



Third Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

39-40 Elizabeth II

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Denis C. Rocan
Speaker*



VOL. XLI No. 12 - 1:30 p.m., WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1992



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	Liberal
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	Liberal
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CONNERY, Edward	Portage la Prairie	PC
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Liberal
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	NDP
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	NDP
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Liberal
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold	Rossmere	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	NDP
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, February 19, 1992

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition, and it conforms with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth

THAT child abuse is a crime abhorred by all good citizens of our society, but nonetheless it exists in today's world; and

It is the responsibility of the government to recognize and deal with this most vicious of crimes; and

Programs like the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign raise public awareness and necessary funds to deal with the crime; and

The decision to terminate the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign will hamper the efforts of all good citizens to help abused children.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba show a strong commitment to deal with Child Abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign. (Ms. Barrett)

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition, and it conforms with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth

THAT child abuse is a crime abhorred by all good citizens of our society, but nonetheless it exists in today's world; and

It is the responsibility of the government to recognize and deal with this most vicious of crimes; and

Programs like the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign raise public awareness and necessary funds to deal with the crime; and

The decision to terminate the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign will hamper the efforts of all good citizens to help abused children.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba show a strong commitment to deal with Child Abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign. (Mr. Chomiak)

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition, and it conforms with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth

THAT child abuse is a crime abhorred by all good citizens of our society, but nonetheless it exists in today's world; and

It is the responsibility of the government to recognize and deal with this most vicious of crimes; and

Programs like the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign raise public awareness and necessary funds to deal with the crime; and

The decision to terminate the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign will hamper the efforts of all good citizens to help abused children.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to request that the government of Manitoba show a strong commitment to deal with Child Abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign. (Ms. Wasylcia-Leis)

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have a ministerial statement.

It gives me great pleasure today to advise all members that the government of Manitoba has reached an agreement with Linnet International,

which will move Manitoba a step closer to becoming a leader in the growing field of geographical computer mapping system.

These agreements will provide the opportunity for this province to become a major player in a new and expanding industry. We are using the government's need for improved information and program effectiveness as a stimulus for innovation and growth in the field of high technology. We in this government have the vision to recognize the unique and innovative approach that Linnet offers in the use of geographic information systems.

Mr. Speaker, with this agreement, the province becomes a partner, acquiring a 24 percent interest in Linnet to execute two projects that will utilize Linnet's expertise and unique approach in two areas of high public priority. We have taken a part ownership in Linnet for two reasons. The first quite simply is that we expect Linnet to be successful and to generate profits through export sales. I believe that, by adopting Linnet's approach for our internal requirements, we are in fact providing a form of investment to Linnet and that we should have the opportunity to share in the company's success.

* (1335)

The second reason is that Linnet's contract will be providing a common base for various types of land-related information, information that is already in the public domain, which is owned by the province and which Linnet will use under licence. Being a shareholder in the company and therefore taking part in the corporation's decision making is a responsible way of incorporating the public interest. This is a clear example of how government can encourage economic development in the creation of a new industry here in Manitoba by investing in companies with innovative technologies.

Two demonstration projects will be conducted using sophisticated computer technology. The first project for the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation will use existing data and apply it in a graphic form to the quarter section level of farm land. This will lead to a better method of interpreting data and will support the Crown corporation in its efforts to improve service to individual farmers.

The second project will provide a means of integrating data from various sources to assist municipalities, planning districts and utilities in meeting the demand of urban and regional expansion. The project will demonstrate this

approach using the area between Winnipeg and Selkirk. These projects will pool the information into a much more convenient and meaningful data source.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, the government still maintains the ownership of the information and controls the access and distribution of the information provided through these projects. As I mentioned, with this agreement, the province becomes a partner with I.D. Group of Winnipeg, specialists in consulting and project management recognized across Canada and abroad. The other shareholder is SNC Inc. of Montreal, Canada's largest international engineering firm with expertise in information technology. SNC also maintains a worldwide reputation for quality in a worldwide marketing organization. The international expertise of both companies will greatly enhance Linnet's chances in the world market.

GIS is a growing industry. Experts predict that the industry will be worth \$20 billion to \$40 billion annually by the turn of the century. For now, Manitoba will proceed slowly and carefully. Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation will benefit from state of the art information systems, and users of the ex-urban information will have a one-stop information resource.

One of the keys to Manitoba's economic future will be to build on natural strengths and create centres of excellence in industry. Geographic information systems technology, as part of the information processing sector, can thrive in our province. Our central time zone, efficient communication links, affordable facilities, and well-qualified work force make Manitoba an ideal location for information technology companies.

Our government has worked hard to build a solid foundation for economic growth. We have made a commitment to control spending and create a positive climate for investment. Today's announcement is another example of our government's commitment to fostering growth, supporting innovation and establishing Manitoba's place in the global economy.

Manitoba is already the geographic centre of Canada. With this announcement, we can see Manitoba becoming a recognized world centre for geographic information systems. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (1340)

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): It is statements like these, and the way that the government has announced this statement following on a press release yesterday, that give those of us on this side very great concerns about the government and where it is going. Quite frankly, no wonder there are 57,000 people unemployed in this province with the stewardship of members opposite and the way in which they are managing our economy and managing the assets of our province and the public of this province.

These secret negotiations have gone on for some time. I would note that there has been absolutely no tendering at all about dealing with public assets and moving them over to one private firm, a private firm that has close connections to members opposite, the Conservative government and the province of the day. It is secret negotiations dealing with public assets being moved over to a private company.

Even conservative Alberta, with their ideology close to their cousins across the way, decided not to proceed with moving public assets over to one private company. In fact, they said very clearly that they would have—[interjection] Yes, public assets, the information that has been gathered by the public, paid for by the public, available to the public, which is going to be privatized by members opposite in pursuit of their ideological objectives with their friends in the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no explanation of how much this company is worth. There is no correlation between the amount of money the government is paid and the value of the company. The government could not provide any answers to the media that was able to attend their last-minute announcement yesterday, because they do not have that information. They wanted to have this announcement almost in the dead of night, having it late yesterday afternoon, tied to other press conferences the government was holding on other announcements.

Mr. Speaker, these are public assets that have been gathered over a number of years and have geographic and geological information that is maintained by the public. We have great concern on the pattern of this government opposite to take public records and public assets and privatize them. In the 1980s, there was considerable privatization of resources and utilities by Conservative governments, and now private companies in the information society want to get and obtain a

considerable amount of assets and records in the public sector.

Mr. Speaker, the minister opposite is correct. It is a tremendous potential for growth of \$20 billion to \$40 billion, but the question is: Who is going to control that growth, and to whose benefit will it be? Will it be to the benefit of the public of Manitoba, or will it be a benefit to a few private members and a few individuals?

Finally, Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no cost benefit in terms of jobs for the province of Manitoba in the announcement of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). We do not know how many jobs—I would suggest the minister should table how many jobs will be lost in the public sector versus how many jobs will be gained in the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, this company came to us when we were in government as well, and our preliminary review of this project was that it was going to cost us considerable jobs in the public sector and considerable rights of individuals and citizens of the province of Manitoba to move it over to the private sector. That was five years ago, and this type of project has been rejected by a number of other provinces in a number of other jurisdictions for the reasons we have outlined. We think the government should not be proceeding this way, because we believe, at the end of the day, we will have less access to our own information and we will have less people working in this area in the province of Manitoba. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we have an announcement today, but we have very little information. We do not know what the people of Manitoba have invested in. We do not know if we bought a pig in a poke. We simply do not have any information, just like we had very little information when the previous NDP government entered into a Unisys contract, just as this government entered into a contract with Wang.

When we do not go to the public tendering process, we do not know whether we have good deals or bad deals, because we do not know what alternative deals there are for us to examine so that we can justify in our own minds that we have the best possible deal.

We have only this government's word for the fact that this is a wonderful deal. Well, we had the NDP government's word that Unisys was state of the art

for our hospitals and was going to be the most miraculous thing since sliced bread.

We had this government's word that the Wang deal was going to be just a wonderful deal in terms of the computerization of the entire operations of government. Both of them have failed to live up to expectations, and the tragedy is that we do not know whether Linnet is going to be a very exciting adventure or whether it is not going to be a very exciting adventure. We do not know whether there were alternative firms who could have done a better job, and we do not know any of those things because this government chose not to ask for bids at large so that we could be assured that they had cut the best possible deal for the citizens and the taxpayers of the province of Manitoba.

I hope, Mr Speaker, that they have cut a successful deal. I hope that the interests of Manitobans will be protected in terms of their information bank and in terms of their confidentiality. I hope this will be a moneymaker, but because I have not been able to make a judgment any more than they have been able to make a judgment, I have very serious concerns.

* (1345)

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I am tabling today the Nineteenth Annual Report dated March 31, 1991, for Legal Aid Manitoba.

I am tabling today the Twentieth Annual Report for 1990-91 of the Manitoba Law Reform Commission.

I am tabling the Annual Report for 1990-91 of the Manitoba Police Commission.

I am tabling the 1990 Annual Report for The Manitoba Human Rights Commission.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 46—The Jury Amendment Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, with the leave of the House, I would move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Bill 46, The Jury Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jurés), be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Attorney General have leave?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Leave is denied.

Bill 47—The Petty Trespasses Amendment Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Perhaps if I try again, Mr. Speaker, honourable members in the New Democratic Party will come to their senses.

I ask for leave to move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Bill 47, The Petty Trespasses Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'intrusion), be introduced and that the same be now read and received the first time.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Attorney General have leave?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No? Leave is denied.

Mr. McCrae: So much for co-operation.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* * *

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, the spirit that this House exercised with respect to the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) the other day—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Under Introduction of Bills?

An Honourable Member: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, we have some very clear rules in this House about what items of business we deal with.

We are currently dealing with the Routine Proceedings which is Introduction of Bills. There are a number of bills that are listed that have gone through the proper notice procedures. I know we have a member introducing one of those bills today.

I would ask if it is in order for the government, which has filed a number of bills which have not yet been placed as part of the routine proceedings that are not yet in order, in terms of the normal notice procedures, to stand to attempt to bring them through and then to make the type of comments the Minister of Labour did, the extraneous comments. In fact, I would suggest that is not in order, and we should proceed with those bills brought in in the normal procedure, a number of which are waiting for introduction on first reading currently today, Mr. Speaker.

* (1350)

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, the honourable Attorney General had asked for leave. Leave had been denied. Therefore, that settled the issue.

On the issue of the honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), if the honourable minister wanted to make a statement you could have stood up during Ministerial Statements.

Bill 42—The Amusements Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Now under Introduction of Bills, the honourable Minister of Labour.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, with leave, I would like to move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), that Bill 42, The Amusements Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les divertissements, be introduced and that the same now be read and received for a first time.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Labour have leave? No, leave is denied.

Bill 52—The Pas Health Complex Incorporation Amendment Act

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), that Bill 52, The Pas Health Complex Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation "The Pas Health Complex", be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Speaker, just a brief explanation to the bill. The Pas Health Complex Incorporated currently has a board of directors consisting of 10

members. However, it has attempted to expand the membership to 13 and that is to give the community a wider representation at the board of The Pas Health Complex.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have with us this afternoon, from the George McDowell School, sixty Grade 9 students. They are under the direction of Mr. Jack Watts. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay).

Also, from the Sandy Bay School, we have thirty-three Grade 9 students. They are under the direction of Mr. Paramour. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Round Table on the Environment Project Review Process

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we want to formally welcome the Premier (Mr. Filmon) back. I would hate to admit that we missed him, but we welcome him back to the House. The animation has already been raised a bit by your presence again, and we wish you a speedy recovery. We even note that your crutches, I think, are colour co-ordinated with the political party that you represent. We know that your injury is very painful. We wish you all the best in your recovery. We will try to keep you off your feet, but we had better start with a question to the First Minister.

Mr. Speaker, we were proud to have co-signed the proposal with business to have round tables in all provinces and the national government to have business, labour, government, environmental people working together on the economic and environmental consequences of very major projects. We applauded the provincial government, including the Premier, when he agreed to chair a round table in Manitoba to carry through on that recommendation.

Since that time, we have been very concerned and have expressed our concern that the round table in this province has been a public relations exercise. In fact, last year, I recall a public relations firm was hired for a quarter million dollars, yet the major decisions dealing with our environment like Oak Hammock Marsh, like Repap, like Rafferty-Alameda, like Conawapa were not being discussed and decisions being made in a round table in a sustainable development way but rather the emphasis was on public relations.

Today, we find a document signed by the Chamber of Commerce that again has said that this process by the government has tended to be a public relations orientation. They are now calling on a real sustainable development process for this province.

I would ask the Premier: What action is his government going to take to change it from a public relations exercise to a truly comprehensive decision-making body for jobs and the environment in our Manitoba province?

* (1355)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his welcoming-back remarks. I can assure him that dealing with my broken ankle is not nearly as painful as listening to the rhetoric from across the way.

Speaking of empty rhetoric, we know exactly the situation that this province faced when we took office in 1988 and did form the round table and did put in place the most extensive comprehensive process for environmental assessment and review that has ever been seen in this province. We know that, when we came into place, we had Manfor up at The Pas, owned and operated by the provincial government, which had never been licensed by the previous administration environmentally. We had it being the only pulp and paper mill possibly in the world that from time to time discharged raw effluent right into the river without any checks and balances, without anything being done to it.

We had them construct Limestone, the largest hydro-electric project in North America during the previous couple of decades, without a public environmental assessment review.

That was the attitude that the administration, of which the Leader of the Opposition was a part, put forward. We put the roundtable in place as a means of altering for all time and future public policy with

respect to environmental assessment and economic development.

I can say to the Leader of the Opposition that that round table has been getting compliments from right throughout the country. In fact, we had recently the chairman of the education and information committee of the national round table in Winnipeg at one of our round table meetings telling those present that ours was the leading round table in the country in terms of the work that it was doing, in terms of the development stage at which it was, that it was leading in showing the way in a whole host of initiatives that were not being matched by any other round table in the country and that we were in fact taking the lead role in so many areas of round tables, showing the way in the development of a sustainable development policy and implementing it throughout all levels of government departments.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to note that the Premier does find the debate in this House painful. He should find it painful, with the number of people who are unemployed and the number of people on welfare in the province of Manitoba. He should find this Chamber very painful for him and his government, with the lack of action in our economy.

