



**First Session — Thirty-Fourth Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

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**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**(HANSARD)**

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37 Elizabeth II

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authority of  
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Speaker*



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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Fourth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
<b>ALCOCK, Reg</b>	Osborne	LIBERAL
<b>ANGUS, John</b>	St. Norbert	LIBERAL
<b>ASHTON, Steve</b>	Thompson	NDP
<b>BURRELL, Parker</b>	Swan River	PC
<b>CARR, James</b>	Fort Rouge	LIBERAL
<b>CARSTAIRS, Sharon</b>	River Heights	LIBERAL
<b>CHARLES, Gwen</b>	Selkirk	LIBERAL
<b>CHEEMA, Gulzar</b>	Kildonan	LIBERAL
<b>CHORNOPYSKI, William</b>	Burrows	LIBERAL
<b>CONNERY, Edward Hon.</b>	Portage la Prairie	PC
<b>COWAN, Jay</b>	Churchill	NDP
<b>CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.</b>	Ste. Rose du Lac	PC
<b>DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.</b>	Roblin-Russell	PC
<b>DOER, Gary</b>	Concordia	NDP
<b>DOWNEY, James Hon.</b>	Arthur	PC
<b>DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.</b>	Emerson	PC
<b>DRIEDGER, Herold, L.</b>	Niakwa	LIBERAL
<b>DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon.</b>	Riel	PC
<b>EDWARDS, Paul</b>	St. James	LIBERAL
<b>ENNS, Harry</b>	Lakeside	PC
<b>ERNST, Jim, Hon.</b>	Charleswood	PC
<b>EVANS, Laurie</b>	Fort Garry	LIBERAL
<b>EVANS, Leonard</b>	Brandon East	NDP
<b>FILMON, Gary, Hon.</b>	Tuxedo	PC
<b>FINDLAY, Glen Hon.</b>	Virden	PC
<b>GAUDRY, Neil</b>	St. Boniface	LIBERAL
<b>GILLESHAMMER, Harold</b>	Minnedosa	PC
<b>GRAY, Avis</b>	Ellice	LIBERAL
<b>HAMMOND, Gerrie</b>	Kirkfield Park	PC
<b>HARAPIAK, Harry</b>	The Pas	NDP
<b>HARPER, Elijah</b>	Rupertsland	NDP
<b>HELWER, Edward R.</b>	Gimli	PC
<b>HEMPHILL, Maureen</b>	Logan	NDP
<b>KOZAK, Richard, J.</b>	Transcona	LIBERAL
<b>LAMOUREUX, Kevin, M.</b>	Inkster	LIBERAL
<b>MALOWAY, Jim</b>	Elmwood	NDP
<b>MANDRAKE, Ed</b>	Assiniboia	LIBERAL
<b>MANNES, Clayton, Hon.</b>	Morris	PC
<b>MCCRAE, James Hon.</b>	Brandon West	PC
<b>MINENKO, Mark</b>	Seven Oaks	LIBERAL
<b>MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.</b>	River East	PC
<b>NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.</b>	Rossmere	PC
<b>OLESON, Charlotte Hon.</b>	Gladstone	PC
<b>ORCHARD, Donald Hon.</b>	Pembina	PC
<b>PANKRATZ, Helmut</b>	La Verendrye	PC
<b>PATTERSON, Allan</b>	Radisson	LIBERAL
<b>PENNER, Jack, Hon.</b>	Rhineland	PC
<b>PLOHMAN, John</b>	Dauphin	NDP
<b>PRAZNIK, Darren</b>	Lac du Bonnet	PC
<b>ROCAN, Denis, Hon.</b>	Turtle Mountain	PC
<b>ROCH, Gilles</b>	Springfield	PC
<b>ROSE, Bob</b>	St. Vital	LIBERAL
<b>STORIE, Jerry</b>	Flin Flon	NDP
<b>TAYLOR, Harold</b>	Wolseley	LIBERAL
<b>URUSKI, Bill</b>	Interlake	NDP
<b>WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy</b>	St. Johns	NDP
<b>YEO, Iva</b>	Sturgeon Creek	LIBERAL

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, July 25, 1988.

The House met at 8 p.m.

### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

**Mr. Speaker:** On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles).

**Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk):** May I extend to you my congratulations and best wishes on your appointment as Speaker of this House. Your humble acceptance of the position was well played, and I am certain that the sense of humour will benefit you in the times to come.

May I also extend to my colleagues here in the House my congratulations on their election, and to my Members that support me throughout my time here and in the future, and to the staff of our caucus because they serve us so well.

I wish also today, as I begin my speech, to recognize the Member who preceded me as MLA for Selkirk. The Honourable Howard Pawley served his constituency with true commitment and dedication. I wish him all the best in his retirement.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Pawley was only one of three distinguished Members who has served our district over the last some 60 years. Mr. Tommy Hillhouse was a Liberal MLA for Selkirk and a respected Member of the Legislature who was recognized across Canada for his innovative legal mind. Mr. Hillhouse retired after serving some 20 years. Before him, the Selkirk district was represented by the late Honourable J.O. McLenneghan, who served in the coalition Government as Attorney-General. It is an added honour to follow the service of these men in what I hope will be a continuing tradition.

I am very pleased to represent a rural riding in this Legislature and, yes indeed, it is a rural riding. It was interesting to note that some Members in this House do not realize that, yes, the Liberals do have rural representation. I would like to point out that the thriving metropolis of Lockport is indeed a rural community. Members of my constituency, such as the father of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet, would certainly consider themselves a farmer.

I grew up also in a community so small that, as a child, I was convinced that someone would change the population sign when my brother was born and that, by the way, was my first recognition that numbers are not always factual.

My memories of a small town are rich with the warmth and sensibilities of a farming community where life was shaped as much by the weather as by local activities. When my husband and I with two children at that time were looking for a place to raise these children, we left

the City of Winnipeg and chose Selkirk as a community in which we wanted to raise them. We have never regretted that decision and we do not mind a few inconveniences of commuting to Winnipeg.

As I said, people have questioned me if the Selkirk riding is truly a rural district. I think many are judging rural districts and that they have to be a totally farming community. But we must realize there are many rural communities that are indeed small towns and that have their own needs and desires. Many do not realize the importance a surrounding farming economy has on the small towns such as Selkirk. Often people do not realize that I, too, represent a farming community. Farmers in the Selkirk area, as across Manitoba, are struggling for recognition of their rights to farm. I hope that we may see some legislation to that effect from this Government.

Although there are indeed new subdivisions to the south of our riding, we have successfully blended the city influence with the country life. Many of these new residents are like my own family where, although parents are working in the city, they are very committed to the rural lifestyle. We enjoy and protect the quiet pace and we are quite willing to volunteer whenever needed, two characteristics that I believe are the essence of rural life.

Mr. Speaker, as many here will agree, it is particularly rewarding to represent the rural lifestyle. People around me in Selkirk and the area are more than willing to take the time to stop and chat. It does not take much coaxing to hear their viewpoints on so many topics. The major concern I have heard from them is a desire to see the Legislature get on with business. They want to see some decorum in this House, and they are most colourful in their interpretations of the antics that they see on T.V. on Question Period each day.

If my constituents have extracted one promise from me, it is that I am to maintain the decorum they wish me to represent. They stress their disgust and the lack of respect for those who mock the Legislature by their unruly conduct. They seem to recognize the difference between an interesting comment and harassing interference.

Mr. Speaker, the electorate welcomed the past election. They have pinned their hopes on a change not only in a political direction but a political attitude. It was therefore pleasing to see the Throne Speech set out a course of action that said they were going to follow a renewed spirit of openness and a willingness to listen. However, it is difficult to believe those words from a Government that had already been at times suspiciously abrupt and quick to make statements and perhaps even faster to retract them.

I was disappointed earlier this term when this Government was limited in its cooperation with the request of briefings by the department to the critics. This is a practice of other Legislatures that recognizes

the important role the Opposition plays in the democratic process. That was my first example of this renewed spirit of openness.

