in terms of the development of the fisheries in Manitoba, where now we want to go back to a system similar to what was the situation in Manitoba a number of years ago, where a fisherman would be issued a 20-year lease on a lake, and the fisherman could sell that licence to somebody else.

Mr. Speaker, what will happen, and that's one of the whereases in the resolution, the fishermen themselves say that the result of this is going to be that some of our fishermen are going to be selling off their licences and are going to collect welfare because they won't have any way to sustain their own livelihood. Mr. Speaker, that's an unfortunate situation but, Mr. Speaker, that's what the fishermen themselves say is going to be the result of this type of regulation being imposed upon them.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is the danger, that we'll return to fewer and fewer people being able to make a living, being able to feed their families, being able to hold their head up high in this province, and fewer and fewer people controlling the resource. Mr. Speaker, this is the direction of this Conservative government is to do that. This is their rigid, dogmatic, ideological position that there is an elite group that's capable of governing and there is an elite group capable of running business and nobody else in fact should get the benefits from our resources except those particular few. And I see the Member for Gladstone is nodding his head in agreement, Mr. Speaker.

So that is what is happening in the fishing industry and that is what's probably going to happen in other resource based industries, as my colleague for Rupertsland has already pointed out to the Minister, his tendency in terms of what he's doing in the forestry industry in the negotiating of contracts in that particular industry.

So, Mr. Speaker, the other thing that the Minister indicated when he issued his announcement that the implementation of fishing policy changes that were proposed to take effect in June of this year has been suspended was that one of his reasons for this, he told the media, was that, well, the NDP members have been involved in this issue and therefore we have to suspend it for now because NDP members have been involved in this issue.

Mr. Speaker, I know that when we received copies of this letter announcing this new policy from commercial fishermen, my colleagues and I did express our concern about the probable results, but, Mr. Speaker, we then waited. We then waited and it was the fishermen themselves who looked over the Minister's letter, who prepared themselves, who made presentations to the Minister's departmental representatives when they came to the community saying we reject this policy; we reject this policy; we do not want this policy.

Mr. Speaker, that was pretty well the unanimous action of fishermen in our province except for a very few who said they weren't sure about the policy and, Mr. Speaker, that was the position of the Moose Lake fishermen. The Moose Lake fishermen made a proposal and asked for funding to study and come up with an alternative policy for the one that the Minister recommended. But they rejected the Minister's proposed policy as outlined in the letter that he sent the fishermen.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister to clarify things for the commercial fishermen of Manitoba, to stand up today and say he is withdrawing these regulations, he is not just suspending their implementation but he is withdrawing these regulations so the fishermen can get to work, so the fishermen can get back to earning their livelihood and not have to worry what this Minister is going to do to them next.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member's time is up.
The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. RANSOM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I welcome the opportunity to participate in the debate on this resolution and hopefully be able to cast some

light on the facts that relate to the fishery and some of the actions that have taken place with respect to the proposed fishing policies.

I think if I might first examine the resolution put forward by the honourable member and some of the whereases I believe warrant some examination. The first one in itself is rather interesting, where the honourable member says, "WHEREAS without being requested by the fishermen of Manitoba, the Minister of Resources has announced a new policy", etc.

This is a somewhat curious approach, Mr. Speaker, in that the framing of that paragraph would lead me to believe that the honourable member somehow feels that a government with the responsibility for managing a resource, such as the fisheries resource, should not take any action unless requested to do so by fishermen, by the users of that resource. Now I can't accept that of course because I think it is a government responsibility to try and manage the resources in the interests of all Manitobans, but it's also appropriate, I believe, to point out that in fact over the past few years the fishermen have been asking for changes. They have not been specifically asking for these specific proposals but they have been telling government and they have been telling others that there are problems in the fishing industry and that something has to be done about those problems.

As it happens, Mr. Speaker, the facts concerning numbers of fishermen, the amount of fish produced and the value of the fish produced certainly indicate that there has been a serious problem in the commercial fishing industry and that the previous government did nothing to deal with that problem. They simply implemented policies which were designed to essentially distribute small amounts, small portions of the resource among as many people as they could, which of course ultimately leads to people having a very small stake in the resource and not being able to support themselves.