The Premier announced last year at the round table meeting, the public relations meeting that we attended, that we had the best environmental act in the country, and we were proud of the fact that we did pass that act. We also congratulated the government for establishing the round table, but there is absolutely no sense having a round table if the people who are participating on it are calling it a public relations exercise. They are calling for an action-oriented round table.

I would ask the Premier: Will he be submitting major projects that affect jobs and the environment to that round table for written decisions and written advice to all the members of the public, and would he perhaps start with the Conawapa project, where there is considerable debate going on in this province on the timing of the Conawapa for domestic use of the province of Manitoba?

Point of Order

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I know we have rules in this House which ask members to rise, but it seems

to me totally inappropriate to ask the Premier to rise and possibly endanger his other ankle.

Mr. Filmon: I thank the Leader of the Liberal Party, Mr. Speaker. Just to demonstrate how steady I am, I want to assure her that I would not do anything that endangered my other leg, and I thank her for her concerns. I speak better and I think the microphone picks up better if I am standing, so I will do it that way until I have a problem. Thank you.

* * *

* (1400)

Mr. Filmon: I just want to say to the Leader of the Opposition, in response to his postamble, that it is not the rhetoric of the opposition that is painful, it is the empty rhetoric. I happened to go through Hansard and read the so-called emergency debate on the economy that was instituted by the NDP on Monday of this week.

Mr. Speaker, by leave, all parties, because the economy is such a major concern, wanted to have the opportunity to hear the constructive ideas of the NDP party. There was not one new idea. There was not one constructive suggestion. There was just a lot of empty rhetoric from the New Democrats, people who presumably have been sitting preparing for this session to resume for more than two months. That is what is painful, because these are serious issues that we have to deal with.

Our government is consulting and being involved with Ministers of Finance right across the country. I am talking with Premiers almost daily. We are fighting similar battles, and we have similar challenges, but what we get from the opposition and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), the NDP party, is they are reduced to going back to their old times of 15 years ago, the "should have beens" and "what have beens" and "never was's." That is what is really painful.

I want to say in response to his question—[interjection] Well, if you want to have a lot of preamble and postamble, I will have to respond to it, I am sorry.

The fact of the matter is that the individual who made comment is not a part of the round table and does not appear to be at all familiar with any of the work that the round table is doing, as near as I could tell, Mr. Speaker, has not bothered to try and get information on the round table efforts and is, from a distance, supposing what it is and what it should do

without any information. Of course, if you have that kind of commentary based on lack of information or involvement, then you can have misunderstandings.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the business community, the labour community, the environmental community, the education community and the government community is on the round table. The whole idea is to get a group of people together to develop a consensus on the major economic and environmental decisions before us. I am surprised the Premier would repudiate one of the participants, one of the bodies that is part of the government's round table because—[interjection] again the Premier—I was absolutely surprised that he would attack the integrity of an organization rather than dealing with the substance of the concerns.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Premier very simply, given the fact that there is a great deal of conflict in this province about the timing of projects like Conawapa and the economic and environmental consequences of this, and given the fact we have a round table that is established in this province, would the Premier agree to submit this project to that round table so that a consensus could be developed in our province about major environmental and economic decisions, and we can move forward as a province rather than having the debate that this round table that the Premier chairs is only a "public relations body"?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I repeat just so the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) has some valid facts to base his statement on, not commentary out of a news article, the Chamber of Commerce is not represented on the round table. There are many business people, labour people. There are people from the environment community, and none of them have given that criticism. This is a body that is not involved with it, that does not appear to have much information on the work of the round table, that has gratuitously made comment. That does not make them expert.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to changing the forum under which the Conawapa project will be reviewed, I think it would be totally inappropriate to take the Conawapa project review out of the hands of a full and open public environmental review process, open to everybody to appear before it, to expert witness and everything else, take it out of that kind of public forum, which is the best forum, I would say, in Canada and put it into a back-room forum of a

committee such as the round table, which is not accessible to the public, not open to public debate and consideration. That would be the wrong way to go.

I know New Democrats did not have public environmental assessment or review of Limestone, Mr. Speaker. That was a great, great failing. We are not going back to those days. We are going to have a full federal-provincial joint-panel public environmental assessment and review process which will be the best and most thorough in Canada.

Conawapa Dam Project Public Utilities Board Review

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the new Minister of Energy and Mines.

The Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce has criticized the government for proceeding to build Conawapa before it was needed. The original PUB review wrongly assessed that Conawapa power would be needed for domestic consumption in the year 2000.

As the First Minister will not take this to the round table, which is the committee which deals with jobs and the environment, will the new Minister of Energy and Mines resubmit the Conawapa project to the Public Utilities Board?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): I want you and this House to know that this government has two new processes to the further development of any Hydro projects, a complete environmental hearing process that everyone is welcome to participate in; secondly, it has gone before the Public Utilities Board, which fully endorsed the initiative that was established.

Listening to the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer), Mr. Speaker—and this is in the throne speech, in 1988, he said, we will fight the mothballing of our Manitoba Hydro program right down the line this session and the next session—[interjection] the member who just asked the question, in 1990 budget debate, and he is putting his position forward. Yes, he does support the Conawapa project.

Now I am having a difficult time, Mr. Speaker. With two new processes added, creation of 25,000 person years of jobs, leaving the province of Manitoba with a completely paid-for project in Conawapa in the year 2022 and some \$900 million

worth of economic benefits to the province, that the member would ask such a question, that he is now not supporting it, coming from northern Manitoba.

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Speaker, to correct the minister's statement, we are not saying yes or no. We are saying, do the job right.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I remind the honourable member, this is not a time for debate.

Mr. Hickes: I would like to ask the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Downey): Is he taking the advice of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) who said on Monday that Conawapa is an environmentally benign project and urges cutting the timetable for the environmental hearings in half in order to ram the Conawapa project through?

Point of Order

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. It is a matter of order when there is a deliberate misrepresentation of what the member has put on the record.

The debate, as the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has already referred to, was in the course of the debate on the economy. It was a suggestion that was made out to honourable members opposite that, if indeed it was jobs and more jobs that they were looking for, now and immediate, then suggestions like looking at the timeframe for the environmental hearings for Conawapa could be coming from members opposite.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister does not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts.

An Honourable Member: On the same point of order.

Mr. Speaker: There was no point of order.

* (1410)

Point of Order

Mr. Hickes: On a new point of order, I would ask the Minister of Natural Resources to read Hansard, February 17—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Point Douglas does not have a point of order. Your question has already been put.

* * *

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, the other comment I would like to make in response is that I am not sure that what is being commented upon by the individual from the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce is in fact the official position of the Winnipeg Chamber. I will refer to a news report that indicated the chamber has not taken a position as far as I know on Conawapa. That is this Mr. Cantor, who is now clearly indicating in a news report that it is not the position of the Winnipeg Chamber.

Mr. Hickes: Can the minister tell this House whether he or any member of his cabinet contacted Ontario Hydro or the government of Ontario to discuss renegotiations of the power sales?

Mr. Downey: No, in fact, just a little bit of the background for the member as well—I will quote what his Leader said. This was in 1989, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Doer said he was supportive of the Conawapa project when it was first announced in 1989. In fact, he claimed he and Premier Pawley's NDP government had signed an agreement between Manitoba and Ontario Hydro in August 1987. He said the idea is good for the province. He said the contract will create major jobs.

No, we have not contacted Ontario Hydro as to whether we want to change the deal. We believe it is a good deal for Manitoba Hydro. We believe it is a good deal for Manitoba all along.

Conawapa Dam Project Legal Opinion Request

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in December, the Liberal party of Manitoba revealed that the Ontario Hydro deal had in fact not been ratified by the Ontario government within the deadlines required by the contract. The government produced a hastily prepared legal opinion, a legal opinion which not only had incorrect dates and spelling mistakes and suspicious conclusions, but which this government has today refused to table and will not give us access to, even through Freedom of Information.

Will the First Minister now tell us if they are committed to open government, as they committed in the 1990 campaign, and will they now table the complete legal opinion and not just phrases so that

we can know how to fit the mistakes in with the rest of the copy?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, to the Leader of the Liberal Party, we do have legal opinion which in fact indicates the deal is authentic and the agreement is authentic. There has been a portion of the legal opinion provided for the member, and I think that all of the information dealing with the subject matter that is pertinent to this has been provided to the member of the opposition.

Mrs. Carstairs: We do not share this government's fear of tabling legal opinions or indeed its need to hide them. We would like to table the following legal opinion which we commissioned, also from a reputable Ontario law firm, which in fact says that there is significant doubt as to the validity of the agreement.

Will this government now, on the basis of this new agreement, table its opinion so that the two can be compared as to which perhaps is the better legal opinion?

Mr. Downey: I am quite prepared to take the information that the Leader of the Liberal Party has provided. I am quite prepared to assess what has been tabled by the member of the Liberal Party.

Mrs. Carstairs: Obviously, they are not committed to the process of open government.

Public Utilities Board Review

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the former Minister responsible for Hydro said he was not sure that the deal was still a good one, but that Manitoba could not get out of it at that particular moment in time, nor would they renegotiate.

Well, it is obvious that renegotiation is indeed possible, and it is also possible to send all of the new information to the Public Utilities Board.

Why will this minister not commit today, in light of new facts, new very relevant facts, about need for hydro-electricity, about the validity of the contracts? Why will he not refer the whole issue to the Public Utilities Board?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Because it has been reviewed by the Public Utilities Board, Mr. Speaker, endorsed by the Public Utilities Board, being a major benefit to this province both in long-term benefits as far as the economic

benefits in some \$900 million worth of value to this province, the creation of some 1,000, the equivalent of some 1,000 25-year careers and jobs, or 22,000 to 25,000 person years of employment, and it has been reviewed by the Public Utility Board and spoken to clearly by the Public Utility Board that it is a good project for Manitoba based on the data that it was essential to make the decision for the Public Utility Board.

Dutch Elm Disease Funding Restoration

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, the evidence is clear from Minneapolis, Ottawa and other cities that, when you reduce the Dutch elm disease conservation programs, you lose trees at a very rapid rate, in some cases, as rapidly as five years.

In Winnipeg, we will lose \$1.1 billion of community assets; we will lose the character of neighbourhoods like Wolseley, Crescentwood, Jubilee and others.

Mr. Speaker, there is no point in Winnipeg 2000 asking us to celebrate Winnipeg's quality of life, because when we lose those 200,000 trees in Winnipeg, there are going to be 200,000 reasons for every Winnipegger to remember this Tory government.

I would like to ask the Minister of Urban Affairs: Will he recommend to the cabinet, as the man who speaks for Winnipeg in this cabinet, the restoration of the Dutch elm disease fund to the 1988-1989 levels?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the Province of Manitoba provides annually to the City of Winnipeg approximately \$100 million in a variety of forms of grants, including very large multimillions of dollars in unconditional grants upon which the City of Winnipeg can spend that money, without any condition at all, on whatever it likes. If it chooses to make Dutch elm disease a priority related to that particular program, they are more than welcome to spend it on that.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, will the minister then acknowledge that what this reduction policy is, in fact, is part of his government's continued program to offload and increase local taxes, given that the estimated cost of removing the elm trees in Winnipeg will be \$12 million from public lands and \$40 million from private lands?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, it has been the policy of this government since it came to office that it would provide as much money as possible to the City of Winnipeg from available resources with as few strings attached to it as possible, unlike the former government, unlike my friend the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), who attached strings to a \$30-million bridge in North Kildonan, and he sits there with a smile on his face.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Dutch elm disease program, in addition to having the City of Winnipeg available to spend the grants that are given to it by the Province of Manitoba on whatever it likes, we are providing additional grant money to provide for replacement tree stock so that, when those Dutch elm diseased trees succumb to that disease, for which there is no cure, we will have a replacement stock available to put new trees in place, of significant size.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, how can the minister defend as responsible management in 1992 the reduced support of a program which is labour intensive, which offered employment to former welfare recipients in a city where there is 12 percent unemployment? How can he defend that? Will he listen to the Chamber of Commerce at least, which asked his government to show some leadership in sustainable development? Will he ask the cabinet to replace and maintain the 1989 levels of funding?

Mr. Ernst: The member for Wolseley heard in my earlier two answers, the City of Winnipeg can set whatever priorities it wishes with respect to the unconditional grant money that is paid to it by the province—multimillions of dollars, Mr. Speaker.

* (1420)

Pharmacare Deductible Increase

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, just before Christmas, this government dealt a serious blow to senior citizens and low-income individuals in our province by drastically increasing the Pharmacare deductible and by flip-flopping on a 1989 promise to tie all future increases to cost of living.

This government also removed over 150 drugs from Pharmacare coverage. I would like to ask the minister if he did a utilization review, the kind recommended by the Centre for Policy and Evaluation that the minister referred to yesterday?

Did he do that kind of evaluation in terms of health outcomes before heaping this incredible burden on seniors, single-parent women, low-income residents, chronically and terminally ill?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, in preparing for this year's budgetary commitments, in which we expect to support the Pharmacare program in the province of Manitoba to those same seniors, those same single parents, those same families, those same Manitobans to the tune of approximately \$5 million more, despite the decision we made to increase the deductible by 10 percent, taxpayers across the length and breadth of this province will be asked to contribute an additional \$5 million to the support of purchase of pharmaceuticals by all Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, to answer the specifics of the changes, other than the deductible to the Pharmacare program, I have to answer to my honourable friend that the process that was followed, if she cared to investigate, is the same one that was followed for a number of years that Pharmacare has been in place, wherein all governments have accepted recommendations from the Pharmaceutical Advisory Committee, composed of professional pharmacists, wherein they recommend deletions as well as additions to the Pharmacare list.

Those deletions have been made this year, last year, the year previous, for the last 15 years in the province of Manitoba, regardless of the political party in office, including the time when my honourable friend sat around the cabinet table and approved very similar changes in the Pharmacare program.

Clarithromycin Exclusion

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, if this minister will not address the burden it has heaped on senior citizens through a 41 percent increase in the Pharmacare deductible since 1988, then let me ask why this government is adding to an already difficult burden facing victims of AIDS?

Why did this government discontinue Pharmacare coverage for clarithromycin, a medication released on a compassionate basis by Health and Welfare Canada for infections found in people who have AIDS, a drug which has resulted in clinical improvements for victims of AIDS and has

cut down on sizable costs when it comes to physician visits and hospital admissions for blood transfusions.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, if I understand the nature of the experimental—I am not using the right word, but that pharmaceutical, to my knowledge, has not been licensed by the federal government to date.