One of our questions of this House on Friday was the Government's lack of financial support for the IVF program. The Government seemed more than pleased to be able to respond that they have not been asked for help. Mr. Speaker, those parents or childless couples were on the steps of the Legislature. Where is their willingness to listen?

One decisive measure taken by this Government is a declaration on reducing elected representation for the City of Winnipeg. To arbitrarily take away voters' rights without consultation does not seem to me to be a willingness to listen.

On the other hand, the Minister for Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) seems able to only listen. She has heard the needs of the foster parents in this case. Where is her willingness to act?

I find it difficult to believe that the same Government who has sat still on the crisis in day care, foster care and health care and the Government who has been short on new ideas for agriculture and the psychiatric crises is the same Government who now wishes to solve everything at once as the Throne Speech implies. Or is it this Government who is so quick to pronounce and retract suggestions of AIDS quarantines or quotas on female medical students or toll roads? Is this the same Government that was so slow to pick up the federal funds for day care suggestions or infrastructure support that now wishes to appear to be ready for any challenge? This Government is already sending out mixed signals.

In reading the Throne Speech, I can only conclude that they appear to believe that, if you put enough bandages on a wound, you will stop the infection. Mr. Speaker, the infection we have in Manitoba is a lack of regard for the public sense of right. It is a fact that those who live outside the boundaries of Winnipeg receive reduced services and supports. We receive second-class recognition. As for those beyond the 53rd Parallel, their dilemma is even greater.

It is imperative that we counterbalance the importance that our one major city centre enjoys. The Department of Urban Affairs should be redefined to include other cities such as Brandon. We must reach out in all directions in the province and include all citizens in the wealth of services and support that the City of Winnipeg now enjoys. Moving Government departments out into other areas would dissipate the magnetic centre of Winnipeg.

Perhaps the best example of inequality in Manitoba is our telephone service which, I point out, did not even receive mention in the Throne Speech. In this world today where the ability to keep in touch is of great importance to business, health care and other services, our rural sector is put at a great disadvantage. The communities in the North, in fact, have very little communication services. This Throne Speech outlines a plan with the federal Government to bring transmission lines into remote areas, and I hope this

Government will see to it to include telephone service along with these lines. The public is continually told that party lines are being phased out. I support this program wholeheartedly and ask that it be given top priority.

I am aware of a resident of the Gimli constituency who has phoned me in great fear. She has a severe heart condition and she is on a line with several residents who use the party facilities quite heavily. She fears what will happen if she needs help and cannot get an open line. To make matters worse, it would seem that she has a private line to her house but plans are not in place to bring the line on stream.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech talks of reducing disincentives to job creation, meaning in particular the payroll tax, but what of the tax on rural living? The provincial tax that is applied over the federal tax on long-distance phone charges in Manitoba is a severe burden on the rural economy. Just this weekend, a local businessman was telling me that he pays over \$2,000 for Winnipeg lines. Those who call long distance on a regular basis can easily use up hundreds of dollars plus taxes and, if you are a citizen in need of Government services or other special services, you will be charged and taxed for these calls. It exists as well that neighbours just across the road from each other will be taxed and charged to phone each other. I was pleased to receive notice that SaskTel and MTS have completed a deal to have toll-free charges between Creighton and Flin Flon. If two provinces can get together to provide toll-free services, can we not expect the same commitment to the other residents of Manitoba?

Mr. Speaker, it was interesting to see that only once in the Throne Speech was the word "priority" mentioned, and this was in regard to the development of Highway No. 75. Certainly I support the need to attract our American tourists and congratulate the Government on recognizing this need. However, I ask the Minister to look at prioritizing all road repairs and development in the province. Consultation is indeed necessary to understand the needs of each area. As most Manitobans are aware, just north of Selkirk is perhaps one of the finest bridges to be found on the Prairies and, for \$28 million, it should be, give or take the approaches.

\* (2010)

As most Manitobans may not know, there are plans for yet another bridge to the south of Selkirk, another bridge that no one seems to want. I cannot find evidence that any citizen or resident of the area was ever asked their opinion on the need for such a bridge. No one asked for the bridge. The trucking companies, when phoned, out of eight trucking companies, only one indicated that they may use another bridge. The business community will surely be affected as traffic is rerouted around their businesses and more land will be spoiled with pavement and asphalt. In order to tie these bridges together, there are plans for an additional highway to run between No. 8 and No. 9 Highways. That will make three highways within seeing distance of each other. The people in our district are asking why, and that seems like an understandable question.

With so many roads needing attention in Manitoba, we in the Selkirk district seem to be getting undue attention. I ask the Minister if he will ensure consultation with the citizens before future plans are taken. Government must respond to the priorities and needs and not past or present political agendas.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to respond to the Throne Speech as critic for the Status of Women. First, I wish to congratulate the Government for their support of both the River and Osborne Houses. I will expect similar attention to be paid in like services in our other rural areas and northern centres. Their needs, if anything, are more acute.

I was disappointed that there was no affirmation of rights of women, especially our aboriginal and immigrant citizens. Training services are limited as you travel away from our major centres. With this Government's emphasis on tourism, let us make sure that women are given equal opportunity and choices to become managers as well as servers.

I would have welcomed, as well, a direction to be given to reform in our justice system as to the laws that support the continuing belief that women are lesser citizens to be protected by their spouses. I will assume that all Members of this Legislature do not see justice as a hyphenated word.

The Throne Speech gives lip service to our environment. The Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connelly) mentioned that our Leader gave lip service to our environment.

I would like to point out that every citizen is involved in the environment. I believe this Legislature would be understandable if it decided to ban styrofoam cups. These destroy our ozone, and perhaps our greenhouse effect that is attracting such attention these days could be well-served by this Legislature by making a point of serving such a small part of environmental management.

May I also point out there are no aluminum-can recycling bins in this Legislature that I have seen, and I think this is something we could look at. I would point out that two Members of this caucus were up for inclusion by the past Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connelly) to be on the Environment Council. I do hope the Minister will move to include also agricultural areas on the Environment Council. The Environment Council should be put forth as soon as possible.

If this Government is to be in consultation with their federal counterparts, I ask that they ask for financial aid for our sewer and waterline reconstruction. To invite tourists to come to our province when our major rivers are polluted and our drinking waters are distasteful, when our air is fouled by smells of rotting sludge beds and landfill sites litter the landscapes, to do this would be like dressing for dinner without taking a bath. Certainly that may be an exaggeration, but the Red River north of Winnipeg is dangerously polluted, especially after heavy rainfalls, because the finances are not there to support a satisfactory sewer system in the City of Winnipeg.

West St. Paul suffers with the smell of Winnipeg sludge beds rotting in their backyard because the

Winnipeg system inadequately treats their waste. Our landfill sites continue to burn and blow refuse on our roadways because there has been no commitment to recycle our garbage, even though up to 80 percent is recyclable. Portage la Prairie is faced with a cost of up to some \$36 million for a new sewage treatment plant, while their sludge beds foul the air. The City of Dauphin has water quality problems every spring, and a sample this year came out as unsafe for consumption. These examples, I hope, will convince the Government that there is an immediate need for financial support if these problems are to be addressed.

Furthermore, in many communities, the streets and sidewalk repairs are being held up by infrastructure demands. Tourism potential will be greatly influenced by the quality support these conditions receive. Infrastructure is not a pretty topic, but the alternatives are just as costly and certainly dangerous. Perhaps that is why it seems to be insulting to specify the Forks Projects, as worthy as it is, above the value to put in sewers in this province. This Government must face their duties and ensure a safe, clean environment for all citizens, as well as tourists.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting that only one commitment of the previous Government received support of this new Government, that being the Meech Lake Accord. It would have been interesting to see some support from the Lotteries for the recreation centre in Selkirk, as the Honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon) tried to ask of Mr. Pawley during the 1986 election. I do not fault the process of public hearings for the Meech Lake Accord, but I would like some assurance that this Government will use its new-found willingness to listen and follow the input of the citizens.