If I might point out a few figures, for example, that in 1968-69 there were 3,976 fishermen in the province. They produced a little bit in excess of 25,700,000 pounds of fish. Now it's interesting that by 1976-77 the number of fishermen in the province had declined to 2,953 and they produced a little bit in excess of 19 million pounds, Mr. Speaker. Now how does the Honourable Member for The Pas square that with one of these whereases, where he says, "WHEREAS these regulations will result in fewer and fewer people controlling commercial fishing in Manitoba."

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's evident from the facts that from the time they took over the responsibility for managing the resource as government in 1969 that in fact the number of fishermen declined from close to 4,000 to just under 3,000 as a result of their policies and the amount of fish produced declined by 6 million pounds. Now certainly that must indicate some basic problem with the industry, and I think that that was what we were attempting to address.

It is also appropriate to look at the facts for the north, the northern area of the province, Mr. Speaker, because in 1968-69, there were 1,517 licences issued. They fished 163 lakes; they harvested a little bit more than 9,500,000 pounds of fish. But by 1976-77, the number of licences in the north had declined to 1,102, over 400 decline in the number of licences issued and, Mr. Speaker, the volume of fish harvested dropped to a little bit in excess of 5,600,000 pounds, from 9,500,000 to 5,600,000 and some. Now, that's just roughly probably a 40 percent decline in the volume of fish harvested and these declines took place while the honourable members opposite were in government.

Now that, to me, indicates that there was a problem, that they weren't addressing it. The volume of fish being taken was declining and, at the same time, the numbers of fishermen participating were declining drastically and, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for The Pas puts forward a resolution that alleges that the policies that we put forward for discussion will result in fewer and fewer fishermen involved in the fishery.

Again, to appreciate the position that fishermen are in in Manitoba and what has happened over the past few years, if one examines the figures that were dating back to 1962-63, for instance, which was one of the better years in the fishery, that year there was in excess of 36 million pounds of fish harvested. There were over 5,600 fishermen involved in taking that and the value to the individual fisherman, on the average, participating in the fishery at that time was a little bit in excess of \$750.00.

Now, if we go to 1977-78 and look at the value of the fish harvested in that year, the value to the fishermen, and divided that by the number of fishermen who fished in 1962-63, then we find that would come to about \$1,568 per fishermen, but between 1962-63 and 1977-78, of course inflation rose by about 110 percent so that were the same number of fishermen to have been fishing in 1977-78 as were in 1962-63, there was essentially no increase in the amount of money, in the purchasing power than individual fishermen had in their pockets.

Now, I think just about every other sector of our economy probably increased their real income during that period of time. But fishermen were able to do it to some extent, Mr. Speaker, because the number of fishermen fishing in that period declined, so that the real gains were made through decreases in the number of fishermen. The amount of money accruing from the fishery was divided among fewer people and therefore the individuals were somewhat better off.

Perhaps unfortunately that's the case. That's the nature of the resource. There is only so much resource; there is only so much value to it and either you can distribute it among the greatest number of people and have very little return, or you can distribute it so that you allow those people participating in it to have a reasonable opportunity to earn a satisfactory level of income.

It happens that this industry is one of the most closely regulated industries that we have in the province and because of that, Mr. Speaker, it surprises me really that the honourable members didn't move to make the one big fishing company here because this was perhaps the one place where they might have increased the return to the fishermen had they done that. Because at the moment, Mr. Speaker, the government establishes the lake limits; the government establishes how many fishermen can fish; the government determines how big an individual fishermen can grow; and he controls how much the individual can earn; the government controls how much competition the individual fisherman is going to face; he determines where he will deliver his catch; he determines where he will sell his catch; he determines how much money he's going to get. And do you know what's left for the fisherman, Mr. Speaker? Whatever small amount remains after all the other actors in the system have taken their pound of flesh. The fisherman is left with what remains. And it happens, it happens, Mr. Speaker, that in 1977-78 that only amounted to a little less than \$2,500 per person participating in the fishery. Now, that is not very much money. Unfortunately, someone who is limited to that level of income is very likely, then, to be damned to continue life at that level, unable to expand, not able to earn enough money to have a satisfactory level of income or a satisfactory level of return on their investment, limited by the actions of government.