In attempting to undertake trials to see if it has efficacy for use in the general public, the supply of that pharmaceutical was made available for those trials by the manufacturer. That free supply was discontinued, and it is my understanding, and I will check with the department to assure the information I am providing is correct, that the pharmaceutical is still not licensed, but the manufacturer has discontinued the free supply of that.

Mr. Speaker, we have, in the last couple of months, had it drawn to our attention that at least one individual who has been supplied with that has been asked to pay for that. This is one of those areas wherein we do not have a pharmaceutical which has been recommended for inclusion on Pharmacare for any kind of reimbursement of program. We are asking for consideration by our expert advisory committee as to whether we can include and continue to supply free of charge this pharmaceutical. To date, no decision has been made.

Point of Order

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I would like to point out to the minister that it is in his own Order-in-Council of December 18, 1991.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. That is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I would like to, as my final supplementary, ask the minister: Considering that the costs of clarithromycin, about \$367 a month, are prohibitive, denying AIDS victims the right to treat such incidents as fever—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for St. Johns, kindly put your question now, please.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Yes, I apologize for going on about the side effects of this disease, but I would like

the minister to tell this House if he is prepared to show some compassion, as Health and Welfare Canada has done, by releasing clarythromycin on a compassionate basis. Is he, too, prepared to show some compassion and reinstate this drug under the Pharmacare program so that victims of AIDS can enjoy some quality of life and some clinical improvement?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I realize my honourable friend has her questions crafted so she has to continue regardless of the answer that I have given, but if my honourable friend would care to revisit my second answer, I indicated that this drug was recommended not to be on the list. That was part of the Order-in-Council from the expert advisory committee.

I also indicated in my second answer that at least one patient's circumstances have been drawn to the attention of the department, and we are asking that issue be revisited by the same group of experts that made the original recommendation.

I went on further to say that I have to date made no decision because I have not received a recommendation to do such on reinstatement of that drug, but I have asked for that very reconsideration, so the honourable friend ought to listen to the answer. It is fully under reconsideration by myself and this government.

(Mrs. Louise Dacquay, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair)

Conawapa Dam Project Cost Projection

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Madam Deputy Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Energy and Mines.

In this government's retreat to different grounds to justify its slavish commitment to the Conawapa project, we have just heard another one from the minister, which is that it is going to create 25 years of work for 1,000 people, was his statement. He cited that fact as his primary reason for support of the Conawapa project, in view of the mounting evidence against it or for reconsideration.

By my calculation, that works about to \$228,000 per person per year. That is aside from the cost to the environment. Is that in fact the good business sense that this minister is relying on for this project, and will he indicate exactly what he perceives the

cost per year will be if not that, because that is exactly the calculation that he has given us today?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Madam Deputy Speaker, I guess the critic for the Liberal Party may be having some difficulty in understanding some of the impacts that a \$6-billion project will have to the people of Manitoba, to the economy of Manitoba.

After it goes through a proper environmental hearing process, full extensive environmental hearing process, there will be some \$6 billion invested into the Manitoba economy creating, I said, probably some 22,000 person years of jobs. I said the equivalent of some—[interjection] No, it is not going down—25 1,000 years careers for people.

At the end of the contract, the Conawapa Dam, the year 2022, will be owned by the people of Manitoba, through Manitoba Hydro, will have probably generated \$700 million to \$900 million worth of economic profits to this province, and this is all done, and I can assure the members opposite, as I can assure our members, this government is truly environmentally conscious. It was demonstrated so by the processes that we have put in place. We will live up to those commitments, but we also have a responsibility, as did D. L. Campbell, who was a great Premier of this province, as did Duff Roblin and Walter Weir and Ed Schreyer and Sterling Lyon and Howard Pawley, who used Manitoba Hydro as a major economic generator for this province.

I want the member to take a little closer look at the total picture of what Hydro means to this province and not just specific individual items that may in some way damage a great opportunity that we have.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Deputy Speaker, truly passing strange.

* (1430)

Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce Conawapa Dam Project Position

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Will the Minister of Energy and Mines not recognize the extremely unique and rare coalition which has built against Conawapa, which now includes the business community, environmentalists, scientists, the former minister? Will this minister not recognize that the coming together of these groups has probably never happened before in the history of this province? Does that not tell him something, that

those who represent the business community think it does not make business sense?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, I think that we have gone far enough in allowing the member for St. James to misrepresent what has been said about the issue.

I would like to quote directly from the individual who was quoted in the Free Press article that, I might say, was based on a report that did not even refer to Conawapa in the report. It was taken a jump beyond by a reporter wanting to make a story out of this. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Cantor, when asked the direct question on the radio this morning, said: The chamber has not taken a position, as far as I know, on Conawapa. It is very unfair to draw a conclusion from a comment I made to the effect that any Hydro development is environmentally unfriendly.

That was the comment he made, not that he had a problem with Conawapa.

He was asked further: So do you have any conclusions as to ways that this project could be done to make it more harmonious with sustainable development?

Not really, he says. We have not dealt with it specifically.

The question was asked by the reporter: How does Conawapa fit into the philosophy that the chamber expressed in its resolution dealing with the round table? The answer is: Well, we are concerned.

We are concerned—so this makes the story. The chamber has not taken a position. They did not refer to Conawapa in the report. This is all balderdash.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Deputy Speaker, will the minister come to grips with the fact that this is on letterhead that says the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, not Alan Cantor, but the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce and—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member for St. James have a supplementary question?

Mr. Edwards: Madam Deputy Speaker, the Chamber of Commerce is the spokesperson, the largest spokesperson for the business community in this province.

Is the government saying that we should not listen to the Chamber of Commerce's concerns? Should we disregard what this single largest business

organization in the province has to say about the business sense of this deal?

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Time for Question Period has now terminated.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe our normal tradition is to allow the question to be answered. I would suggest that we allow the—

Madam Deputy Speaker: I thank the honourable member for Thompson for that instruction. I have been advised by the Clerk that indeed the honourable First Minister is entitled to respond to the question.

* * *

Mr. Filmon: The member makes the point finally, and that is that we would indeed listen to the Chamber of Commerce and to any interest group in this province. That is why we have set up a Public Utilities Board review of this project. That is why we will have the most complete, thorough and comprehensive public environmental assessment and review process ever carried on in the history of this province on this project, and we will listen to anybody on it.

The point that he misses completely is that the person who wrote that report as a committee member of a chamber committee, said, as a chamber committee chairman, I will even grant: The chamber has not taken a position, as far as I know, on Conawapa. It is unfair to draw a conclusion from a comment I made to the effect that any Hydro development is environmentally unfriendly.

He went on further to say that they have not dealt specifically with Conawapa at all. In fact, it is not mentioned in the report. Therefore, it is an absolute total fabrication to suggest that they have made commentary for or against Conawapa, the wrong basis upon which anybody but a Liberal could make an argument.

Nonpolitical Statements

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Leave? Leave has been granted.

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to rise in the House

today to pay tribute to a member of my constituency, Joan Ingram, with her rink consisting of Dorothy Rose as third, Lori Bradawaski as second, and Elaine James as lead, in their winning the Senior Ladies Curling Championships this past weekend, and will represent Manitoba in the Canadian Senior Ladies Curling Championships in March. I would ask all members in the House here today in wishing the Ingram rink well at the Canadian Senior Ladies Championships at Conawapa, Saskatchewan, in March.

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): May I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member for Interlake have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

* (1440)

Mr. Edward Connery (Portage la Prairie): No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Leave has been denied.

An Honourable Member: Ask again.

Mr. Clif Evans: Madam Deputy Speaker, may I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member for Interlake have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Leave has been granted.

Mr. Clif Evans: I wish to congratulate Joan Ingram and her rink on winning the Manitoba Ladies Senior Curling Championship, and we all on this side of the House wish her well in the Canadian championships. Thank you very much.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would call second reading of Bills 5, 9, 15, and I then ask for leave to do second reading of Bills 21 and 34 which have been distributed. That would require leave. If there is time after that I would then propose that we revert to debate on second readings, Bills 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 20 and 38.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 5—The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Education and Training (Mrs. Vodrey), that Bill 5, The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil consultatif manitobain de la situation de la femme, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Mitchelson: This afternoon I am pleased to speak in support of Bill 5, the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act.

This amendment would see the name of the Council changed to the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council. As all members of this House are, I am sure, aware, the Advisory Council's mandate is to advise the government of Manitoba on issues of concern to the women in our province. This includes a broad range of issues and concerns which I will touch on later in my remarks.

As I am sure all members are also aware, there are a number of groups and organizations that, while having different mandates, are also dedicated to promoting equality for Manitoba women. The Action Committee on the Status of Women is one such organization. Again, while this body plays a different role and has a different mandate, it shares with the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women the same acronym, MACSW.

This shared acronym and similarity of names has caused much confusion by community groups, members of the media, individuals, even members of this House, and the bureaucracy. The Action Committee regularly receives calls for information regarding meetings or activities sponsored by the Advisory Council, and vice versa. Often public statements made by one or organization are attributed to the other.

The confusion of names and acronym causes difficulty for women and women's groups because often they do not realize there are two different organizations with two different mandates and different functions. Unfortunately, Madam Deputy Speaker, this confusion causes problems and

difficulties for many, including the very people these two organizations are intended to serve and represent.

I have introduced Bill 5 to once and for all resolve the confusion of names between the two groups. The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women was established by Order-in-Council in 1980 and ensured permanence by the passage of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act in 1987.

While the name of the Council will be amended as a result of this bill, the intent and the mandate of the Council will not change. I am certain that all the members of this House will agree that since the Action Committee was established prior to the Advisory Council, the onus is on the Council to make the necessary change, which will solve this problem.

It should be noted by members of this House that not only does the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women support this bill, but so do a variety of other Manitoba women's organizations. I will list some of the other organizations that have indicated clearly that they are in support of this name change.

They are: The Manitoba Women's Institute; Pluri-Elles Inc.; The Provincial Council of Women; North End Women's Centre; Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre; The Original Women's Network; The Aboriginal Women's Unity Coalition; and the Canadian Congress of Learning Opportunities for Women.

These groups representing Manitoba women have come out in support of the name change. They are all well aware of the confusion and misunderstandings that have occurred and continue to occur as a result of the similarity of names and the shared acronym.

They have asked for this amendment. These groups recognize that this amendment is literally one in name only. The mandate of the Council will not change in any way. The Council will continue to act as the advisory body to the government on issues of concern to women which, I must stress, are issues of concern to all Manitobans regardless of sex, race, culture or creed.

Unfortunately and to our detriment, too often women's issues are seen as exclusively social issues such as child care or health care. These issues are not solely the concern of women but of all of society.

I cannot stress enough that all issues are women's issues. This includes economics, financial planning, regional development and resource development and allocation. All issues are women's issues and women's issues are everybody's issues.

We have all observed with great interest and participated in, either formally or informally, the current constitutional debates. These debates have underscored the necessity for each of us to be vigilant and aware in a wide variety of areas, for example, the division of powers between federal and provincial governments and economic issues.

If women's and all of society's needs are to be addressed, the Council, in keeping with its mandate, has actively participated in and represented Manitoba's women in the constitutional debates.

Throughout the current constitutional process, as in other legislative, social, political, cultural and economic processes, the council will continue to advise government and focus on issues as diligently and as forcefully as it has done in the past.

In keeping with its responsibility to represent Manitoba's women and promote equality, the council has undertaken a number of initiatives which concentrate on a range of issues and concerns. In recognition of the fact that all issues are women's issues, the council has focused its energies on an incredibly broad range of projects. These endeavours have concentrated efforts on issues related to substance abuse, public information for social allowance recipients, gun control, the economy, single parent families and, as I noted earlier, the Constitution.

* (1450)

The council has also taken the initiative to establish its presence throughout the province and with all women's organizations. It has focused much of its time on creating and strengthening the link between itself and women's groups and, in fact, undertook a tour of rural Manitoba which resulted in the important development of links with rural, northern and native women.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the council has worked hard and diligently to advance the concerns and interests of Manitoba's women. The council under the new name, the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council, will continue to do so.

With those comments, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to encourage all members of the House to support this name change, and I want to indicate

clearly that the change of a name does not necessarily mean that there will be a change of mandate. We value the contribution that the Advisory Council has made to the province of Manitoba, to Manitoba women, and to Manitobans in general. We do know that with a different name, that will clear up some confusion, they will continue to do the kinds of work that need to be done in support of women throughout our province.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): I am delighted to be able to speak on this particular bill. Although I have not received a copy of the bill, I will accept the minister's comments that it is simply a matter of changing the name. What I really want to do is to put on the record the respect that we have for the Manitoba Advisory Committee on the Status of Women.

They have done excellent work on behalf of women throughout the province of Manitoba. The minister herself made reference to their contributions on the Constitution. I think that those in particular have put them more in the public light than some of the other things they have done. I would like to commend them for having very fiercely defended the interests, not only of women in their action on the Constitution, but to all of those who would be impacted in any way, shape or form on a change in the Constitution which might weaken the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Throughout the whole constitutional debate, particularly when I would enter into conversations with government officials in Quebec including the Premier of Quebec during the Meech Lake process, he would always say, I know you are concerned about women. The issue of Charter is far more than being concerned about women.

I was at a conference in October of last year in which they paid tribute to Justice Bertha Wilson, the first woman to be appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada. This was a symposium on her work and her contributions to the Supreme Court, but it focused on her Charter judgments, because the Charter judgments were a jewel, I think, in her crown.

I was at that symposium for two reasons. First and foremost, I would not have heard of the conference if it had not been for the fact that my husband was a classmate of hers and that is why we were invited. I went because I wanted to learn more about her Charter judgments which, like the Manitoba

Advisory Council on the Status of Women, went far beyond their concern just about the rights of women. They went and dealt with the rights of aboriginal people. They showed her concern for minority groups, particularly members of visible minorities and, yes, they showed her concern for the rights of women, and that is exactly what the Advisory Council on the Status of Women has done.

A very prophetic statement was made at that seminar. It said that if you are a white, Anglo-Saxon, thin Protestant male you did not have to worry about Charter. The more I thought about that the more I realized that I did not fit into very many of those groups. I was white, so I fit in that, but I am not Anglo-Saxon, I am certainly not a male, I have never been thin in my entire life, and I am not a Protestant. Perhaps that is why I had to be more concerned and why the Charter has always been of more concern to me than it has been, I think, to many others within our society.