The Fathers of Confederation chose wisely our style of Government. They purposely avoided the example of the United States, where individual states have the rights not assumed by the federal Congress. Sir John A. Macdonald and his colleagues had watched the bitter Civil War, where family fought family and the country was torn apart. They were convinced at that time that the strong powers of the individual states, states' rights, were what had caused the war and they set out to adopt a different system for Canada.

Our central Parliament was thus given powers not conferred upon local Governments and Legislatures, making our Confederation one people and one Government. Their wisdom has served us well, and yet we wish to challenge that and other sections of their will, not because they are faulty but because they were not thrown into a deal which began with perhaps an honest attempt but ended with a flat conclusion.

There can be a better deal and there must be a better deal. I am a proud Canadian, and I do not intend to vote to change the future of my country in order to follow a political agenda. I believe the central power of Government, like in any family, must have an overriding central power of authority. I believe that to ask for unanimity on future decisions sets us up for one special interest group, which can hold us ransom to their political will. Perhaps that is what is happening now.

The Accord sets fishery and Senate reforms as agenda items for the First Ministers' Conference forever.

Surely we should have enough confidence in our abilities and in ourselves to believe that these issues will be satisfactorily concluded at some point in the future. This Accord as it stands holds us hostage to politics. Canada is a country that should strive to be above this embittered infighting. Let us listen to the people. Manitoba sits proudly at the centre of this nation, and our voice will be one of the last expressions of the conscience of the people. It is our duty to freely respond with the wisdom of our hearts.

\* (2020)

It has been an honour to address this House. We each represent here the lives of all of those that have been given to this democratic process. It is my hope that we may each represent the electorate to the best of our abilities and with complete honesty in order that we may each, when we leave this House, be able to say I have served the people well.

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Municipal Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure for me to have the opportunity to rise and speak and say a few words in regard to the Throne Speech.

I would like, first of all, to take the opportunity to congratulate you on being elected to the office of Speaker in this House. It shows the regard in which we all hold you. I guarantee you that, while days may be exciting from time to time, we will honour your judgment.

I want to also congratulate the Deputy Speaker on his appointment and extend a welcome to all new Members of the House. It seems almost impossible that it was only two years ago that I arrived here myself, and certainly it is with a great deal of pleasure and pride that I now have an opportunity to address this House as a Minister on behalf of the Government.

We have been given an honour and we have been given a responsibility, and it is up to each of us in this House to decide the difference. We have been accused of being overly ambitious in this Throne Speech, and frankly that is a criticism that I can willingly accept.

To be ambitious and wanting to serve the people in Manitoba is something that causes me great pride. There is a better way to serve the people of this province. There is a better way to serve the people of Manitoba from this office and this Government, through the Throne Speech, through the attitude and through the work ethics of this Government caucus, will prove that is true. There is a better future for Manitoba and we want to provide that direction. We can provide it, and this document will show the way to that better future we see for the Province of Manitoba.

This document shows a Government that is prepared to make decisions to improve our ability to meet on further requirements, not only in terms of economic responsibility but in terms of being able to, through the strength of that economic management, afford to support the social infrastructure which the people in this Province have become so used to expect.

I am not sure where the wind is coming from, but I guess it is coming from the air conditioner.

We must never forget the responsibility, Mr. Speaker, that we all have to provide affordable services in this province, affordable services and services that the people of this province have a right to expect. We know that health and education is a primary responsibility that we have to live up to. There are three things probably that the people of this province expect the most from their elected Government. They expect quality health care, they expect quality education provided on an equality basis, and they expect service through their infrastructure, through provincial and municipal infrastructure.

The fact that this Legislature is sitting at this time, so shortly after this Cabinet was sworn in, is an indication to the people in this province and to our fellow Members in the Legislature that we have a commitment and a desire to bring the Government forward and to move quickly to act by example in providing leadership in this Province — leadership, by the way, that I feel has been lacking for far too long in the area of provincial politics, in areas of provincial initiative, leadership that I believe we can now take the initiative and provide for the people of this province.

We have laid out the most fundamental proof of our beliefs that this Government was elected to work. We were elected to work for the people of this province and we are here to do that job. We were sent here to do a job, and I believe that, collectively in this Province, the people will be looking at us and they will be asking, are we going to throw it away by allowing it to degenerate into petty political haggling. Are we going to allow it to degenerate into political posturing, or are we going to get on with the job of providing policies? Are we going to provide initiative, are we going to provide leadership, are we going to get this province back on the wheels?

We must grasp this opportunity. We grasp this opportunity not for our own personal gain. There are many people on this side and on that side of the House who have taken a great deal of personal sacrifice to be here. I am broad-minded enough to know that I believe every Member of this House came here with the intention of providing sound Government for the people of this province and you can rest assured that is where this Government is headed.

**Some Honourable Members:** Hear, Hear!

**Mr. Cummings:** The amount of wind that is coming across here I am going to have to staple down my papers.- (Interjection)- I can hold them down.

I noticed some comments from the Opposition regarding our concern for the rural parts of this province. I must admit that I thought my tie was too tight for a minute because it seems to me that, when you look at this caucus on this side of the House, there is very little doubt about the concern that these men and women have about rural Manitoba. That is why most of us ran for this office, so we could represent our constituencies, so we can be here to speak on behalf of rural Manitoba and take action on behalf of rural Manitoba. With every seat south of Swan River outside of the Perimeter, save for three, I would say

that this caucus represents rural Manitoba quite adequately.

**Some Honourable Members:** Hear, Hear!

**Mr. Cummings:** I hear some words of encouragement from one of the other Members representing rural parts of this province, and that is well and good.

We are mindful of the concerns of rural Manitoba. We will continue to be ever mindful of those concerns because the needs and desires of all Manitobans need to be heard in this Legislature. All Manitobans need to be represented adequately. This Government, this caucus and, I hope, this Legislature will do an adequate job of representing all parts of this province.

We have pledged ourselves to a new attitude in coming into Government. That includes making sure that Manitobans feel that their Government is open and approachable. I think that is important. I am sure that there is no one who could mount much of an argument against those principles. But at the same time, I find that is not necessarily what happens to Governments after they have been in power. I certainly want to indicate my desire. I know it is the desire of all my colleagues that this will be an open approachable Government.

**Some Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cummings:** Let me give you a small example of what I have found since becoming a Minister responsible for Municipal Affairs. I found that the elected representatives and the municipal authorities across this province do not necessarily feel that their concerns, their issues and their feelings have been adequately considered as representative of their communities. I think that is a sad commentary on the partnership that has to be forged between municipal organizations, between provincial organizations, and no less so the partnership that needs to be forged between provincial Governments and federal Governments in order to make this country and this province function as it should on behalf of the people who live here.

We must recognize that importance and we must recognize that partnership takes time. It takes time to develop those bridges of communication. It takes time to develop an understanding of each others' concerns and issues. It takes effort on the part of the provincial authorities. It takes effort on the part of the municipal authorities, but that effort ultimately will be worthwhile.

Occasionally, it will require accommodation by both sides so that the other may fulfill its obligations to those to whom it is responsible, but let us remember that both the provincial-municipal as well the federal-provincial agreements require occasional consensus. If they reach that consensus, taking the time, making the effort to which I just referred, then you can rest assured that those consensuses will stick. An imposed solution does not sit well with the people of this province or, I would dare say, of any other province, but an agreement between the provinces and municipal authorities that is reached by consensus and understanding and discussion is an agreement that will

stick and will be supported by all parties and will be to the best benefit of all of those concerned. I want to commit myself, as I know all my colleagues commit themselves, to that type of government that will enter into discussions.

\* (2030)

If you see some bags under a few eyes on this side, if you see a few yawns, it is not because the speeches on the other side have been boring. They have been anything but, and I would admit that I have been impressed with those who have spoken in this Chamber in this new Session. I only want to demonstrate that there have been some very long and serious discussions and work that has been going on, on this side of the House, in order to prepare for this sitting. That is an example of the kind of Government that you can expect from this administration.