The Honourable Member for The Pas said that at one point some fishermen fished for a wage, Mr. Speaker, for the fish companies. It would not surprise me in the least if those fishermen who fished for a wage had more money, had more disposable money in their pockets than many of the fishermen who now must make an investment in equipment in order to catch a limited amount of fish which simply is insufficient to cover the investment, to give them a return on their investment, let alone a return for the time and for their labours that they have put in.

I also must review some of the circumstances leading to the proposal of these policies, Mr. Speaker. --(Interjection)-- Well, the Honourable Member for Rupertsland wants to know where it came from. I'll tell him where it came from, Mr. Speaker. It came from me and it came from policy approved by Cabinet. And last October I brought some 20 fishermen, representatives of various fishermen's organizations because fishermen don't have one organization at this time. --(Interjection)-- Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Honourable Member for Rupertsland would like to speak later, but I would prefer to be able to speak without interruption. When those fishermen were brought to Winnipeg last October at government expense, I was able to outline the general principles of the policy to them and to tell them that these policies were developed by government, by Cabinet; they can be changed by Cabinet. I said these are the directions in principle that we think it would be in the interests of the industry and people in the industry to go. And we said we are going to go out to the communities and we are going to meet with the fishermen, and we are going to explain to them what the policies would involve; and on the basis of the reaction from those meetings, then I would make a judgment as to how the policy should be modified.

We did not put our civil servants in the position of defending policy, as the previous administration put their civil servants in the position of defending policy with their Beef Income Stabilization Plan, for example, Mr. Speaker. What they're saying to the fishermen was, you explain to them, you report back; we will make decisions on the basis of policy as we judge fit on the basis of the reaction from the fishermen. If we had planned to ram these policies down the fisherman's throat, Mr. Speaker, we would not have organized 40 meetings across the north and gone to speak to them. We would not have done that, we would simply have gone ahead and implemented the policies. It was made clear when we met with the representatives here that we knew there would be concerns. People would feel that perhaps the resource is going to get into the hands of a limited number number of people, and the small fisherman, the local people in communities will be forced out. We recognize that and it's possible to put limitations on, there are any number of devices that might be used to assure that people who hold licences must participate in the fishery, for example, and not be a non-resident holder of a licence. We can make changes like that, Mr. Speaker, and I know that although the communities, in many cases, voted unanimously against these policies, they voted because: No. 1, there were aspects of it they didn't like and, naturally, they were going to vote against because they didn't want those aspects. That didn't mean that they were going to reject all aspects.

I have letters, I have indication from fishermen that there are many things about these policies that they favour but they have concerns about concentration of the fishery in a few hands. We plan to address that, and if some of the communities feel that their system is 100 percent the way it is and they're happy with it, fine. But in many cases, Mr. Speaker, in the same breath that fishermen say, "We are content with the present policy," they say, "but give us more licences and more quota." Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, by giving more licences we simply distributed the same amount of resource among fewer people. If we increase the quota we run the risk of damaging the resource. Well, they say they're content with the present regulations, their requests indicate, of course, that they're not content with the present situation because they want more and we can't supply it. And if individual people must have more, unfortunately, it means that either we distribute the same resource among fewer people or we change the system, and this gets into the marketing system, so that we can reverse the trend that took place during the administration of the previous government when the volume of fish harvested in the province declined substantially.

Now, if we are able to implement new policies to address that issue, and can get the volume of harvest back up to where it was 10 years ago, then we will have accomplished something because, at this point in time, there are fish going unharvested. One of the reasons that, in the immediate past season, Mr. Speaker, that fishermen have been more content, of course, is the prices have been higher and that, of course, is simply a response to the marketplace and which we, on this side, regard as one of the best controls that there is in terms of the development of resources or marketing of any product is what the marketplace says. And in this case the marketplace said, "More money"; the fishermen are getting more money and, naturally, they're pleased to be getting more money. But we will be examining very carefully the reactions that we have received from all the fishermen and we will be advising the fishermen of what our position will be and what our future action will be to remove any kind of misunderstanding which may exist presently.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: I must say, Mr. Speaker, that listening to the Minister today makes one even more cynical about the actions of this Progressive Conservative government and, in particular, the actions of this Minister. If we look at the record of this Minister with respect to this particular policy, we must realize that it is full of contradictions, it is full of contradictions, Mr. Speaker, and many misrepresentations have been made to the fishermen of Manitoba.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, if I can take a moment to go through some of the events that have taken place with respect to this policy, the Minister indicated to the fishermen of Manitoba by way of a letter that there would be consultations take place with respect to this announced new policy.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, another case in point with respect to that issue is the Minister is reported to have made a commitment while he was at the meeting of the Northern Association of Community Councils last summer in which he said no changes in fishing policy would be made without consultation with the fishermen. And then, Mr. Speaker, the Minister, by way of a letter in the fall of 1979, wrote to the fishermen saying, "Here's the new policy, there will be meetings in your communities to discuss the policy with you." Not so much to discuss their ideas of what the policy should be all about, but to explain the policy as it's going to be without consultation.