That is why I particularly have valued so much the role that the advisory council has taken on the whole issue of the Constitution and particularly its references to Charter, but it is certainly not alone in their accomplishments. They have published papers, they have put together booklets, they have responded to the needs of vulnerable people, not just women in our community. For that they must be congratulated, and they must be encouraged to continue their very fine work. If it makes them, quite frankly, feel better to have a name change, if that is more reflective of their need in 1992, then we are delighted to support the legislation, and we are prepared at this point to allow it to go immediately to committee.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 15—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Bill 15, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant le Code de la route, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Driedger: Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to make a few comments on this bill. I have taken the liberty of passing out spread sheets for my critics on this. This is a very simple bill. There are only three areas here, and I would just like to give a little bit of a prelude to that and then make reference to the three areas that are involved in the bill.

The Department of Highways and Transportation forwards a bill to the Legislature on an annual basis to make routine housekeeping amendments to The Highway Traffic Act. Given the mandate and the scope of this act, typically our annual housekeeping bill is quite large. This is due, in large part, to the fact that the act has never been comprehensively rewritten for over 20 years. I am pleased to announce that the Department of Highways and Transportation has undertaken a project to completely rewrite The Highway Traffic Act over the next two- to three-year period. This project will result in significant consultation with numerous stakeholders including Manitoba's law enforcement agencies, various government departments and Crown corporations.

We look forward to this project, producing a new Highway Traffic Act that will be both legally reliable, user-friendly for the public and far easier to update and maintain. Overall, this should alleviate the Legislature from the burden of considering large, annual housekeeping bills. For this reason, less urgent legislative matters are being held and will be addressed in the omnibus rewrite of The Highway Traffic Act. Therefore, this year's housekeeping bill to amend The Highway Traffic Act is limited to three issues.

Firstly, amendments are proposed to ensure Manitoba meets our national commitment under the national safety code made by every Canadian province and territory to introduce a uniform periodic vehicle inspection program for commercial vehicles. These amendments strengthen Manitoba's commitment to commercial vehicle safety and ensure uniformity and harmony with commercial vehicle safety programs across Canada.

I might say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that this is an issue that the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) had raised at various times in our discussion last year about one of the trucking outfits, whether the inspections were regular. This should address that aspect of it.

Secondly, on behalf of Manitoba's law enforcement agencies, an amendment is proposed to exempt peace officers from ensuring persons taken into their custody are belted when transported in a police vehicle. Police officers frequently transfer persons who are intoxicated or violent. These passengers are often extremely unco-operative, making it very impractical for a peace officer to ensure that the person is always belted.

I might indicate that the request has come from the law enforcement agencies to make an exemption for them in this case, and if members have some concern about it, I am sure the law enforcement people would be prepared to sit down and talk with us jointly on that. They have given many examples to myself about the difficulty that they have when you have somebody who is not co-operating, trying to belt them in the back seat of a car.

* (1500)

The third area that we have, an amendment is proposed to broaden war veterans' exemptions from paying vehicle registration fees. In the past year, it came to our attention that war veterans are exempt from paying the registration fee for their passenger cars but not for their private trucks, and this is being corrected. Again, it is a very minor thing, but it has created some anxiety out there with the veterans and we are trying to correct not an infraction, I guess, but a discrepancy that has been there for a while.

Madam Deputy Speaker, a clause-by-clause explanation of the amendments to The Highway Traffic Act, as indicated, has been provided to the opposition critics, for their full consideration, and, therefore, it is my pleasure to recommend this bill to the Legislature. Thank you.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

**Bill 21—The Provincial Lands
Amendment Act**

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): I ask leave of the House to move Bill 21, The Provincial Park Lands Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les parcs provinciaux, at this

time, seconded by the honourable Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey).

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave?

An Honourable Member: No. No leave.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Leave has been denied.

House Business

Mr. Enns: Madam Deputy Speaker, just simply acting on behalf of the House leader (Mr. Manness), I think the indication had been given that on the adjourned debates on second readings that we would begin with 7, 8 and 10, but I would ask that you call Bills 11 and 12 first. I understand there is some indication that there will be some speakers on those bills.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 11—The Bee-Keepers Repeal Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on the second reading of the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), standing in the name of the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), Bill 11, The Bee-Keepers Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur les apiculteurs.

Is there leave to leave the bill remain standing? Leave? Okay.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to speak to The Bee-Keepers Repeal Act. I must tell the House that I had my research staff examine this bill in detail and, to say the least, it is not the most substantive piece of legislation that has ever come across my desk.

According to my research, the assets, obligations and liabilities of the association are to be transferred to the Manitoba Honey Marketing Board, which seems totally appropriate at this point, and it does nothing to confuse it with the bee act. Therefore we should be able to give it ready passage. We are prepared to do that, Madam Deputy Speaker. I will be the only speaker to speak on it.

Because the Manitoba Honey Marketing Board is to be endowed with these new powers and abilities, I think it is an appropriate moment to put a few remarks on the record with respect to marketing boards.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it was with some sadness that I listened to the Minister of Agriculture

(Mr. Findlay) on Monday give a defence for why he had not signed the declaration in support of Canadian supply management. He stated it was because the declaration was not a balanced position; it was only in support of supply management and not in support of the negotiations presently being undertaken at the GATT round. That is simply not true.

The opening statement of this declaration on behalf of supply management is very clear. The opening statement says: Fully supportive of all elements of the balanced position pursued by the federal government in their proposal of March 14, 1990, to the current round of GATT negotiations in agriculture. It said very clearly that those on supply management, most of which find themselves in marketing boards—all of them in fact which find themselves in marketing boards—were very supportive of the balanced position. They then went on to express their concerns about supply management, but they did not express their concerns on only one side of the issue. They also expressed their concerns about the balanced position.

I think the Minister of Agriculture has made an error in judgment here. Knowing the Minister of Agriculture, as I do, I do not think it is particularly unbecoming of him to say, I made a mistake. Lots of material crossed his desk. I think somebody made a judgment call here, and I think they made a judgment error.

We are going to have some rallies across this country on Friday. There will be one in Winnipeg at the Holiday Inn. There will be one in Ottawa on Parliament Hill. I would ask those members of the governing party who are assembled here today to say that it would be a wonderful gesture of our Minister of Agriculture to say an error of judgment had been made and that he had only read the furthermores and had not read the opening statement and that he is now prepared to sign, as have eight other ministers of agriculture. This would make our supply management people feel that they have the support of their government, not that their government was not with them on this issue.

I believe the Minister of Agriculture is with them on this issue. If he is with them on this issue, and if he could bring himself to sign this, then I would be able to bring myself to congratulate him on recognizing that a paper too quickly moved across his desk and that he will in fact recognize that the

support of a balanced position is one that this government could undertake and do it before Friday.

With those short comments on the record I am delighted to be able to support Bill 11, The Bee-Keepers Repeal Act. I will be the only speaker and we would like to see it go to committee.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we believe that the process that was begun last fall in which we could get legislation into committee prior to those last few days where we are voting on amendments with, quite frankly, not the time and thought that should go into them as legislators. If we can speed that process up and concentrate our energies into debating things which are truly of a nature which requires debate, requires consultation, requires long committee hearings, and we could do that in an orderly way then this entire Chamber would be doing its job properly and not as unfortunately has become the tradition of this House on all sides. I think it is time to correct that.

I think we made a good first step in December. I would have liked to have seen more substantive legislation introduced in December, but if we can get that within the next few days, and that is why we were prepared to give leave today, then we can get some real debate going in this House on substantive matters.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

* (1510)

Bill 12—The Animal Husbandry Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading of bill (Bill 12, The Animal Husbandry Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur L'élevage)—is there leave to leave the bill standing in the name of the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman)?

An Honourable Member: Leave.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Leave? Agreed.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to speak today on Bill 12, The Animal Husbandry Amendment Act. This was another bill which we sent off to our research department and reviewed ourselves. I must admit we did not come back with a long detailed document as to just what was involved in this particular piece of legislation.

The bill does three things. The bill establishes that artificial insemination, embryo implant or embryo transfer technicians no longer have to reside in the region which they serve. It says that it removes reference to the Manitoba Semen Distribution Centre because that no longer is a government agency and it increases fines for violation of animal artificial insemination provisions. Those seem to be the three things which this bill does at this particular point in time. I would like to address all three.

Firstly, the location of the technicians no longer having to reside in the region which they serve is one which causes us some concern. We think that wherever possible this should be undertaken. They should live in the region which they serve. Unfortunately, that may not be very practical. It may not be practical when we are in many cases reducing the number of technicians which they have and because, quite frankly, there is not one that can serve every single region in which they serve.

My concern—and I wonder if it is appropriate to put this in legislation—is that as I read the bill there is not even any requirement for them to live in rural Manitoba. That is a difficulty. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms would say that they have mobility and they can live anywhere they want to live; and, because I am a great defender of Charter, I am not going to say that we have to enforce them by law to live, when I know that if it came up against a Charter challenge, that this would run amuck of that Charter.

However, I think there are means by which such encouragement can be offered. I think if you look to hiring people who have homes in Winnipeg, then the likelihood is, if possible, they will maintain their homes in Winnipeg; however, you can look to hiring people who make a commitment to living in rural Manitoba, even though you cannot enforce it. Certainly, we have an ability to encourage such dwellings in rural Manitoba. We certainly have done with regard to the decentralization initiative, when we moved jobs. We can do it by the location of offices for them in rural Manitoba. None of those things will guarantee that they will live in rural Manitoba, but we must do everything in our power by positive connections to make sure that we have tried our best to ensure that these people live in rural Manitoba.

So we will not be making any amendments to the act because to make an amendment would perhaps lead to a Charter challenge on that particular aspect, but I want to encourage the minister responsible to

do everything in his power to make sure that these people dwell, wherever possible, in rural Manitoba.

As to the references to the Manitoba Semen Distribution Centre, which was privatized last spring, I was not opposed to that distribution centre being privatized and therefore am also not opposed to the deletion of it from this particular bill. I think that it was an agency of government that has gone into the private sector, but I find a certain amount of irony today, in standing up and saying that it is a positive thing that this has been privatized when the government announced today that they were going to take ownership in 25 percent of a firm.

There is a certain amount of illogic here—

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Twenty-five years ago it was a proper thing for a government to do what we are now revealing; 25 years from now it will be proper for us to get out of the Linnet thing. It is all a matter of timing.

Mrs. Carstairs: Well, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) has said that perhaps 25 years from now will be the appropriate time for them to get out of Linnet Graphics. I think the question may be, was it an appropriate time to get in it today, particularly when a bill came up for debate in which they had privatized another aspect of government.

An Honourable Member: . . . ideologically driven, you could never change and that is the difference between us and

Mrs. Carstairs: It is quite interesting for a member of the Conservative Party to talk about not being ideologically driven. It has been my experience to date that there has been no other party with the possible exception of the New Democratic Party that has been so ideologically driven. Unfortunately, they are ideologically driven from the right. Just as tragically enough the NDP are ideologically driven by the left, and there is never a balanced position, unless of course the Liberal Party is in attendance.

Finally, they have increased fines for the violation of animal artificial insemination provisions. I think there is a logic to ensuring that artificial insemination is conducted scientifically and with appropriate controls.

Tragically, we live in a society that if we do not have appropriate controls, they will be violated. Tragically again, if there are not appropriate fines, then we find that people will violate provisions which

are clearly necessary in order to make sure that the processes are scientifically viable.

It is unfortunate, however, that while we are here today making sure that we have appropriate fines for violation of animal artificial insemination provisions, the federal government is still not addressing some of those issues that need to be addressed with respect to humans. I do not want to get into that debate today, but I think we are wise to do it with respect to animals. I think we are equally wise to do it in all of those ethical decisions with respect to human beings.

I hope that we will see that kind of legislation coming forward at the federal government level in the future to ensure that not only the medical profession is involved in ethical considerations, but so too are consumers, so too are citizens who have concerns for these particular issues.

With that, the Liberal Party is more than prepared to have this go into committee stage so that once again we can free the Order Paper for much more substantive pieces of legislation.

Bill 7—The Real Property Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), second reading of Bill 7, (The Real Property Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biens réels) standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson. Is there leave—

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Deputy Speaker, I wish to speak on this bill, The Real Property Amendment Act at second reading stage.

I think it is important to initially reflect on the kind of comments that are appropriate for the second reading of a bill, the kind of comments I will be making today, because I am somewhat disturbed that in recent days we are departing, not only from the traditions of this House in terms that there are readings of bills, but also the parliamentary traditions that have been established over many centuries and that are particularly important when one looks at the consideration of bills.

We have, of course, Madam Deputy Speaker, as I think most people are aware, including many people outside of this House, three readings on any particular bill. We have the first reading, which for all intents and purposes might be more equivalent to a

notice of motion, although there is a separate item of notice that many organizations have.

* (1520)

We have the second reading, Madam Deputy Speaker, that is for the purpose of listening to debate between the minister and other members of this Legislature, the minister proposing the bill before us, as to the basic principles of the bill. I am glad that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) agrees with that, and I hope that we will perhaps remind some of his colleagues who in recent days have departed from those traditions.

We have seen ministers refer to specific sections of bills and introducing for debate on second reading particular bills, mostly notably the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay). On this particular bill, Madam Deputy Speaker, yesterday, we saw the minister, rather than get up and talk about the basic principles of The Real Property Amendment Act, talk about—and in fact, he spent most of his time talking about the Land Titles Office going back to various debates in 1988 and subsequent to that.

This being the minister who was supposed to use his time to give us an explanation as to the intent, the purpose of this bill, who instead used it for the purposes of another extraneous debate. Indeed, I will deal with that in a minute, because since he has raised this in the debate, and I noticed your ruling yesterday that this matter was not out of order, and indeed it is difficult in determining relevance whether it was out of order or not. Since the minister's comments ruled in order, I will be addressing those comments.

I also want to reflect as well on the parliamentary process as we are dealing with this particular bill and other similar bills. I want to reflect on the process we have, the provisions for notice, the provisions we have for placing matters on the Order Paper, and just how important those are, Madam Deputy Speaker. I think the government has indicated as it has indicated today on various bills, it has lost track of what has happened in this particular session.

In this particular session we have moved to more of a normal—if anything in this Chamber can be considered normal—schedule. That is very much the result of co-operation between the opposition and government. If one looks at the traditions in any House, the role of an opposition, I think one has to give the greatest credit to the opposition parties for getting us into this position today where we are

indeed—we sat earlier than we might normally. We are dealing with Estimates in a more normal schedule. We are dealing with the budget in a more normal schedule, Madam Deputy Speaker.

That is because the opposition parties said that we needed to get back to that type of schedule in this House. Let that be made clear on the record, clear on the record. The opposition in this House made that accommodation.