As a new Government, we will have to work extremely hard to continue to produce that atmosphere of respect and cooperation. We will continue to work that way. There are very real ways that we can show that we have the desires and aspirations of everyone in this province and hope to bring forward initiatives and legislation that will respect those desires. If we have the respect and the cooperation of the affected people and the effective organizations with which we need to deal, then everyone in this House will be able to feel confident in accepting the legislation and accepting the initiatives that this government brings forward after we have forged that first understanding and agreement.

We pledged ourselves to being an open government, but that openness means more than just what the word might indicate at first glance. It means that elected people must also stand up and be prepared to be scrutinized and examined not only in this House but in other ways as well. I can tell you that the proclamation of The Freedom of Information Act will go a long way towards enhancing that examination of our behaviour. It also means that senior officials and Ministers should not be able to directly gain by stepping back and forth between the public and the private and gain immediately from that experience. It means being accountable in our Crown corporations. Our Crown corporations must be open and responsive. As the Minister responsible for MPIC, I am acutely aware of that responsibility.

We have taken the first step by putting in place a board that is a strong board that will act independently to provide information to this government, to provide leadership to the corporation, and I believe that we have an opportunity with this corporation to start afresh, to bring forward initiatives and to create an atmosphere in which this corporation, particularly the Autopac side, can again function responsibly to the people of this province.

We took an initiative when we appointed the chairman of the board who was not also the Minister responsible, an initiative that makes it so that the Minister responsible for MPIC cannot so easily delve so directly into the day-to-day operations of this corporation. That is a positive step on behalf of the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans will soon see the first step that we are taking in terms of making MPIC Autopac

Division more open because they will soon have their first opportunity to look at the fiscal position of the corporation.

Rates for MPIC Autopac Division will be examined by PUB. The public can be assured thereby that the political influence has not taken place in the way the rates are structured. The reflection of the cost of operation must be what sets the costs of our automobile insurance through Autopac. As long as we have an automobile insurance system in this province where we have a monopoly, we can clearly say that that monopoly need have nothing to fear by clearly stating its fiscal position. We must restore the confidence in this automobile insurance part of the corporation.

We must make sure that the staff, who have been beaten literally into the ground by the responsibilities that were thrust upon them by the last minute changes of the previous administration, have an opportunity to once again hold up their heads and get back current with their workload. It is a little known fact that probably the last of the renewals from the end of February have still not cleared the corporation. They have been working seven days a week, double shifts and hundreds and hundreds of hours of overtime to catch up with what was thrust upon them by a change, albeit that was hoped to reduce the impact on the public but was made without advance planning.

That type of management has to become a thing of the past. It has to become a nightmare of the past. Employees of the Autopac Division have to once again be made to feel that they are proud of what they are doing and that they are not constantly scrambling from behind a roomful of late returns. Extra staff was one thing but to force the system that was built on a computerized efficiency to not be able to implement and use the system which it was designed to function through has clearly caused the corporation a tremendous headache.

Mr. Speaker, the rural Manitoba economy is ever at the top of my personal list of concerns. I have often said that interprovincial boundaries will be harder and more troublesome to trade in and out of this province than free trade with the Americans will ever be. I want to indicate my support and compliment my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) on the work that he is doing on tripartite stabilization. It seems to me that, if the provinces of this country have an opportunity to get back on track so that we are playing on an even playing field in terms of the beef industry particularly, the beef industry of this province can only gain.

Our beef supply has been bled both east and west for far too long. I come from a constituency where the Town of Ste. Rose boasts of itself being the cattle capital of Manitoba, shipping the majority of its feeder cattle into Ontario and the balance to Alberta. I do not need to go into reams of information about what damage that does or what potential that removes from the rural incomes potential of this province, not to mention the infrastructure of the eventual handling and processing of the finished product.

\* (2040)

That is something that we have to be fully aware of and be cognizant of in the way we deal with our neighbouring provinces, and I think that it is only reasonable that we take a very clear-eyed view in this province as to the future relationship to the Free Trade Agreement with the United States. Those of us who make our living in agriculture, it seems only natural because we have always dealt on international markets. Our price, save for a few control price commodities, of our product has always been influenced dramatically by what is happening on the world scene and what is happening across borders to the south of us.

As I said, it only seems natural that we should be interested in enhancing trade, particularly when we are a province with the majority of our population down near the south end of the province, very nearly into the heart of the continent.

Every trading grouping in the world that is successful has an extremely large population into which it can trade. Any opportunity that we have in this country to access one of the greatest consumer societies in the world has tremendous potential for advantages to the people of this province. We have an opportunity upon which we can build our manufacturing, our industrial, our agricultural, our service industries and our technology. All of this can be built on a larger base. That larger base will provide economies of scale that will make us more competitive everywhere else in the world as well. Those principles alone tell me that this trade arrangement with the United States of America holds tremendous potential for this province.

Mr. Speaker, something that has been constantly raised, and I suppose I am going to show my rural bias in indicating this line of thought, something that so often is raised, let us remember this part of the agreement, that each country retains its right to apply its own trade laws with respect to anti-dumping and countervailing. This means that U.S. and Canadian producers maintain their right to obtain remedies against dumped or subsidized products. As a result of the agreement, either country will be able to seek review by a bi-national panel and that solution will be binding, a binding bi-national panel. That tells the whole story right there, the word "binding." We have a right if we feel that we are being unfairly used by the huge trading nation to the south of us, we have a right now, we will have in the future, to ask to have a bi-national panel to make a binding ruling, and that is a tremendously important element of this agreement.

Potentials of our industries gaining the effectiveness, effectiveness that goes with size, is of tremendous importance. You add the technology that will allow us to compete more effectively in the world markets and you have a situation that appears to be win-win.

The Canadian labour force is already viewed as highly educated, highly skilled and competitive with other countries. If we then add the volume that is necessary to take advantage of that skilled and competitive work force, that educated work force, then look at the advantages that we have. We have long since lost the most-favoured status and the ability to trade in a most-favoured basis throughout the United Kingdom. We have certainly lost it in fact, if not in law. We need to



expand the markets that are available to our producers and our province.

We need to be concerned about potential protectionism of the American Government. That is the most dangerous aspect of all, that there should be a concern, that we might be facing protectionism, and that is why this agreement is important. Those who say they will dump this agreement have not offered anything to replace it. They have not offered anything better. They have not offered us a future that shines brighter than the one that is being offered to us right now. Rather than attacking social programs, this agreement will give us the infrastructure and the fiscal ability to support the social programs that we have.

This is an important step, moving not only for stability in agricultural trade, which is important to me and others like me throughout rural Manitoba who depend on agricultural trade for our livelihood so we can contribute to the good GNP of this province as agriculture has historically done for years and years. Do not deny us this opportunity. This is a chance for us to seize an opportunity to deal with one of the greatest trading nations of the world, and we have an opportunity that we would be foolish to turn our backs on.

This agreement does not reinvent the wheel. It simply is built upon the already tried and true principles of the GATT Agreement. Even Pierre Elliott Trudeau, during his years -(Interjection)- I am pleased to see the great admiration and thrill that comes to the eyes of the Members sitting opposite. They may not be so thrilled, however, when I remind them that Pierre Elliott himself tried desperately to develop bilateral trading agreements. He wanted very badly to develop bilateral trading deals but it ultimately failed. Negotiations take two forms. They are either quick and dirty, or they are long and dirty.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Cummings:** I notice some discomfort across the way when we discussed the fact that even one of the great disciples of the Liberal Party tried desperately to make an agreement with the United States to enhance the trade coming into eastern Canada.

**An Honourable Member:** What do you think of Laurier?

**Mr. Cummings:** It is funny that someone should mention Laurier, because this is not a Johnny-come-lately idea. This has got history that goes back to the days of Laurier. Those who will oppose in principle a closer working arrangement with the U.S. will never be satisfied, and they will never probably be willing to go forward when the opportunity is presented to them.

As the Minister responsible for Municipal Affairs, not only because of my agricultural background but because of my feeling for the farm lands of this province, I am tremendously concerned about the loss of prime agricultural land in this province. We must continue to press forward. We must press forward with plans and ideas that will help the rural municipal bodies of this

Province have an opportunity through development plans, planning districts and zoning by-laws to direct the development of their home communities, and have the opportunity at the same time to protect the agriculture infrastructure that is in their communities.