And, Mr. Speaker, it became very clear to the fishermen when the civil servants attached to the Minister's department came out to the communities and said, "Well, here it is, we can't take your views into account because this is the policy as it's announced and we're just here to explain to you what it's going to be." And the fishermen were asking, "Well, where did this policy come from, who thought of this policy, who suggested this policy?" And the Minister now finally, after all these months, is admitting that the fishermen had nothing to do with this discussing this policy, or recommending this policy, or suggesting it. There was no consultation with the fishermen in determining this type of policy. He's admitting that it was made up by himself and the Cabinet of the Progressive Conservative government. And not even, as my colleague from The Pas is pointing out, not even the officials within the department who have had many years of experience with the fishermen of Manitoba, many of whom are trusted advisors to the government, trusted people dealing with fishermen in Manitoba whose advice and counsel the Minister would have been well advised to take before he decided to go with this very rash and ill-considered policy proposal that he has before us.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Minister is now saying that he's prepared to take into account the fishermen's views and make amendments here and make amendments there. Well, Mr. Speaker, the fishermen no longer trust this Minister because, first of all, he said he would consult them in the first place. He has proven himself wrong in that respect; he did not consult him, he said, "Here's the policy, this is the way it's going to be." And even as late as January, Mr. Speaker, when it was brought to the Minister's attention that the community of South Indian Lake had voted unanimously, rejecting this Minister's proposed policy. He said and I quote, and this is from the tape of the CBC interview that took place at that time. Mr. Ransom, questioned about objections from areas like South Indian Lake said, "Despite objections the basic policy will remain the same." That's the message the fishermen received in January.

And then, Mr. Speaker, following that the Minister, after being pressured during the federal election campaign as my colleague described by his fellow party people who were attempting to get elected in areas where there were fishermen populations, they began to call his office and say, "What are you doing, what kind of a policy are you forcing down the fishermen's throats and have got the fishermen up in arms, and are telling us we can't even come into the communities to campaign. What kind of a dictatorial policy are you doing that's killing us in this election campaign?" And the Minister then decided, well, maybe I should pull back on this policy and he announced by way of a press release, which I believe has already been read so I will not go into detail on it, that the policy will be suspended.

And if you look at the press release, Mr. Speaker, you will see that it's very carefully worded because the Minister was attempting to walk a fine line between the majority of fishermen, who were objecting to this policy strenuously, and a small lobby pressure group that was pushing him to adopt this kind of a policy.

And, Mr. Speaker, this small lobby pressure group has been identified by the fishermen themselves. They've said there's a small group of elite independent fishermen in the community of Gimli that are pressing for this policy because they want to be able to buy up large numbers of licences; and the suspicion of fishermen, Mr. Speaker, is that this Minister subsequently will make an effort to change the marketing arrangement in Manitoba so that those fishermen can opt out of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation, take that massive quotas that they've been able to buy up through this scheme the Minister is introducing and they will market their catch outside the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. This will have two drastic and dangerous effects on the communities that depend on fishing as a livelihood at the present time.

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One, Mr. Speaker, it will allow outside interests to buy up licences in communities that depend on fishing for their livelihood. It will allow people with money to go into a community and approach fishermen, perhaps in a moment of weakness, buy their licence, buy their quota for a 20-year period. And for every licence that's lost in that way, Mr. Speaker, to that community, it will probably mean one more family in that community on welfare.