We saw today that the government wants us to go further, Madam Deputy Speaker. They want us to throw out the rule book. They took great offense when we indicated we would not be giving leave in terms of bringing matters that were not on the Order Paper onto the Order Paper and dealing with them immediately. Not only that, they had various ministers get up and provide various editorial comments as to why we were somehow not co-operating, Madam Deputy Speaker, in this Legislature.

Well, let us understand why we are debating this bill today, and why we would not give leave for other bills. We are debating this bill today because notice was given prior to Christmas— [interjection]

Point of Order

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Deputy Speaker, a point of order, please. I appreciate because I listened to my colleague the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) introduce this bill at second reading, that he—and I think is a good practice—gave fairly wide scope as to the nature of the bill.

He perhaps embroidered a bit more in terms of some of the history with respect to the Land Titles Office operations or some of the difficulties that it had in terms of the delays in servicing the public, but the honourable House leader for Her Majesty's Official Opposition knows full well that he is now really stretching the point. I was listening to him, after reminding us all that second reading of a bill is to debate the principle of the bill before us, he is now really not coming anywhere near that. We are now talking about some offence or a grievance that he had with respect to the way the House operated this afternoon.

Surely we are dealing with the Land Titles Office bill, or a bill having to do with the Land Titles, and that it would behoove him as a House leader to provide us, even those new and not so new in this

House, as a bit of a role model, which I know he is capable of, because he looks at himself in the mirror and he sees Stanley Knowles in front of himself—
[interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order, I assume the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) was drawing the Chair's attention to the fact that the debate on second reading of the bill should indeed be relevant to the bill under debate, and the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) indeed did have a point of order.

I would remind all honourable members that debate should be relevant to the bill on second reading.

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: Madam Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, a new point of order. I would point out, and I would ask for your ruling, if it is appropriate for a member to stand without indicating any way, shape or form, he was rising on a point of order and then have the Chair assume that he was rising on a point of order and make a ruling to that effect. I would ask if you would peruse Hansard to determine if indeed the minister had risen on a point of order, because I do not recall him making that comment.

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the honourable member for Thompson's (Mr. Ashton) point of order, I indeed will take that under advisement. I was under the assumption that he indeed rose on a point of order, and that is why I ruled in that manner, but I will take it under advisement.

* * *

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Thompson, to continue debate on second reading of Bill 7.

Mr. Ashton: As I was indicating, I was giving the background on this particular bill and the process it had followed through, and why we are dealing with second reading on this particular bill currently. I am sure the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) would realize why we are dealing with it today, Madam Deputy Speaker, because it went through the normal process. In fact, prior to the break that we took, notice was given to opposition parties. We were aware of the specific subject matter in its general sense.

We had the opportunity to look at the printed bill which is always distributed following first reading, because that is a key process. When we have second reading we have the notice that we had as of yesterday because it was officially on the Order Paper. The minister made explanatory comments, and we were able today to be able to stand as I am and debate this bill in its principles, based not only on the general sense that we should somehow be dealing with this matter, Madam Deputy Speaker, but based on the printed copy of the bill and also the minister's comments.

In this House when we deal with second reading on this or any other bill, it is important for members of the opposition to compare both the stated printed word, which in many way, shape or form may be literal, may not be exactly what we think it is. We have had many times where bills have been reviewed through committee, wording has been changed.

This bill in particular being a technical bill, I am sure there may be presentations at committee expressing concerns about some of the technical aspects. Indeed, we have had many bills where even though we have agreed to the general principle, we have subsequently, Madam Deputy Speaker, in other sessions amended that bill because of the legislative process that takes us through these readings and makes us scrutinize every bill through various different stages. That is why I am speaking on this bill today.

It is not simply in this province sufficient for the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) on this bill, The Real Property Amendment Act, to introduce the bill and somehow expect that it should be passed through every single stage in one day, Madam Deputy Speaker. That is not appropriate, and I hope that government members would not expect that to be the case. In a democratic system, in the parliamentary system in particular, there is role for debate as there indeed will be on The Real Property Amendment Act, so that we can scrutinize the principle on the second reading and deal with the greater details in the future. I think that is important to reflect on.

Today on this particular bill we will reflect on the principle. I know our critic will also have some comments, the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), because we indeed will be participating in the debate on this bill. In this particular bill, having had the opportunity to both see the bill, go through the

proper notice procedures and listen to the minister's comments yesterday, then today having the opportunity to debate those bills, we will indeed be passing this bill through to second reading in committee stage to take it to that further step, because we feel that is the next appropriate step.

We can move now because it does not require that great a scrutiny at the second reading stage when one is dealing only with the question of the principle of the bill. That is important, Madam Deputy Speaker. That is very important because I think members opposite should understand exactly what the commitment of the opposition parties has been on this bill and other bills. Our commitment on this bill and other bills this session has not been to give up the right of an opposition, as indeed in this particular bill, to stand and say—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

I would sincerely request that the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) please do as he is suggesting that all honourable members do and keep the debate relevant to the principles of the second reading of the bill. I feel I have been extremely flexible and have allowed considerable latitude, but I am having great difficulty interpreting your remarks as directly relevant to the bill on my desk.

* (1530)

Mr. Ashton: I made direct reference to the fact that we were passing this bill through to committee today. I believe, if you would refer to my comments and refer to Hansard, you might find that is in standard keeping with debate on any bill to give an indication as to what the intentions of the parties are, Madam Deputy Speaker. That is very relevant because in this particular case this particular bill following my comments and the comments of the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) will be passed through to committee.

I would hope, Madam Deputy Speaker, that would be considered in order because I believe we give that kind of indication on a regular basis when we deal with bills and that is exactly what I was doing in this case, indicating this bill, because the basic principle of this bill is a technical change to The Real Property Act. Some technical changes, perhaps, require scrutiny at committee stage where we can receive legal advice as to its specific import. We believe that is the type of bill that we can deal with as we are dealing today.

In fact, we will be passing this bill through subject to the Liberals or other members of the Chamber, Conservative members, dealing with this matter. We will be passing it through one day after it was introduced for second reading—one day!—because there are cases such as this bill where the principle is fairly basic.

In other bills, and we will see as we debate them, as they come up for debate in this House, there may be more complicated matters of principle. There may also be disagreements in principle, in terms of ideological differences, referring to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) earlier and his comments on ideology or differences of philosophy, differences of approach.

In this particular case, though, we have a bill where it is a fairly straightforward bill in terms of some technical changes or some Latin phrases, for example, that have been changed in this bill to English.

I am surprised we still have Latin in our legal system. I would have thought after all the debate in this House over official languages that we could at least eliminate a language that has not been in common usage for some two thousand years and have legal terms explained in the English or French language in a way that is comprehensible to all.

In fact, I would suggest, and I know other members of our caucus—I see that the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) would suggest, and we will debate this later when a particular bill comes up on this matter—that we might also go further than the type of changes contemplated in this bill and have all bills written out not only in lawyer's English but in "English" English and "French" French, in common-day usage so that all members of the public can understand our legal system, can understand the precepts of our legal system and, indeed, so that we will have a far more accessible legal system.

I would note also some of the comments that were brought in yesterday by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) on the Land Titles Office and its relation to this bill. In fact, he went on quite extensively, and I have Hansard in front of me, on 480 and 481. I really found that rather amazing because I am wondering if the minister has read his own bill.

Is this minister somehow suggesting that this bill is the Land Titles Office bill? Is he somehow suggesting as one might, and members of the public

reading Hansard might, glean from his comments on pages 480 and 481 of Hansard from this session, that somehow this was part of the government's agenda to deal with what they saw as a backlog at the Land Titles Office under the previous administration, the previous NDP government?

Indeed, if one was to read those comments, one would find that would be the only conclusion that could be made. I have gone through the bill, and I can see no particular reference in this particular area, but yesterday his comments were ruled in order.

Madam Deputy Speaker, if the minister wants to talk about the Conservative solution to land titles, and if he wants to talk about this as somehow being part of their solution, I would suggest that the real reason that there has been a reduction in the backlog at the Land Titles Office in many ways is to do with the recession we are faced with. I mean we have got a reduction in the number of real estate transactions, a reduction in the number of housings being built. No wonder people are using the Land Titles Office less frequently. There is a recession on.

Yet the minister continues to stand up and try and resume debates from three or four years ago and somehow put this bill, his own bill, in that context. I can see nothing in this bill that is going to make any difference in terms of the Land Titles Office situation. I mean, essentially as I have said, it deals with some Latin phrases. There are a few provisions that deal—I am not saying there are not any provisions of this bill, but this is not anything to do with the debate that the minister has introduced in this House on the Land Titles Office backlog that took place in 1988, as he suggests, and that it has somehow been resolved. It is resolved due to what? Due to the recession we are faced with.

I was particularly astounded—and the reason I made my comments earlier about why we are here debating this bill in second reading, what the purpose of second reading is—when the minister, in his flights of fantasy here, talked about those left over from those Neanderthal hordes, who were once in government in this province.

This was part of his introduction of this bill for second reading, I mean, this minister talking about Neanderthals. If he wants to see Neanderthals in this Legislature, he need only read his own comments, he need only look in a mirror, because that is the only description I can find appropriate for

his comments. To throw those type of comments across the way on Bill 7, The Real Property Amendment Act, I find that somewhat amazing.

He continued, and I have Hansard in front of me, and made reference to comments that had been made by Gerry Mercier when he was critic for opposition Roland Penner. Six years, he was responsible for the Attorney General's department, for Land Titles in this province. Madam Deputy Speaker, here we are in 1992 and the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) is redebating the debates of 1986, 1987, 1988. I am wondering if that does not indicate something, if that does not indicate something about this minister and this government. I mean, this minister, if he was going to launch into comments on this bill, on issues where Attorneys General have stalled, this centre could have referenced aboriginal justice. My opinion is relevant as his comments on the Land Titles Office in 1992, but, no, he chose to reference the situation, the debates of 1986, 1987 and 1988.

I would suggest if we are indeed going to try and get this Legislature back to a more normal course, one of the ways we could do it on bills, such as this bill, would be to deal with the contents of this bill, to deal with it in the proper fashion, following through the procedures, and in this particular case, on Bill 7 at second committee stage, dealing with the principle and not bring in old debates, Madam Deputy Speaker, from 1986, 1987, 1988.

We could revisit those. I could spend a considerable amount of time rebutting the—I believe the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) called it—"revisionist history." I could use a less kind term for it for the statements in here from the Minister of Justice. I could rebut. I am sure the member for Flin Flon could rebut every last one of those kind of comments that were in here, Madam Deputy Speaker, that he made, not only in passing, he spent probably about two-thirds of his speech introducing the bill for second reading with gratuitous comments, gratuitous attacks, resumption of debates from 1986, 1987, 1988.

We could, all of us, all 20 members of this side of the House, respond to each and every one of the points raised on the Land Titles Office and point to the real reason for the slowdown. As I said earlier, the economic conditions we are faced with, something the minister I am sure would have to, on reflection of the facts, admit is the real cause of the situation and has nothing to do with the actions of

previous governments as he suggests, and is in no way, shape or form going to be affected in any major way by this bill, which is essentially a series of technical changes.

* (1540)

Madam Deputy Speaker, if we indeed are to have a new approach in this House, which I indeed would suggest on bills such as this, in many ways it is probably the more traditional approach that we had for many years whereby we had a more normal calendar, we had greater notice period, and we were able to deal with these types of bills in a more orderly manner. The first step that this government should do is to cut the extraneous rhetoric, to cut the kind of ridiculous political rhetoric—Neanderthal hordes! This is the real property bill that the minister is bringing in and he is talking about Neanderthal hordes. [interjection]

No, I know the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) did not think it was relevant, but I would point out, Madam Deputy Speaker, that those comments were ruled in order and that is why I am responding to them now.

I do not want the record of this Legislature to leave the kind of comments the minister made yesterday, when he should have been explaining the principle of this bill and what it means for 1992, for the minister to be able to go off on a tangent and somehow leave that kind of rhetoric on the record of this Legislature, to waste the time of this Legislature with that type of rhetoric. That is not the role of ministers on second reading, and I look to the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst). I know he would not engage in that kind of rhetoric if he was the minister responsible for introducing this bill. I would trust that, because I think he knows that the bottom line is, if we are going to have a more orderly resolution of debates on this type of bill the best thing is to stick to the specifics.

Indeed, I have referenced the main specific principles, Madam Deputy Speaker, in this particular bill. They are, as I said, essentially technical changes, and I do not wish to repeat some of the comments that were put in. There are provisions related to the service of notice request to lapsed caveats, judgments of liens. That is indeed one part of this, as the minister did briefly point to. There are provisions that would allow district registrars to vacate caveats without notice. Indeed, I mentioned earlier the Latin phrases, Madam Deputy Speaker.

There is a series of technical changes. That is why we do not feel there is that much in this bill in the way of major principle, at least that is apparent, to spend a great deal of time. That is why we are going to be passing this bill through today. That is why indeed I have spoken for a few minutes. Our critic will be speaking for a few more minutes. That is the way the business of the Legislature does function.

I would point out, this is probably the first time in many years where a bill that received second reading only yesterday is now going to be passed through in 24 hours at the beginning, we are on Day 12 of the session. Indeed, we did have a break period, so one could argue that we have certainly been aware of these particular bills for longer. Indeed we have. We have had the printed copy, we have been able to review it, and that is why we are in this position today and that is how we can continue, I believe, to set a new course in this Chamber in terms of getting back to a more orderly disposition of business that avoids the situation we have had in years past where similar bills to this, without great import in terms of principle, have been dealt with in the last hours of the session.

We are not dealing with this bill in the last hours of a session. We are not going to be debating it extensively. This is the type of bill that should spend the majority of its time in the period leading up to second reading, and following second reading, when we move it into committee, Madam Deputy Speaker, should be available in an orderly fashion to members of the public, and I am sure to members of the legal profession, because I believe they will have the greatest interest in this particular, so that they can study this bill, which has only essentially been introduced in this House as of yesterday, so they will have some time to deal with it before it is passed through committee and returns to this House on third reading stage.

This is the final suggestion I would like to make to the minister and the government in this particular regard, and that is not to now rush this bill into committee out of the assumption that because we passed it today it should somehow be in committee the following day, or Monday or Tuesday.