I have subscribed very strongly to the principle that, once the planning districts and zoning by-laws are in place, those who are closest to the problem, those who are the locally elected representatives should then have the ultimate responsibility to decide how those communities will grow.

I am someone who has made my living entirely from the land, Mr. Speaker. I suppose it could be said that I have never worked for anyone in my life until elected to this job, but now I find that I work for a very great number of people.

But the taxation on agricultural land for educational purposes is a concern of myself and all of my colleagues, and is truly something that is impacting upon the development and the future of our agricultural lands in this province. As we struggle forward to a reassessment reform by the year 1990, it would be my expectation that part of that can include taxation reform rather than have to deal with education tax on agricultural land on an ad hoc basis, as has been done up to now.

\* (2050)

I sincerely wish that the outgoing administration had moved more quickly in the area of assessment reform and taxation reform. It would have made my job in the near term a lot easier. We have been left a legacy of neglect, Mr. Speaker, a legacy of unwillingness to move in the face of concerns which were raised on an ongoing and continuous basis.

The Weir Commission recommended years ago the changes and the direction in which this province could go. We are quite prepared to meet the 1989 deadline with assessment reform, and I think that is not a solution that anyone in this House need shy away from. There are a lot of inequities which need to be corrected in the taxation system in this province and the Members opposite can taunt all they like, they know damn well that it needs to be dealt with.

Let us make no mistake about the gravity of the situation, Mr. Speaker. Rural Manitoba has an infrastructure problem which is going to hamper the ability of this province to diversify and to have jobs across the province. My critic opposite correctly identified some of the areas where there have been neglect in the area of infrastructure construction. It seems to me that, if you were ever going to have jobs in the province, you have to have the ability to deal with the waste water and the by-products of the industry that we hope to establish across the province.

**An Honourable Member:** I think she will be supporting you for a long time by the sound of it.

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Speaker, I would expect that probably that is true, because it seems to me that the responsibility that has been left to lie in terms of

communities that cannot even expand their residential base because they have reached the limits of their sewage capacity has left this new administration with some very serious fiscal and planning problems which are going to require a lot of dollars in the near term and a lot of support in the long term. I see some of my colleagues opposite nodding and I expect, when the crunch comes, that we will have their support to see that kind of diversification across the Province of Manitoba.

I would hesitate to even put a figure on the potential need for municipal infrastructure across this province, but I have gone on record about seven times in various municipal meetings across this province, indicating what I felt would be almost a minimum in order to bring up to date the infrastructure that is needed. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, if all the needs out there were to be met tomorrow, it would probably cost this Government \$100 million. Where can a province like this find that kind of money?

This document puts forward marching orders that I am prepared to carry out and that I expect all Members of this House will be able to support to varying degrees. I notice that a few Members opposite feel that probably those kind of dollars are all being spent somewhere in eastern Canada. As a Member of the Government that is presented with that kind of problem, I would simply indicate that, if we had the courage as Manitobans, as a Government running this province for the last several years, to have dealt with these problems on an ongoing and continuing basis, we would not be faced with the magnitude of the problem that we have today.

Those who chirp from their seats and talk about the problem as if they had never heard of it before will probably realize that they may very well in some way have been avoiding the reality. It could be the ostrich syndrome; it could be a lack of prioritization.

As a Member who has to drive by the remains of the 1988 crop every week, as I travel back and forth between here and my home, sometimes I have to wonder where it is that I am going at the end of the week. The days get to be a little longer.

Mr. Speaker, I want to heartily recommend again the actions and the forthright work of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) and for cooperating with the provinces to the west of us and with the federal Government to bring into play at least some element of support for those farmers out there who are suffering from the effects of one of the worst droughts that this area has seen for many many years.

The initiatives that this Minister has taken are only the beginning of what I am sure will be a long and fruitful relationship between the farmers and the agricultural community of this province and the Filmon administration. My constituency, the constituency of Ste. Rose, is an area that is totally variable from one end to the other in the type of economy that we have. We run from lush Newdale clays and grain belt farming to the capital centre of Manitoba in Ste. Rose, north through the Alonsa LGD. We also rely on the part-time and full-time fishery along the shores of the lake. In

fact, it could be said that the Ste. Rose constituency encompasses all the land between the Riding Mountain and Lake Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, it is a humbling experience for me to have been re-elected to this Chamber to represent that constituency again. I want the people of Ste. Rose to know that I am here to serve that constituency as well as the rest of the people of this province. I want to clearly state it is my intention to do justice to this job and to the people of this province.

What you have seen in the Throne Speech and what the people of this province have seen in the Throne Speech is an outline, is the marching orders that we will follow to put forward a new plan for this province. It will be a new plan carried out by a group of people with a new and renewed commitment to the service of this province. It is with a great deal of pride, Mr. Speaker, that I want to tell you and anyone else who will listen that I strongly support this Speech from the Throne, and that I will spend every ounce of energy that I have to see that the priorities in there are carried out.

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to join with others in this debate, firstly, to congratulate you on your appointment to this very high office and a very difficult position. I know, having been in this House with you for a few years, that you will treat both sides fairly and you will do your very best to exercise justice. It is a difficult position.

\* (2100)

I also want to take the opportunity to welcome new Members. There are so many new faces in this past election, and they come here with a lot of enthusiasm and well-meaning, as we all do. We all come with enthusiasm, we come with well-meaning, the best of intentions. It reminds me, back in 1969 when I was first elected, because then too there was a huge influx of new people and I was one of them. We came with the best of intentions, with great enthusiasm to remake the world, and we did some things that were pretty good. The only trouble -(Interjection)- we did not go wrong at all, Mr. Speaker. I am being prompted in my speech from a voice behind me.

I recall the first Government we had. We did not have a majority but we were very close to a majority. There was one independent, Mr. Beard from Churchill, who was ready to support us, and there were a few Liberals who were ready to give us a chance, and we did some great things. We brought in Autopac, a great thing. We eliminated Medicare premiums, a great thing, and many, many other things that I am very proud of that have been accomplished by the Party that was in power, by the Government I was a Member of at that time.

It is disconcerting though, I might tell you Members, and you begin to wonder. You get in here and you wonder just who is listening out there, like the press gallery up above there is waiting with bated breath.

**An Honourable Member:** Oh, yes, there they are!

**An Honourable Member:** There are thousands of them, Leonard.

**Mr. L.S. Evans:** Maybe they are in the press room. But you will find that many of the speeches you make — you may feel it is the best speech that has ever been made in this Chamber — are never reported, not one word in the paper, not one word in the radio or TV. It is very disconcerting also when one of your constituents asks you, "How is the Session going?" when the Session has been out for months, or conversely, "When is the Session going to start?" and you have been slugging it away for weeks on end. Of course, in the City of Winnipeg it is even more disconcerting when you find that the average constituent does not know the name of their MLA. It is not true in rural Manitoba, but certainly in Winnipeg it is very difficult. For whatever reason, people do not know the names of their MLAs. At any rate, there are some frustrations in the job.

It is particularly frustrating being in Opposition. The Member for Portage la Prairie, the Minister of Labour, Environment and so on (Mr. Connery) said that he did not like being in Opposition. He was a man who wanted to get things done. He welcomed the chance now to be in Government. I can say indeed it is frustrating to be in Opposition because your job is to criticize, to point out the failures of the Government as you see them, to make suggestions, not that anyone pays any attention to your suggestions.

I think, Mr. Speaker, this time it is different because, although I have been here 19 years and although I came in with a minority Government, never ever before have we had the situation of numbers that we have in this particular Chamber this evening, this Session.