Although fishing is not a big money thing, which the Minister has mentioned, it's a significant income to many people. In some cases, Mr. Speaker, it's supplementary income to people who do some other thing in other seasons of the year. They may be marginal farmers; they may be trappers; they may have a part-time job, where they work in the summer and they fish in the winter, or vice versa. But, Mr. Speaker, that fishing licence and that quota is a very important thing to that individual and that individual's family in that community that depends on that for a livelihood. And this Minister is attempting to put in a policy that will allow the greedy and the powerful to take over the fishing industry in Manitoba. It's a political commitment. We recognize that, Mr. Speaker.

The Honourable Member for Gimli, during the election campaign of 1977 made a commitment to a small little lobby group in the town of Gimli and that's the group that this government is attempting to pay off with this policy, and that's the only reason we can see why they would bring up a policy like this without consulting with the majority of fishermen, in fact, not even all the fishermen in Gimli are in favour of this policy.

In fact, I would believe if one would check the facts the majority of fishermen in the Gimli area are opposed to this policy because they see the drastic results that can happen even to their community. Many of the older fishermen there who are at the point of retiring, see that their licences and their quotas will be bought up in a mass by fewer and fewer people until finally only a few people will be involved in the fishery.

And the Icelandic people in Manitoba in the Hecla-Gimli area have prided themselves on being fishermen and being independent fishermen and the majority of them don't want to see the licences bought up by a small group of people or a company that will control the entire Lake Winnipeg area. They don't want that, Mr. Speaker.

And the majority of fishermen, Mr. Speaker, I believe will be affected in another way by this Minister's plans; and one of those plans which has come to our attention is the plan to change the marketing structure of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation, and the Minister has indicated he's prepared to do that. At a meeting with the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation Ministers, it is reported that he was the only Minister that proposed major changes to the marketing mechanism of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. And, Mr. Speaker, we see this proposal for new licensing as a way for the Minister to put into effect his proposed policies with respect to that Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation.

As I described briefly, Mr. Speaker, he will allow a few people, a few of the powerful and greedy of this province to buy up many many licences, amass a large group of quotas, take that quota of freshwater fish, whether it be pickerel or white fish - presumably the higher quality species - market it outside the umbrella of the corporation, compete with the corporation, destroy the concept of the single selling desk concept that we have in Manitoba at the present time, destroy that system. And, Mr. Speaker, it will be to the detriment of all the other fishermen in Manitoba who will be required to still continue to sell their fish through the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation whose selling prices on the world market will be reduced as a result of the competition from this group of fishermen that the Minister is sponsoring in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, it can only be a detriment to the Minister. And I must say that this Minister is ignoring the majority of fishermen in Manitoba on both respects, both with respect to this proposed fishing licence and also with respect to his proposed changes to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation.

And if one looks at the Resolution which was passed by the Advisory Committee to the Board of Directors of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation, we see that they passed the Resolution unanimously, which was requesting that no changes be made to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation; that it be left exactly the way it is now. And this Minister chooses to ignore that request, and in fact when

I questioned him on this in the Legislature during question period, he scoffed at this group as being unrepresentative of the fishermen in Manitoba.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll just read off some of the names here. They are, I think, fairly representative of the different areas in Manitoba. One is certainly not a New Democrat, John Ateah of Victoria Beach, Manitoba. I'm pleased and encouraged to see that he's taking an interest in more than just a personal interest in this, but looking at the interest of all the fishermen.

Raymond Fleming from Winnipegosis; Raymond Smith from Gimli; Alexander Jonasson from Wabowden; Roland Gaudry from St. Laurent; Louis Dysart from South Indian Lake. These are the members of the Advisory Committee to the Board of Directors of FFMC and they passed this Resolution unanimously. And, Mr. Speaker, I forgot to mention Bill Bennett from Nason Island who's the Speaker of the committee. He wrote this letter to the Minister.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's clear, clear that the fishermen of Manitoba are rejecting both policies of this government, both their fishing licensing policy and their policy for changing the marketing structure of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please. The hour is 5:30. When this subject matter next comes up the member will have seven minutes remaining.

The hour being 5:30 I am leaving the Chair and the House will resume in Committee of Supply at 8:00 o'clock.