I would suggest now would be an appropriate time to set something of precedence so that we give members of the public the opportunity on this bill to look not only at our debates on the principle, which in this case will be relatively minor compared to other bills, but also the specifics, so that they can

give us the kind of advice and judgment, so that actually we may be able to have a more meaningful debate on this bill on third reading.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in the last number of years, third reading debate in this House has tended to become very short, if it exists at all, and has not reflected on some of the changes that have been made, or should have been, as were recommended by the committee.

So once again this is the way that bills of this type should be dealt with, without the kind of rhetoric we heard from the minister. They should be dealt with in an orderly fashion. They should be reflected upon in terms of the principle. If there is not significant principle, as in the case of this bill, it should be moved to committee. That is exactly what we are going to be doing following comments from the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), our critic.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): I welcome the opportunity to comment on Bill 7, the amendments to The Real Property Act in Manitoba, Madam Deputy Speaker, and, just by way of a general background, discuss The Property Act itself in the sense that it is a fundamental act of the province and of our Legislature dealing with the land Torrens system, which has been in place in Manitoba and the western provinces for many, many generations. It deals with the rights to property, something that we hold fundamental to our legal, social and political system.

All matters dealing with The Real Property Act are of some significance in that they affect not only the legal questions dealing with land, but they affect the day-to-day workings of every single Manitoban in terms of their houses and their real estate and the allocation in buying and selling of those particular properties.

Generally the largest asset an individual holds in terms of monetary value is property. In that case, it is generally real property in the form of home or land, and it is of great significance to all Manitobans, so matters dealing with real property amendments are not something that should be taken lightly by anyone in this Chamber.

My comments would have been generally confined to rather short comments but for my surprise and utter disappointment with the comments of the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) yesterday in introducing this particular bill.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I have two major complaints in this regard. The first complaint is that I would have hoped, given that it is a technical bill and given it is a legal bill, we would have had some kind of a spreadsheet outlining the changes vis-a-vis the particular act. Now I have taken the liberty of reviewing the hundreds of sections in the act and trying to fit in the changes and trying to determine what the changes are.

I would think as a matter of courtesy that the minister would have provided us with some kind of a spreadsheet in order to incorporate these changes, particularly when you are dealing with matters of a legal nature and particularly when you are dealing with matters that affect so many citizens. A wrong word here or a wrong change there, Madam Deputy Speaker, can fundamentally affect the rights of thousands of people. It is not something we take lightly on this side of the House.

It is something I urge the minister to consider, a spreadsheet to changes of this kind to allow us—much like the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) provided for the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) today on his bill. It would improve debate, and it would also ensure that perhaps errors would not be incorporated that could otherwise be incorporated because of the technical nature of the changes.

My second disappointment, Madam Deputy Speaker, is the—and I have to say, shame on the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) for his comments yesterday. In his comments, the minister spoke in Hansard yesterday approximately 17 paragraphs in terms of this particular bill, four of which were devoted to what the bill was about and 13 of which were ranting and raving rhetoric. Surely, that is not appropriate for a minister when introducing a bill of this nature to spend the majority of his time on political rhetoric and virtually no time dealing with substance and dealing with matters of importance.

Thirteen paragraphs devoted to rhetoric on the Land Titles Office and three or four paragraphs dealing with the substance of the bill is completely inappropriate and, I suggest, a very disappointing performance by the minister. I would hope that we will not see that kind of thing again in this House, because it generally serves to lower debate and serves to detract debate away from the principles and the substance of the bill, which is what we should be doing at second reading. I would urge the

minister to perhaps control his rhetoric in matters of this kind.

* (1550)

In fact, in dealing with the substance of the land titles and the minister's claims that the line-ups have decreased, I think a certain amount of it has to be attributed to the fact that there are no longer 7,000 real estate transactions in the province. In fact, they are way down to 1,500 largely due to the economic recession that we are in and largely due to the hands-off approach and lack of any kind of policy by this government to deal with the economy. If fingers have to be pointed, Madam Deputy Speaker, the fingers have to be pointed at this government. In fact, as the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) indicated, if there is any lack of initiative, the minister perhaps should be chided for his lack of initiative in the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry and other areas of justice.

Returning to some of the specific substances of the bill, Madam Deputy Speaker, at least for more analysis of the bill, it appears that they are largely technical in nature. I personally, at least if I understand the principle, welcome the fact that an individual who executes an instrument at Land Titles or lien, can also be the same individual who can discharge it. That makes sense to me. As I recall from practice, both professionally and advising individuals, that particular type of an occurrence will assist individuals in registering caveats and liens and the like and taking them off without having necessarily to engage the same individual or a professional person to do it and may, in fact, assist individuals in dealing with matters of that kind. In addition, Madam Deputy Speaker, I also recognize that many of these amendments dealing with the Latin phraseology of "lis pendens" are put into effect in order to co-ordinate this particular act with many of the rule changes that have been made in the Court of Queen's Bench rules and the rules that apply to that particular jurisdiction. In order to incorporate those changes, many changes have been made to the act.

Generally, it is other than that in terms of general principles, Madam Deputy Speaker. It appears to us at this point that the amendments are not inappropriate. We will be looking forward to public presentations in a matter of this kind, particularly as I indicated earlier, because of the potential far-reaching effect of changes to an act, a complicated act, I might add, Madam Deputy

Speaker, of this kind, a wide-ranging act, The Real Property Act, and the effect these changes can have on land distribution, on litigation, and on matters of this kind. We will be looking to those particular changes, and as the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), indicated we will be allowing passing this bill at this stage.

I generally will close my remarks again with reiterating the point that if the minister wishes for debate to proceed in an informative sense, I would urge him to neglect and refrain from the rhetorical references and the revisionist history and the political dealings that the minister engaged in yesterday. It certainly does tend to lower debate in the house, Madam Deputy Speaker, and does not serve the public of Manitoba well, nor does it serve members of this Chamber. So those comments on the bill, we are prepared to pass the bill to the committee stage.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Deputy Speaker, I will be the only speaker on behalf of the Liberal Party speaking on Bill 7. Like the other two parties in this Chamber, we too would like to see this particular bill passed through to committee stage today, in hopes that sometime in the future with the proper notice that we will be able to receive in the proper and much better fashion into a committee so that, in fact, if there is any one, any members of the public that would like to have some input on it that they are given some sort of due notice that would allow them to make presentation.

The importance of real estate and property is one that we should all take very seriously. After all it affects virtually every citizen in the province in one way or another. The Land Titles Office has been a subject of debate, a subject of questions. Since the last election I can recall the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) asking a number of questions to the minister regarding the backlogs over at the Land Titles Office, Madam Deputy Speaker, because like everyone in the Chamber we were somewhat concerned in terms of the length of time it was taking to process. That is basically because you have the residents, you have buyers and sellers that have monies tied up as a direct result; you have real estate individuals that have commissions that are waiting to go through the Land Titles Office. It provides a service to all Manitobans. Anything that goes toward improving that service is something that should be done in a very serious and, if at all possible, in a quick fashion.

We understand now that the Land Titles Office is from seven to 10 days, at least I believe that is what I picked up from the minister's comments the other day, which is much better service as compared to two, two and a half years ago, where we were looking at well over 40, 45 days in order to get something through the Land Titles Office.

I understand that it updates some of the procedures at the Land Titles Office, with hopes that it will be better able to facilitate registration. In fact, the act also has a number of other somewhat minor changes that, no doubt, will be addressed once we go through the committee stage and go clause by clause with the bill. On that note, Madam Deputy Speaker, we will allow Bill 7 to pass through to the committee stage. Thank you very much.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 7. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 8—The Garnishment Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), (Bill 8, The Garnishment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la saisie-arêt), standing in the name of the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), set as second reading.

Is it the will of the House—stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Flin Flon?

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): I will be the only speaker on this side of the House with respect to this bill.

As we indicated, Madam Deputy Speaker, in the co-operative atmosphere on this side of the House we will be passing this bill through to committee today in order to allow the government to move on a number of areas. I note with respect to the bill, The Garnishment Act, again another bill of great significance, maybe not affecting lives on a daily basis as did the previous amendment to The Real Property Act, but in a very significant fashion The Garnishment Act does have an impact on citizens on a day-to-day basis. In fact, anyone involved in litigation or in any kind of a maintenance situation

will be greatly affected by the provisions contained in this particular act, The Garnishment Act.

I commence my comments again by suggesting to the minister that it would have been more appropriate and much more helpful if he would have provided us, all members of this House, with a copy of his spreadsheet, again dealing with the changes in the act.

* (1600)

While they appear to be largely technical, I again reiterate that when we are dealing with matters of this kind that are of a technical, legal nature, it would be more helpful to have a spreadsheet before us that would allow us to deal with the changes. Again, while it is not as difficult as dealing with The Real Property Act, it has literally hundreds of sections. This act, The Garnishment Act, is much smaller, Madam Deputy Speaker. Nonetheless, it would be a useful principle to engage in, in this House, to have a spreadsheet that would permit us to deal with the matters raised and to juxtapose them correctly in order that we can do our business on this side of the House and deal with the bill in a concrete and a proper fashion.

I am very pleased also that the minister was able to restrain himself in his comments yesterday with respect to the bill, in that he dealt with the proper procedures in dealing with second reading and that is he dealt with the matter in principle and stayed away from the rhetorical musings that he participated in, in the previous bill.

As indicated, in principle there do not appear to be any significant changes that will directly affect the lives of Manitobans to the extent that we on this side of the House would be prepared to hold up passage of this bill or subject it to undue scrutiny, Madam Deputy Speaker. I note that changes are being put into place to deal with a ruling of the Court of Queen's Bench in October 1990, and that the amendments in general will deal with those particular changes and as well will put The Garnishment Act in line with other garnishment acts in other jurisdictions in the country. On that basis members on this side of the House are prepared to pass this matter on through to committee.

I also note the act deals with some of the issues of duration of maintenance orders and matters of that like. Obviously I cannot discuss the specific subsections. I note that most of these changes appear to be largely of a technical nature and

dealing with the court ruling from 1990 in order to align the act and to permit some definitional changes, specifically those dealing with Manitoba employers, including the government.

Therefore, Madam Deputy Speaker, in the spirit of co-operation in this House and largely because the minister largely dealt with the bill, as was appropriate, we will deal with it accordingly. I, on behalf of members on this side of the House, for the New Democratic Party opposition, am prepared to pass the matter to committee stage. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am somewhat encouraged first to hear the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) say that we want to co-operate and the member for Kildonan say we want to co-operate. In the spirit of co-operation, I feel somewhat obligated—and fortunately we did have an opportunity to discuss The Garnishment Amendment Act within our caucus, and just to add a very brief comment regarding it, I understand that Bill 8 really is some minor variations along with some definitions and punctuation changes, that it is a piece of legislation that we have no problem whatsoever in terms of allowing to go to the committee stage.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, we will leave it at that and let it go to committee stage at which time the critic will take the opportunity to speak on it.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 8, The Garnishment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la saisie-arrêt. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 10—The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Downey), Bill 10, The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Hydro-Manitoba, standing in the name of the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes). Stand?

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave. It is agreed.

Bill 14—The Highways and Transportation Department Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger), Bill 14, The Highways and Transportation Department Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le ministère de la Voirie et du Transport, standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid).

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): With leave I would ask that it remain standing in my name, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave that this matter remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona? Is there leave?

An Honourable Member: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: It is agreed.

Bill 20—The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach), Bill 20, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale, standing in the name of the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk). Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing?

An Honourable Member: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave. It is agreed.

Bill 38—The Manitoba Evidence Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Justice and Attorney General (Mr. McCrae), Bill 38, The Manitoba Evidence Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la preuve au Manitoba, standing in the name of the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Evans). Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave. It is agreed.

House Business

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, we would certainly be willing to move private members' hour earlier and call it five o'clock perhaps with a brief recess. I do not know if that is a problem for the other parties.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, we would be willing to grant leave if we were to deal with Resolution 28 which I believe the government was wanting to deal with. Failing that, we would have to wait until five o'clock at which time our resolution would be coming up.

Mr. Speaker: We are trying to ascertain whether or not we are going to call this five o'clock. We will decide whether or not we are going to call it five o'clock. We are just simply trying to ascertain whether or not there is leave of the House to call it five o'clock.

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Then we will not be calling it five o'clock.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if we might have leave to advance Resolution 28 for private members' hour.

Mr. Speaker: Would there be leave of the House to advance Resolution 28?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Okay, leave is denied there.

The honourable acting government House leader, sir, what are your intentions?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, if there is not a willingness to move to Resolution 28, then I suggest we recess till five o'clock for private members' hour.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to recess till five o'clock? Agreed. This House is now recessed until 5 p.m.

The House took recess at 4:09 p.m.

After Recess

The House resumed at 5 p.m.

* (1700)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., time for private members' hour.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, with leave, I would move, seconded by the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), that the sponsorship of Resolution 10, Aboriginal Justice Commission, currently standing in the name of Mr. Carr, be transferred to Mr. Cheema.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Inkster have leave to change the sponsorship for Resolution 10? Leave?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave. It is agreed.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Lamoureux: Again, Mr. Speaker, with leave, I would move, seconded by the member for St. James, that the sponsorship of Resolution 18, Constitutional Referendum for Canada, currently standing in the name of Mr. Carr, be transferred to Mrs. Carstairs.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Inkster have leave to move sponsorship of Resolution 18? Leave? That is agreed.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Deputy House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would ask again if there would be leave of the House during private members' hour to deal with Resolution 28, Postal Rate Increases for Rural Newspapers, moved by the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose).

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to move Resolution 28? No? Move it forward? No, leave is denied.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 2—Renewal of Core Area Initiative

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that

WHEREAS phase II of the Core Area Initiative Program is being wound down without new funding commitments; and

WHEREAS the first two phases of Core have begun the process of revitalizing Winnipeg's inner city; and

WHEREAS the Core Area Initiative contributed to significant advances in training residents of Winnipeg's inner city to achieve improved standards of living in harsh economic times; and

WHEREAS such training of individuals is the key to building a Manitoba economy with a high level of prosperity and social justice; and

WHEREAS further work must be done to solidify the advances made in the first two phases of the program; and

WHEREAS among the inner cities of five comparably sized Canadian cities, Winnipeg is the only one to have registered a decline in median family income over the past fifteen years; and

WHEREAS 55% of Winnipeg inner city families earned less than \$20,000 in 1985; and

WHEREAS any improvement is contingent on continued emphasis on the social and economic needs of the community; and

WHEREAS programs which have received widest appreciation and support from residents are those related to meeting their special needs for support services, education, training, housing and neighbourhood improvements; and

WHEREAS funding for the Child Parent Centres was cut just as they were beginning to have a significant impact on inner city life.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the government of Manitoba to consider renegotiating the Core Area Initiative for another five year term, with particular emphasis on job training, education and social services for core area residents.