We have a Government before us who does not have a mandate. They do not have a mandate to govern this province. We do not have a mandate, and I am sure that the Liberal Party who is the Official Opposition is not suggesting that they have a mandate either, but the Government of Manitoba, the Premier and his Cabinet, has no mandate. He and his colleagues in Cabinet can only do what this Legislature will agree to in general spending, in general policies and general legislation. It requires consensus and cooperation of all Parties in this House for the Government to continue and, therefore, cooperation is essential. I say, therefore, it is not the Government who has the mandate; it is this Legislative Assembly which has the mandate to govern this province.

The previous administration has been much maligned in the past election — I heard it today and in previous debate — so I must say one or two words in our defence. I listened to Members across telling us how hard they worked, as though no Cabinet Minister before or maybe since will work as hard as they are. When you are a Cabinet Minister, it is the nature of the job. There is lots to be done and you work hard and you put in many hours, whichever Party you are in.

We did a lot of work and I thought we accomplished a lot of things. I think the history books will show that the record, the economic performance, under the Pawley Administration with the previous NDP Government, was good. It was above the Canadian average in most years. Our unemployment was relatively good. Generally speaking, Manitoba did well within the

national economic sphere comparing us to the other provinces. You can always do better, of course, but we are not a province known to great bursts of growth or development. We tend to plod along rather gently but we did proceed, we did progress.

The finances of the Government were not out of line. As has been well documented by the accounting firm of Midland Doherty which has compared the Budgets of various provinces for the year '87-88, our revenue per capita, compared with the other provinces, was below the 10 provincial average. In other words, the tax revenue take of the previous Government was not excessive. It was not above the Canadian average; it was the third lowest of the 10 provinces in this country. Similarly, with our spending, we were criticized our spending was out of line. The information compiled by Midland Doherty Ltd., which took all the provincial Budgets across the land, showed that the spending per capita in Manitoba was just below the 10 province average. We were the fourth-lowest spender in the country.

Similarly, when it came to deficits per capita, yes, we were slightly above the Canadian average, but just slightly above the Canadian average. In terms of our debt services, debt service cost per capita, which is one way to measure the burden of the debt, our debt service cost per capita was just about dead on the Canadian average. So let it not be said that our spending was out of control compared to the other provinces or indeed that our debt service charges were out of line compared to the other provinces.

We introduced many important social programs, Mr. Speaker, and one in particular that I am proud of because I was the Minister responsible for bringing in the day care legislation. Manitoba developed the finest level of day care to be found in any province in this country. I would be the first to say it can be better, it should be better, we should do more, but Manitoba today stands as a beacon among all the provinces as having the finest standards of day care in the Canadian nation.

We had a program of developing and supporting women's shelters across the province. You hear a lot about Osborne House but there were shelters developed in Brandon, supported in Thompson, supported in Dauphin and so on. There were many good social programs that we brought in and I will not go into all the detail.

Our health care system was the best in Canada. We had no user fees, we had no premiums. We had a nursing home system which was brought under Medicare. That is not true in all provinces, Mr. Speaker. In many provinces, nursing homes are not covered by Medicare, so you therefore do not get help from the public Treasury when you go to a nursing home. You spend all your resources and, when your resources are spent, then you go on welfare and welfare keeps you in the nursing home. This is what it was like in Manitoba up to the year 1973. In the year 1973, the Schreyer NDP Government at that time put the nursing home system under Medicare.

So I say we have the best health care system and it is a challenge to this Legislature, it is a challenge to

all of us to make sure that we maintain a good health care system. It can always be better, it can always be improved, you can always see areas of difficulty, areas you can criticize, obviously. But compared to the other province, compared to many other jurisdictions, I think we have something to be proud of and we must protect it.

One of the reasons we have good programs is because we have good people. The one thing I do regret is recently reading about layoffs of certain key people. I am not suggesting the Government does not have the right, or should not have the right to fire a Deputy Minister — and I am not one to mention civil servants by name in this House — but the Leader of the Official Opposition today mentioned one, Mr. J. Kaufman, as being someone who is very competent, was lined up to be Deputy Minister, would have been an asset to any administration and, regrettably, I learned he is let go. This is sad, this is a loss to the province because you had a very competent person. As I said, I would never have mentioned his name but his name has already been mentioned. I say it with some considerable experience that he was a very excellent civil servant, one who knew something about public administration, one who could help any Government, any Party, in controlling spending and getting the maximum amount of benefit from those scarce health care dollars.

\* (2110)

When I listened to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), particularly the First Minister but even the Minister responsible for MPIC, the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings), tonight and some others on the opposite side talk about the failures of the previous Government, we are in the stage of blaming everything on the previous Government. It reminds me of the old joke which those who have been here before have heard, but perhaps those of you who have not sat in this House before have not heard, and that is the joke of the three envelopes. I ask the indulgence of those who have heard this before, but it is a very insightful little bit of humour here.

It is the story about the incoming Minister who had no experience before in Government going to the outgoing Minister. An election had been held and there was a change in Government and a change in Party, and the incoming Minister begged the outgoing experienced Minister for some advice. Can you please give me some advice on how to conduct myself to be a good Minister, how to be a Member of a Government and make sure we do the right thing? He said, my friend I have it all for you here in three envelopes. That is all you need are these three envelopes and this is my advice to you. So the new Minister, the novice, was very grateful. He thanked him very much and he took his three envelopes. But the outgoing Minister said, please do not use them unless you really have to, unless you are into real trouble. Do not use them unless you absolutely must. So the new Minister took his advice and tried to desist from using them, but one day he got into some big problems in the House and he did not know what the answer was so he had to, in desperation, open up the first envelope, envelope No. 1. And envelope No. 1 simply said, "Blame the previous

Government." And, of course, that message has been well heard across the way.

The new Minister went along for a few weeks. Everything was fine until one day another big problem came along and he regretted in having to open up the second envelope but, nevertheless, he was forced to open up the second envelope. He did so and it said simply, "Blame the federal Government." So he went on and he got out of that mess by blaming the federal Government.

A few more weeks went by and the Minister got into trouble again so he opened up the final envelope — he did not want to do it but he did — and the message was very simple, "Please prepare three envelopes."

I heard Warner Jorgenson tell that -(Interjection)- Yes, the Member for Morris. There is some sound advice in that.

I detect in the Throne Speech a lot of rhetoric regarding the concern of the Government for social programming, for health, for education, a lot of rhetoric and I hope I can believe the rhetoric. I will give them the benefit of the doubt, but I also detect a strong thread of emphasis on fiscal management and the Tory philosophy of putting finances ahead of people. I guess we are going to see what will happen. The proof of the pudding will be in the eating. We will see what will happen.

I also note some suspicion of public spending and public investment in the Throne Speech, and I think that too is regrettable. For some reason or other, public spending, public investment, is spoken of as though it is something evil, something to be minimized, something to be avoided. The fact is that in this province we have built up some very major utilities, very major public infrastructures through provincial Government spending, through provincial Government investment: the Manitoba Hydro, one of the finest electric utilities in the world; the Manitoba Telephone System, one of the finest telephone systems in the world; the Manitoba Public Automobile Insurance, MPIC, and many other areas where public investment — and this goes long before I became a Member of this House, long before the New Democratic Party came onto the scene — because, I am saying, past legislators, past Governments, saw a role for public spending, for public investment, to build up the basic infrastructure of this province.

So when you talk about cutting spending, I worry about what will happen to health care because one-third of our spending goes to health care. A great deal of money goes into health care and, if you are talking about getting a handle on spending, you are talking about really getting a handle on what we do in the health care system.

I do have some concerns at that reference to public spending, public investment, somehow or other being not as good as private spending, private investment. There is a role surely for both the private and the public investment spending, for both private and public general spending.

I detect also in the Throne Speech some contradiction because it is alleged that they will keep spending under

control, yet there will be improvements in services. I would still like to have that one explained to me and maybe Members opposite will try.

I say we will see how things go. We will see how it happens, because I am not so sure, having had many years of experience in two different administrations, that it is that simple, that easy to talk about keeping spending under control and at the same time suggesting that you are somehow or other going to enhance, expand social services including health care.

I am concerned also in the Throne Speech about reference to improving the economic climate. We all want a good economic climate. Every Party surely does, but I hope it does not mean turning the clock back on labour legislation. There is already reference made to final offer selection.

I think the legislation has been passed. It should be given an opportunity to work. There is a sunset clause in that legislation. Apart from FOS, there are other elements of labour legislation which are very progressive. I surely hope that having a so-called better or improved economic climate does not mean watering down our excellent labour legislation.

We have good labour relations in this province. I think the days lost through strikes are probably the lowest in the country, maybe second only to Prince Edward Island. I hope a better economic climate does not mean watering down the Workers Compensation benefits because, when the Members opposite were the Opposition, we heard a great deal about the deficit of the Workers Compensation fund. I might enlighten Members of the House that this is typical of Workers Compensation funds right across this country almost, where they all are having difficulty in funding, in paying their way in operating the Workers Compensation program. - (Interjection)- Yes, indeed. Go to B.C. and read it and you will find - (Interjection)- I am not saying you cannot turn around, but you do not turn it around on the backs of the working people of this province. That is my concern.

**An Honourable Member:** You never will.

**Mr. L.S. Evans:** You never will. You tell me what magic you are going to exercise. I simply say, I hope "improving economic climate" does not mean reducing or watering down in any way Worker Compensation benefits. It may mean eliminating the health and education levy which some people refer to as the payroll tax. I have simply, given the size of that tax, given the amount of revenue, the millions and millions of dollars of revenue that the payroll tax brings into the Treasury, either that reference in the Throne Speech refers to a very insignificant, inconsequential cut in the payroll tax, which will really mean nothing, or there will be a big cut and the Government across the way is going to have to look for another source of revenue.

I am predicting right now that, if there is a significant cut in the payroll tax, there will have to be a new tax or an added tax. I would suggest that the Members opposite will likely look at a sales tax increase. They will be looking at a sales tax increase because they

cannot do all these things. You are not going to be enhancing health care, putting more money into education, more money into agriculture, more money into highways, unless the Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger), with his tin cup, can raise a few pennies as he stands on the street or on the highways as the traffic goes by with his toll charge proposal. So if there is a significant cut in payroll tax, look for a new source of tax, and I am ready to bet a cup of coffee that it will likely be an adjustment upward in the sales tax.

**An Honourable Member:** You have always been right.

**Mr. L.S. Evans:** The Meech Lake Accord is referred to. I must say that was the one thing in the Speech that surprised me really, because I thought the Premier of this province said that he would not bring in a resolution in the first Session of the House. That is what I thought. Then, of course, we heard about Senator Murray's visit to the building. Then all of a sudden it gets into the Throne Speech and now we are supposed to consider the Meech Lake Accord. I ask, what is the hurry? What is the hurry? - (Interjection)- I think my honourable friend beside me has given me the correct answer. The answer is Mr. Mulroney. It is Mr. Mulroney's timetable that causes us to want to discuss it in this Session.

**An Honourable Member:** Not in Manitoba.

**Mr. L.S. Evans:** It is not a Manitoba timetable. Why not think about it next year? The Constitution has been around a long time. Quebec is not going to disappear. It is still there where it has been ever since the Earth was created. There it is — or ever since Canada was created, ever since it was settled by people.

I say I do not understand why we have to be going under the federal Mulroney timetable. There is no necessity to move - (Interjection)- Well, in this Session, there is no necessity.

\* (2120)

**An Honourable Member:** Where were you?

**Mr. L.S. Evans:** We can have public hearings at some time or other.

**An Honourable Member:** Where were you?

**Mr. L.S. Evans:** I was here. I am telling the Honourable Member from Arthur, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), that there is no hurry. In fact, haste makes waste. - (Interjection)- I am telling you as a Member, duly elected by the people of my constituency, what I think. I think haste can make waste. And I think there are some very important problems with the Accord. There are many problems with it.

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs):** Would the Member for Brandon East submit to a question?

**Mr. L.S. Evans:** I will be glad to answer your question at the end of my speech.

I am losing track of time here, so somebody tell me about the time.

So I say there is no hurry in my view, that there is no hurry with the Meech Lake Accord, and there are certainly some major concerns I have. Personally, I have some major misgivings about the rights of Canadians, particularly the rights of women, Native rights.— (Interjection)— Well, the former Premier (Mr. Pawley) had the same concerns, and he said he had those concerns. He had the concerns about the Northwest Territories. There is nothing written in stone that you cannot amend in a court.

Mr. Speaker, recently I had the opportunity to meet some people from the Northwest Territories and the Yukon Territories, and they are very upset with the Meech Lake Accord, very very upset with the Meech Lake Accord. They think that it has to, if it goes ahead, have that amendment to make it possible for those territories to become, at some time in the future — not now but some time in the future, whenever that is, it may be decades from now — but at some time they might become provinces.

The Members of this side have been chastised also for making reference to free trade in our debates. I and others seem to wonder why we should be concerned about free trade. But you know, Mr. Speaker, the more I examine it, the more the people of Canada and the more the people of Manitoba examine it, the more they should become very concerned about that particular deal. I hasten to add — I should back up and say — although the document says free trade arrangement-agreement, nevertheless it is the Mulroney-Reagan deal, because we have talked about free trade for a long time. Free trade is nothing new. The idea per se is not bad and it has been pursued by this country many years back under the GATT arrangement. It is under the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade.

So you do not have to lecture us on the virtue of free trade per se. But it is not just the free trade that we are talking about in this arrangement. We are talking about national sovereignty; we are talking about the protection of our resources; we are talking about investment and additional takeover of Canadian industry. We are concerned about certain factors that will, in effect, ultimately water down our social services. So there are many concerns that I have.

Let me talk for a minute, particularly over jobs, just about the jobs portion or job impact of the deal. There have been econometric analysis showing that, over 10 years, the economy might gain up to 250,000 jobs, but that is 250,000 new jobs over 10 years. But then what about Mr. Benoit Bouchard, the former federal Minister of Employment, who says that there might be up to 500,000 Canadians who could lose their jobs because of the trade deal.

I might add that the econometric analysis that was done on the new jobs was based on some misleading assumptions. One of the major assumptions was a cheaper Canadian dollar. I think it was based on a 75-cent dollar. But we are way above the 75-cent dollar. What are we now — 82-83 cents, 83.5 cents. That is

a new ball game. How can you talk about this number of jobs with a much more expensive dollar? As I say, the more you think about this, the more concern that we should have. They fail to take into account the cost of giving up several levers of industrial policy and certainly the control of our energy resources.

The jobs that will disappear in the manufacturing sector, Mr. Speaker, regrettably will be among the working poor, the people who are among the lower wage earners and particularly, I am sorry to say, women who are concentrated in the textiles industry, the clothing industry. There are many in the clothing industry in the Province of Manitoba, footwear, leather goods and, in B.C., it is fish processing. In many cases, the people who hold these jobs have very few transferable job skills. They are the people who have the most difficulty, I regret to say, with retraining. As I mentioned the other day in my preamble to a question, to my knowledge from my understanding, the federal Government has made no provisions for these adjustments. It made no provisions for retraining of people. I think regrettably it seems that the Government regards these workers as dispensable somehow.

Just putting jobs aside for a moment, what about this whole question of our social safety net. Comparing Canada and the United States, we have a much more sophisticated social security system than the United States, and we certainly have more protection for our workers than the Americans have. What worries me is, when I compare some of these categories, I see that if you want to go for a level playing field, what is going to happen, there is going to be pressure by our industrialists, by our manufacturers, by our employers, to push down these programs, to bring them down to the level of the Americans.

For instance, take minimum wages. In Canada every province and territory has a minimum wage law, and only Alberta is below one American state standard, so all Canadian provinces have minimum wage laws and, in the United States, there are at least nine states that have no minimum wages. You get southern states like Texas who have a minimum wage, but they are \$1.40 an hour.

Unemployment insurance, 83 percent of Canada's unemployed people collected benefits in 1986. The average payment was 60 percent of the average weekly wage. In the United States, only 25 percent of unemployed workers received what we call unemployment insurance in 1987, and the payment is only 35 percent of the average weekly wage.