Motion presented.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, it is, I believe, quite fortuitous and very important that this resolution comes forward at this time. I am very pleased that it is coming forward early on in the Order Paper for debate because we have an opportunity and potentially a crisis which is looming very close. We need a new Core Agreement. We have seen the benefits and have learned some lessons, I am the first to admit, from the first two phases of Core. However, there is no question that the benefits of the Core have far outweighed any of those who have detracted from the success of its various programs.

Mr. Speaker, I want to start by indicating and referring members to a very current study done by the Urban Institute at the University of Winnipeg which I happened to read just last week as it was published. That study said, and it reviewed some 500 residents of the 10 largest Canadian cities—that study concluded that Winnipeggers more than any other city did not look favourably on their core and on the downtown centre of their city. There is no other city in this country which has people thinking poorer of the inner city. That was the conclusion of that assessment, and that was a poll commissioned by the institute to be done by Angus Reid.

Overall the city of Winnipeg ranked in terms of the way the people felt about the city eighth out of 10. That is not great, Mr. Speaker; in fact, it should be far better than that but there were some positive sides of the many factors. Winnipeggers felt the friendliness was a key. Interestingly, we did not finish dead last on climate, so Winnipeggers themselves actually do not mind the winters that much as it turns out. [interjection] As the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) says, he loves the winters. You certainly, I think, once you live here, learn to live with it, learn to enjoy it and make the most of it. There is a lot to be made of it.

In any event, the critical issue for me was that Winnipeggers felt so poorly and thought so poorly about their inner city. Now I personally feel that there are many positive aspects which are going on in the inner city. Of course, one of those is The Forks development, and that serves a certain market of the city, that serves a certain sector of the city. In terms of being a place to live and raise children and have as a workplace and a place of residence, The Forks, quite frankly, does not address that. It is a market, it is restaurants, it is recreation and that is good, but in terms of the inner city residents the programs which the Core was operating in respect of training, housing and improvement of recreational facilities for the local residents in the inner city neighbourhoods, Mr. Speaker, that is already being and will continue to be sorely missed because the job was not done. I guess the question is, will the job ever be done? Well, probably not, but I will tell you it has come a long way. It has come a long way since the first Core Initiative. I have had the pleasure throughout that time of calling myself a resident of Winnipeg, and I have seen what the Core has done.

One of the things that I come across all the time as the member for St. James is that people think I represent only residents who live past St. James Street. My constituency goes all the way down to Toronto Street, and I come by this issue honestly as a representative of an inner city community. I know the consequences of 55 percent of family incomes being \$20,000 or less. I know the consequences of that, because I see those people and meet those people and hear from those people on a daily basis. I certainly am the first to admit I do not live and feed my family and house my family for anywhere near \$20,000. I am the first to admit that.

* (1710)

I know, and I submit that we all know in this House, how hard that must be to live a life of decency and integrity and feed and clothe and educate one's children on \$20,000 a year. In today's marketplace, for a family that is just nothing. That goes nowhere, Mr. Speaker, and 55 percent of the people in some of these communities are living on less than that. It is a very, very difficult life for them.

Many of those residents simply do not have the ability to take vacations, to provide the amenities of life which break the monotony which give people a break and give them a chance to spend time in a recreational environment with their children. They simply do not have it in the normal sense that more affluent Winnipeggers and Manitobans think of it. They vitally need, and believe me they use, the community clubs and the parks and the slides and the swimming pools. They use them as a life line, whereas most in this House, and those who have larger family incomes, they can find those things elsewhere and oftentimes they do. Not that they do not use and appreciate these public facilities as well, but the truth is on a daily basis it is not critical to have them, and for many of those residents, it is.

I was very pleased, for instance, to see the decision which City Council made on the Sherbrook pool. That was an important hurdle to get over. With respect to the new recreation centre which they are going to be building in the west end, the commitment has been made, and there has been a reprieve at least for the Sherbrook pool for some period of time. Although it is not a complete answer, there has been a reprieve. Mr. Speaker, the Core Area Initiative offered those people some hope.

Mr. Speaker, the other key aspect I want to focus in on is housing. I had, and I think many had the privilege of—and elections do that, you go to thousands of doors. I was amazed in the inner city neighbourhoods the sense of pride that people had in their homes and the number of them that were fixing up their homes and doing significant repairs and improvements to their homes.

The member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) indicates, what about slum landlords? No question that is a problem when people who do not live there own these places and function on them being run down. That is part of the game. They are not in it to improve the house or the neighbourhood, and we have to deal with that. I agree with that.

I was personally extremely encouraged—and this in the last election when I had the opportunity to walk every street as most of us did—to see the number of people who were, even with meagre income, investing in their homes and were taking a lot of pride in their homes.

It boggles my mind, and it always has, that we do not as a province, and with respect to the city, spend more money on maintaining and enhancing those inner city communities. We have the schools there, we have the fire department, we have the community clubs, we have the infrastructure, and frankly we have beautiful developed neighbourhoods with trees and all the amenities of urban life. Yet, many of those neighbourhoods are seriously decaying.

In my experience, an inner city neighbourhood reaches a point beyond which it cannot be reclaimed. There is a point at which it just goes into the abyss and it becomes extremely difficult to get residents and governments to commit to reclaiming it.

Most of our inner city neighbourhoods are not at that point yet, and we know the lessons of other cities, in particular in the United States, that have let that happen. We simply cannot allow that to happen. Our neighbourhoods remain for the most part places where people are trying to make decent lives. That is extremely encouraging because in other cities you will find that at a critical point the inner city residents abandon it. Those who actually want to stay and raise their children abandon it, and it is left completely for the slum landlords, Mr. Speaker. Thankfully, while they are present, neighbourhoods in this city still have the advantage of having loyal citizens who take part in community groups and who get together in residents' associations and make their voices known—more so at City Council than here, but nevertheless make it known.

I want to address one other key point and that is the issue of consultation. The Core Area Initiative, and there may indeed be a new Core, we all hope there will be, but the Core must be the result of a process which gives it legitimacy and credibility into the coming years. If the inner city residents and the stakeholders in the inner city are not given adequate opportunity to have their voices known, Mr. Speaker, indeed it will be off on the wrong foot. I suggest to the government that they will have a very difficult, if not impossible task, of trying to recover credibility.

In fact we have learned from the groups. I remember being in a press conference a couple of months ago with the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), the New Democratic critic, and we had heard from the Urban Futures Group and other inner city groups that they were not being adequately included. That saddened me because they were not specifically asking that everything they say be accepted. What they were asking for was an opportunity to be consulted, to have their voices known, for there to be some process which led to the development of a new Core.

Mr. Speaker, to have that message brought forward that, in fact, that was not occurring was a great regret to us and I really hope that this particular debate today is, as much as possible on this issue, nonpartisan, and I say that with sincerity. The truth is the core of this city, while I know many members are from rural Manitoba and may not have personal experience living there or visiting often, is a critical provincial issue. That was recognized long ago when the initial Core Area agreements were struck. It is a provincial issue. I encourage and I have seen, and we have noted the spoken commitments of the minister to a new Core. What has been lacking has been the consultation process. What has been lacking thus far is any overall commitment to a new Core. Believe me, the pain is being felt today, Mr. Speaker, for not having it in place. Today.

Today, people are thinking differently about the inner city as a place to remain because this is not in place. It is important for those people. They know about it. They are extremely well educated on the Core issues and what it did. I have been amazed to see the level of sophistication of inner city residents throughout the city on these issues. They know. They are aware of what the programs were and they used them, Mr. Speaker. The success of the vast majority of those was without question, and so I focus particularly, and I ask members opposite to focus particularly, if they would, on the housing and the training aspects and come to grips with the Core Area agreement today because it is needed today and, in fact, it was needed yesterday. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Government Services): It is a pleasure to rise today and speak on the Core Area Initiative. I will not expand on many, many virtues of the Core because I could sit here today and talk about the core area for probably two hours.

However, in order to discuss the Core Area Initiative agreement and the possibility of its continuation, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is useful to put in historical context of the core area. As mentioned by the previous speaker, the core area had been experiencing steady decline as a result of the North American-wide trend to suburban development. Thirty years of rapid suburban growth had left significant physical, economic and social deterioration in the inner city in its wake.

The physical environment in downtown Winnipeg and surrounding neighbourhoods was characterized by the deteriorated commercial buildings and substandard housing stock. The area's businesses and industries were fighting a losing battle with the suburban-based enterprises that were developing. Also, the governments recognized that social conditions in the core were much more difficult with the number of residents being unemployed and on the social assistance program.

The three levels of government also recognized that continued core area decline would encourage the further migration of people and employment out of the inner city and this, as the downward spiral, would continue to the detriment of Winnipeg as a whole. As a result, the government recognized that a comprehensive strategy was required to address the core's multiple problems.

In 1980, the Lyon Conservative government, and I believe the minister at the time, Gerry Mercier, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the federal government and the City of Winnipeg to revitalize the core area of Winnipeg.

* (1720)

Mr. Speaker, the result was the Winnipeg Core Area Initiative which commenced in 1981 with a budget of \$96 million shared equally by the three governments. When the three governments looked, their broad objectives of the Core Area were to provide, first, increased employment opportunities; second, encourage industrial, commercial and residential development and revitalize the physical and social environment. Thirdly, there was a problem with the social and economic participation of the core area residents in development opportunities, so it was their job to further these opportunities.

At the time, a separate Core office was established to administer this agreement,

co-ordinate the activities and deliver the comprehensive set of programs that addressed the agreement's diverse objectives. By 1985, Mr. Speaker, the general consensus was that the Core office was achieving a very, very large degree of success in meeting these objectives. I shall expand on these successes in a moment.

The three levels of government recognized that in order to maintain the necessary momentum of Core and because of the scope and complexity of inner city problems, continued efforts were required. As a result of the first Core, a second Core agreement was signed in 1986 with \$100-million budget. This agreement retained the same overall model, but it should be noted that it also recognized that the circumstances of the governments and the particular core area had changed over five years. The objectives of the agreement were therefore modified and some of the programming was changed to reflect these altered circumstances.

I think this is a very important fact to acknowledge today as the second Core agreement nears completion. It was understood that as circumstances change so must the responses, same as we did out of the first Core Area program. The three objectives of the renewed agreement had settled, but there were clear differences from those of Core I. These new objectives after consultation by the governments was, first of all, to stimulate investment, employment and economic growth; secondly, again, support the physical, economic and social revitalization of the inner city neighbourhoods including the provision of special employment opportunities; thirdly, maximize the impact of physical and social investment of core area revitalization through strong central co-ordination.

I was the provincial minister responsible for Core for much of the second agreement, so I am very aware of what the initiative has accomplished. It has accomplished a great deal over its 11 years. The Core Area has brought about a truly unique degree of intergovernmental co-operation and co-ordination in addressing the urban revitalization issues. Without it, we would not have had the north of Portage. Without it, we would not have had The Forks. Also, it is unique. It is one of the first and one of the only tripartite type of agreements in the world.

I would like to note at this time, however, the contribution that Jim August, the former general manager of Core made in facilitating this tripartite

co-operation. Jim—who else could have worked along with three levels of government and three masters and accomplished what he did as general manager of the Core. Jim should be recognized for his hard work and his efforts in that co-operation.

Two agreements have spawned a large number of revitalization activity, and I will just broadly explain a few of the large projects. Twelve hundred projects have been funded including over 600 in the economic stimulus area and over 400 in the area of community and neighbourhood revitalization. The Core Area Initiative expenditures have stimulated an impressive amount of public and private investment. By late 1990, the Core Area expenditure of \$150 million had levered almost \$500 million in additional investment. The two agreements, employment and training activities, have been especially successful. Over 2,800 jobs and 7,000 person years of construction work have been created; over 2,100 people have been trained, 84 percent of whom have been placed in the employment rolls.

What makes these figures even more impressive is that the training has been targeted to persons who have lacked the education and skills to obtain employment, to the new Canadians who have faced language and cultural barriers to employment. Anyone who attended any of the graduating classes of the different schools would recognize the exhilaration, excitement and satisfaction that these people obtained by attending these Core Area programs. Core Area has had a significant impact on the quality of inner city housing. Over 1,250 units of housing have been built and over 7,000 units have been repaired under the two Core Area programs. Overall, significant and lasting improvements have been made to the physical, economic and social fabric of Winnipeg's core area.

However, there are both negative and positive aspects to a tripartite agreement which involves joint decision making by the three levels of government. Often the governments approach the negotiating table with different priorities and perspectives. In this particular case, it has been two types of government who have come from both the federal and the provincial scene. The only one who has been the same partner at the table is the city of Winnipeg. Due to the difference in the mandates of the three levels of government, the concerns that they want to see addressed by the Urban Revitalization Strategy are not necessarily the same view. The length of time it

sometimes takes to come to a common understanding is very problematic. Although formally the first and second Core Area Initiative agreements ran consecutively, in fact, the second agreement was not signed by the previous provincial administration until October 10, 1986, a full seven months after the official start of April 1, 1986.

Mr. Speaker, this delay meant that the second agreement lost almost a year before it became really operational and, in some cases, programs were not started until well into the second or third year of the agreement. It is for this reason that when I was Minister of Urban Affairs, I pressed for and got a one-year extension of the present agreement. The delay between the first and renewed agreement also created a hardship on many of the social service agencies that were looking to the initiative for project funding. The uncertainty made it difficult for these agencies to do any long-range financial or program planning.

Which leads me to one of the other negative factors of the Core Area Initiative agreement. Too many, and I must stress, too many organizations and agencies have become dependent on Initiative funding. Since that funding is time limited, it creates demands on governments for replacement funding which cannot always be met given our limited resources.

Mr. Speaker, the Core original intent was to kick start to get different organizations and different employment opportunities going. I know that community services and facilities program of the renewed Core Agreement was designed to attempt to address the problem of short- versus long-term funding, but in final analysis a time-limited agreement which can only provide short-term project funding may simply not be the best way to respond to high-needs groups.

Another lesson we must learn from the two agreements that we have learned from the two Core Area Initiative Agreements concerns geographical boundaries and eligibility. The intent in establishing a limited geographical area was to provide a focus to revitalization activities and funding. However, the fact that boundaries were really only arbitrary meant that high-needs people in areas that happened to be outside of the boundary were excluded from receiving the benefits of the Core Area Initiative.