So what I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is we have a much better setup here for people who happen to be regrettably thrown out of work compared to what the Americans have. In Canada, 37 percent of our workforce is unionized; in the United States, it is only 17 percent and, in certain states, it is only 5 percent.

In education, we spend more money per pupil in Canada or as a percentage of our national income than the Americans do.

Health care, we have a universal health care and medical coverage system and we have employers who

make contributions on a compulsory basis in some provinces. In the United States, in contrast, only 40 percent of the population are eligible for publicly-funded hospital and medical services, and 36 million Americans, including 12 million children, have no health insurance whatsoever. As far as employer contributions are concerned, they are totally voluntary. Likewise, with income distribution, income distribution is much fairer in Canada than the United States.

\* (2130)

So what I am concerned about is that the trade deal does not put pressure on the economy to come up to our standards. What I see is pressure to bring us down to the American standards, and that has to be a serious concern. It may be a long term but it is, nevertheless, a fundamental concern.

They talk about what will happen to some of our workers, what will happen to our wages. There is, along the Mexican side of the U.S. border, a strip of territory where there are certain — I am not sure how to pronounce this — maquiladoras industries located, and Mexican officials are very proud to say that the maquiladoras are unspoiled labour. They have no unions, they have no benefits, they have no security — real unspoiled labour.

**An Honourable Member:** Seventy cents an hour.

**Mr. Evans:** Yes, they work for as little as \$4.25 a day. They are mostly young women, 80 percent earn less than \$6.25 a day — this is in Mexico just alongside the American border. The labour costs there are only one-sixth of Japan's, one-tenth of the United States and one-half of South Korea. So what you have is the same multinationals that operate in Canada are already establishing themselves in this maquiladoras area, that is this territory in Mexico along the American border. Some Japanese multinationals are moving quickly. In fact, I understand some Canadian firms are there already.

Nevertheless, there is an impact. At any rate, for those who doubt the potency of the forces acting to dilute our wage levels or our social policies, our programs or institutions, I would like to quote a few prominent Canadian businessmen. These are not New Democrats and I do not know whether they are Liberals, but they are certainly leaders, they are leaders in the Canadian business field. One Mr. Tom Stanfield — you may recall the name Stanfield is a well-known name in the Maritimes. He is the president of his company, and he states and I am quoting: "It is the cost of Government, the cost of energy, the cost of human resources that will allow us to compete or not to compete and, therefore, we will have to slowly adopt the American way with very few modifications. Why is it that manufacturing is largely located in the southern United States rather than the northern which is comparable to Canada when it comes to the cost structures and way of life."

Here is another brief quotation from Mr. Colin Harper, President of Camco Limited. "The impact of free trade on Canadian manufacturing is going to be like a wave

breaking at the beach. Several things would be needed to survive. First of all, consistency from the Canadian Government in terms of taxation, regulation and legislation which all affect the cost of doing business and hence our competitiveness," in other words, pressure to change our tax laws, our social legislation, our regulations to conform more with what goes on in the United States.

Mr. Laurent Thibeault, President of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, and I quote, "It is simply a fact that, as we ask our industries to compete toe to toe with the American industries, we in Canada are obviously forced to create the same conditions in Canada that exist in the United States, whether it is the Unemployment Insurance scheme, Workers Compensation, the cost of Government, the level of taxation, or whatever."

Canada West Foundation: "Free trade between our two countries will inevitably lead to wages being equalized between Canada and United States. This will occur since a high-cost producer will not be able to compete against the lower-cost producer if goods are traded freely." So tell that to our working people.

What about the Grocery Products Manufacturers' Association? "Some product sectors in Canada are at a disadvantage because the comparative U.S. industries are not as unionized. Therefore, some fundamental realignment in legislative benefits programs and labour union organization will be required. As well, Canadian workers income expect that U.S. will have to be substantially lowered."

Jimmy Pattison, Vancouver entrepreneur, friend of the Social Credit Government in British Columbia: "We are looking at manufacturing along the Mexican border and shipping into Canada and if we do that we will shut down our plants in Canada and transfer to Mexico."

And my last quote, Mr. Speaker, is from Rex Maingot, President of the American Industries: "The bottom line is this: your cost per Mexican worker is 69 cents per hour versus at least \$9 in the States, a savings of \$15,000 per week. You can see how down here a G.M. car could be made competitive with the Japanese. If you are currently driving a Ford Tempo, there is a 50 percent chance that your engine was built right here in Mexico. We project that there will be one million more new jobs coming to Mexico from U.S. companies in the next 14 years." And, of course, as part of this deal you can add in the word Canadian companies as well as U.S. companies.

So I am suggesting that there will be forces at work that will cause a shift of manufacturing out of Canada to that area of Mexico and possibly to other parts of the States where the labour costs are lower and where there are less social security benefits that have to be paid out. That is a real threat, and I regret that Members opposite do not seem to appreciate this particular concern that these gentlemen, these people who are the the chief executive officers of their various companies have demonstrated, have told us quite clearly what is going to happen in their view.

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure how much time I have left. Three minutes left? Okay.

Mr. Speaker, I go back then that there is lots more that can be said about the Mulroney-Reagan Trade Agreement. But I say, ultimately, it is a threat to our national sovereignty. I say that I am not against trade or liberalization of trade. Canada did a very good job over several decades in lowering trade barriers between the United States and Canada in an organized fashion under the GATT negotiations, and it did so in cooperation with many other GATT members. There is no reason why that could not proceed.

But all of a sudden, we have a deal here that goes beyond that, that goes about challenging our social security system ultimately, that goes about, I believe, undermining our banking system possibly, and certainly one that will allow market forces to control — and this I regret very much — public policy-making at both the federal and provincial level. This is a statement that Lloyd Axworthy made recently which I agree with, that public policy-making, both federally and provincially, are being put at risk by this deal. In the long run the market forces, particularly emanating out of the United States, will dominate.

I would say Sir John A. Macdonald, the First Prime Minister of Canada, a great national Conservative who was a state builder, would turn over in his grave if he knew of what the Conservative Party of Canada is trying to do in this particular arrangement. It is totally against everything that Sir John A. Macdonald stood for: the national policy, building the nation with a railway system, with an immigration policy, and building it with the tariff system that enabled the Canadian economy to develop the way it is today. I say there are alternatives.

In conclusion, I say I trust that there is some sense of direction about this Government. I hope there will be no major spending cuts in social programming or health care. I have already got correspondence from some of my constituents who, it would seem to me, are indicating to me and writing to Ministers opposite that they are a little worried as to what is going to happen to funding of Child and Family Services or what is going to happen to Respite Services, just to use two examples. I hope that there is a little sense of proportion and, please, a little humility is called for. Thank you.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs on a point of order.

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I had asked the Member earlier if he would submit to a question. However, I guess the time is over which would be available.

**Some Honourable Members:** Leave, leave!

**Mr. Downey:** Do I have leave, Mr. Speaker?

**Mr. Speaker:** Yes, you do.

**Mr. Downey:** Mr. Speaker, I will not be too long. I just ask the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Evans), in view of his comments in his speech tonight dealing with the Meech Lake Accord, and the fact that he has some serious reservations about it and in fact is very upset about it, why did he not express those concerns prior to the signing of it by his Premier, whom he sat as a Cabinet Minister with? Why did he not, at that particular time, express to his constituents and the people of Manitoba his feelings at that time?

\* (2140)

**Mr. L.S. Evans:** My understanding is that the indication by the former Premier Pawley in signing the Accord was a preliminary indication of wanting to cooperate with other provinces. The former Premier, Mr. Pawley, did indicate very clearly that, before he would agree to having a resolution passed by the Legislature of Manitoba, he would want to have full public hearings. That was a clear commitment made. Premier Pawley also indicated a concern about women, concern about Native rights, concern about the rights of the Territories. We had those concerns, the same concerns. He expressed those to us in caucus.

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** I believe there is leave to call it ten o'clock.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the will of the House to call it ten o'clock? (Agreed)

This matter will stand in the name of the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer). The hour being 10 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).