* (1730)

These are just some of the issues and problems that have to be looked at before a decision can be made with respect to a new tripartite urban revitalization agreement. The first Core Area Agreement was designed to respond to conditions as they were in 1981. As I have noted, the design was somewhat refined when the agreement was renewed in 1986 to meet changed circumstances. In 1992, the circumstances are again different and to just do more of the same would not necessarily be the best use of our scarce resource.

For instance, the lower interest and high vacancy rates of today make inappropriate a housing program that was designed to respond to the conditions in the '80s. Another example of how needs change over the time is the considerable decrease in demand during the second agreement for funds to improve Core Area community facilities. I believe it shows that the first agreement was successful in its goal of developing and enhancing that met the needs of inner city residents.

There is no question that the Core Area Initiative was an innovative approach to urban revitalization. It was an experiment, and I believe that it worked. The conditions that prevailed in the inner city in the early 1980s have not been completely turned around but there have certainly been very significant improvements.

Urban and economic redevelopment in Winnipeg remains a priority for our government. We are aware of the benefits to be had from the three levels of government working in co-operation with one another. Discussions are taking place, and I know that the honourable Jim Ernst, the now Minister of Urban Affairs, is co-operating with the federal and the city governments on a redevelopment approach that will best meet the economic, physical and social revitalization needs of Winnipeg in the 1990s.

I am optimistic that these decisions will lead to a consensus of just what the new approach should be. Mr. Speaker, I briefly tried to give you some facts in regard and some history in regard to the Core Area Initiative. I do have my pet projects that, in days to come, and as we debate different projects, and as we debate different bills, I will address them at that time. I felt that a little history on where we are at today so that people will understand that not just this government needs time to consider their priorities.

Other governments in the past and especially the previous administration had to take time to look at

the concerns that were necessary, the very many changing concerns that all governments have to look at today and address at that time. Again, I am optimistic that we will look at those concerns and come back with some type of tripartite agreement, and I know that the speakers after me will have their criticisms upon the time taken. I just want to stress to them that it is not easy to sit down with two other levels of government and come up with a solution that is acceptable to everyone.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, it is often difficult to find out where this government is placing its priorities, but it certainly does not seem to be the city of Winnipeg.

The Core Area Initiative in particular has often seemed to me to be the phantom of Winnipeg. You see it here; sometimes you see it there; sometimes it is in the federal government's lap; sometimes they are blaming the city, but meanwhile there has been no renewal of the Core Area agreement.

Sometimes the meeting has been close. On October 1, 1991, Mr. Ernst, the minister, said that the new Core Area deal was close to done, umbrella agreement possible. How many times have we seen newspaper articles like that?

It is close. We are meeting today; we are meeting tomorrow; we are meeting next week. Missed meetings: Mr. Epp could not make this meeting, the mayor could not make that meeting. If it were not such a catastrophe for the people of the inner city, it would be a comedy, and certainly leaning to the farcical.

We have heard "one-year extension" from the minister. He has argued, in fact, that this was required because some programs did not get off to an early start and maybe that is true. Maybe I will accept some of that. It seems to me that a good deal of the political hay that has been made out of that one-year extension is just that—it is Tory-speak for no more dollars.

What we have seen in the case of the Core Area Initiative is delay, procrastination. We have seen the abandonment of programs. I would particularly have liked to have heard the minister address that issue.

The Inner City Foundation: One million dollars put aside in a specific program, publicly announced, publicly committed to by three levels of government. One million dollars which was spent, not in the way that it had been voted, not in the way that this government, the federal government and the civic

government had committed themselves to, but spent for entirely different political purposes—one million public dollars.

It seems to me that the federal government, in particular, had no intention of allowing a foundation to spend that kind of money, and so the pressure was exerted to turn it to alternative uses. Well, we have seen over the last year and a half, two years, public meetings that the minister has been invited to, and the minister is always hopeful. It is always a good sign when the minister is hopeful.

He said at every public meeting that he is hopeful of a Core Area Initiative. Here we are, February 1992, and we are not one inch closer in the public record to any agreement on the Core Area Initiative.

We have had pledge cards brought to the Legislature by the Urban Futures Group. Pledge cards which have been signed by the mayor, but no commitment from this provincial government and no commitment from the federal government. What we see is an abandonment of the inner city of Winnipeg since 1988 and we certainly do not see any leadership coming from this provincial government. The federal government equally must bear some of the responsibility, a considerable amount of the responsibility I believe, for distancing itself from the City of Winnipeg.

They are also trying to distance themselves, I think, from urban commitments in other parts of the country. I do not believe it is just Winnipeg at this particular time, but the new constitutional arrangements have yet to be made and at the moment the federal government does indeed have a firm commitment in legal and constitutional terms to urban development and urban regeneration. It is certainly not showing that face in Winnipeg.

Why do we not see any changes in this policy, Mr. Speaker? Was it a poor program? Well, we have heard from the minister that it was not a poor program, and I think he did a reasonable job in telling the Legislature the accomplishments which were there and which are recognized, I think, on all sides of the House.

It was not a poor program. There were parts of it which we might want to revise; there are some things which in hindsight we might want to have changed, but when we come to write the history of Winnipeg for the last half of the 20th Century, I think that the Core Area Initiative will shine and that it will shine out as a beacon of hope and of sanity for the

people of the inner city, and indeed for all the people of Manitoba, because what happens in Winnipeg affects everyone in Manitoba.

It is not just my view, Mr. Speaker, that it was a beacon of sanity and hope. As we all know, and as I have commented in the House before, the Core Area Initiative won an international award for its achievements. In awarding that IDA downtown award, there were several elements of the Core Area Initiative which were selected as important and as models for the rest of the world. It was the tripartite model which took their attention, a major collaboration between three levels of government for the first time in North America to address urban revitalization issues.

Second of all, the international committee was struck by the private, nonprofit and public partnerships which were used to lever the investment, private investment particularly, into the redevelopment of Winnipeg's core area. So they commended to the members of this international organization this type of tripartite model. They also commended the sense of community pride and ownership which had been stimulated by the staff and by the programs of the Core Area Initiative. They drew international attention to the substantial employment which had resulted for residents of the core area who have been and continue to be traditionally underrepresented in the labour force in this province, and particularly in Winnipeg.

It was not a poor program, Mr. Speaker, and like the minister, I have also attended the graduation ceremonies at R. B. Russell and other places and seen the effect that it has, not just on the individual who has been through the course, or the training program, or the literacy program, or the English programs of the Core Area Initiative, but on the entire family who are present in large numbers at those awards ceremonies. The Core Area Initiative touched not just individuals; it touched families and communities.

It made an impact for many people. It was not just for institutions, for businesses and others, but it made a difference for people who were able to get the kind of basic language training that they had never had before, people who found in it the opportunity to renew their careers, people who found the opportunity to find decent housing in the repairs and the redevelopment of the Logan community, for example; the housing programs, where more than 8,000 homes were inspected and

the inspections led then to rehabilitation of houses. Eight thousand homes in the city of Winnipeg is a substantial number and, again, the impact of that upon the economic and social life, not of just the individual, but of the family and the community are very important for us to remember.

* (1740)

Employment and training and housing, I think, are the two issues that we would all agree upon, are the important areas where Core Area made a difference. I think also we should look at the last Core Area agreement and we should look at the impact that it had upon riverbanks and upon heritage. In both of those areas the Core Area had an impact. For example, you will find that The Forks redevelopment and the riverbank program that goes along with that, done in conjunction also with Parks Canada, has become one of the major recreational forces in Winnipeg within a very short period of time. So the amount of money that was devoted to that, that could be pooled together, that tripartite agreement that the International Downtown Association drew our attention to, really had an impact here.

If you look at the most recent recreation study in the city of Winnipeg, you will find that at the top of their list, 80 percent of the people gave an indication that their first and important priority in Winnipeg recreation was going to The Forks. So I think the riverbank walk, The Forks, has been very important as a result of the Core Area Initiative in providing the recreational opportunities to inner city people.

So it was not, Mr. Speaker, a poor program. We would look for different programs and some amelioration of existing programs and probably some different focuses in a new Core Area Agreement, just, I think, as the minister has also indicated. He has his pet projects, so does the community.

I am interested by the former minister's response, because one of the most hopeful signs when he was minister was that he did agree. In fact, he set a date for public hearings organized, initiated by the province for an evaluation of the last Core Area Agreement. I commended him on that at the time, and I think all our party would have offered our commendations on that. I think he had the support of the Inner City Foundation. It was a short time period that he was offering for those evaluations and presentations but, nonetheless, it was a

commitment to public hearings and public evaluation.

What we have seen since then, since the ministry has changed, since the federal government has indicated its lack of interest in a new Core Area Agreement, we have seen an abandonment of that initiative and ignoring—closed doors when they come to the Legislature—of the inner city groups in Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker, it was a program which brought some advantages and some changes to the lives of families in the inner city. Have conditions changed? Should we, perhaps, be arguing that there is no longer any need for the social programs, for the programs to ameliorate poverty, for the programs to redevelop recreational areas and to upgrade the housing of the inner city?

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the changes that we have seen across Canada and in urban areas particularly have affected Winnipeg very severely. In fact, what we have seen in spite of the efforts, in spite of the very good and successful efforts of the Core Area Initiative to stem the effects, the dreadful and tragic effects of poverty in the inner city, that it has been only that. It has been a holding operation and that the increase in single parent families, the increase in the poverty and the level of poverty that we see there are ones that must still hold our attention as a major most significant priority for any government in Manitoba.

(Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Homelessness, lack of food, empty cupboards, lack of clothing, lack of shoes, lack of warm clothing. If any of the members had been at the meeting that we held at St. Matthews-Maryland, all the west end NDP MLAs in January, those are the kinds of stories that they would have heard. They would have heard of the great increase in the use of food banks in Winnipeg, the increase in child poverty, the great difficulty that people in that area of my constituency are finding in trying to find affordable, decent housing.

I am sure that all urban inner city MLAs have heard from constituents who are finding tremendous difficulty in finding decent housing, people who are having to pay more than 40 percent of their monthly income just to find a decent room over their heads and over the heads of their families. No wonder people are increasingly turning to food banks because they have no alternative and, particularly

with the ending of the Core Area Agreement, there is no beacon of hope. There is no beacon of sanity left on the other side of this House.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the problems that inner city Winnipeggers face are very real problems. One of them, of course, is the role of this provincial government, a government which is so ineffective in Ottawa. People who for years, I assume, have paid their dues to the federal Conservative party, who have applauded Dorothy Dobbie and Brian Mulroney and Jake Epp for years, who have contributed to the creation of those policies and yet now find themselves ineffective without a voice in the federal government, cannot bring the federal government to the table on the Core Area Initiative. Is it the case that the provincial government does not want to bring the federal government to the table? They have said time and time again that this is not the case, so we must conclude that in fact they are totally ineffective in bringing this.

Is it perhaps, second of all, that the provincial government has no idea what needs to be done in the city? I am prepared to believe that some of that is true, but they know very well that the inner city Urban Futures Group is well prepared to tell them, that they held their own public hearings over a year and a half ago, that they produced 90 briefs and that they are prepared to enter into co-operative management and co-operative direction of a new Core Area Agreement.

The province, however, continues to add to, to create and to intensify the poverty in the inner city. They offload onto the civic government. They offload training in colleges onto private schools. They offload assistance to Parent-Child Centres and cancel them, the very ray of hope that many single-parent families—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ben Sveinson): Order, please. The honourable member for Wolsley's time has expired.

Mr. Jack Reimer (Niakwa): Mr. Acting Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise this afternoon to put some words on record regarding the Core Area Initiative. I would just like to respond to the member's resolution. I would like to speak about how the Core Area Initiative came to be an event in essence.

When it was first conceived in 1980 the initiative was clearly in a response to the inner city needs and concerns of the time. I think one of the things we are quite aware of here in the city of Winnipeg, and

being an urban MLA, is the fact that the city of Winnipeg does play a very important part in our economy here. One of the things that is very striking about the city of Winnipeg, as has been pointed out by the member, is the heritage and the buildings of the city of Winnipeg.

* (1750)

We are fortunate that we have some very, very fine old buildings that have endured and have been preserved in a sense that they are here for future generations. Some of the finest buildings in Winnipeg have come under the care, if you want to call it, of the Core Area Initiative in the fact that they were able to take advantage of some of the funding for regeneration and revitalization of some of these buildings that are now put back into the public mainstream. It makes it quite a draw not only for tourists, but for people in the sense that the visual effects of Winnipeg have the advantage of the preservation of some of our older buildings.

I just would like to commend and have that on the record in the fact that some of the visual identification has been associated with the Core Area Initiative.

As was mentioned by the previous Minister of Urban Affairs, in 1980 the Core Area was first brought into being, and it was recognized that the core area was having a negative impact on the whole entire city and was recognized by the government. This is why the government signed a Core Area Initiative with the federal government and the City of Winnipeg in 1981.

The agreement reflected the tripartite understanding that the needs of the inner city crossed jurisdictional boundaries and that a comprehensive approach was required to address severe problems of physical, economical and social deterioration in the core.

I recall back shortly into the mid-'80s when I was involved with the community centres and sitting on the community centre boards in what we call District 5 of the city of Winnipeg, one of the areas that was part of the area that I was involved with was the St. Boniface area or the St. Boniface catchment area, if you want to call it. At that time a group of citizens wanted to get together and expand and modernize the Notre Dame arena. At that time the Core Area Initiative funding was available, and they took advantage of it at the time.

The results in that particular community have been actually very, very positive and very astounding in how it brought the community together. It brought the people together for the funding. It brought the people together for the volunteerism that is involved with community centres. The community centre since that time has become a very, very viable focus point not only for community groups but for organization and for recreation.

The member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) was correct in saying that a lot of the recreation facilities, social facilities and community facilities that were expanded and growing during that time were very paramount in coming to fruition because of the Core Area Initiative. Recreation and social events play a very important part in the community. When we look at some of the other areas that have benefited, it all brings people together under various other programs. It was something that I became aware of. It was something that I became closely associated with and can recognize the needs that came about with that.

As was mentioned, too, was the fact that there was close to 2,000 people who were trained, inner city residents, during the employment training that was under the Core Area Initiative, and the fact, because of the regeneration, that it also brings shoppers and sightseers. One of the biggest draws in the area downtown is the Forks area. The Forks has become quite a focal point not only for a gathering point, which it was made for, but it has become a focal point for future developments and possible other commercial endeavours and expansions.

The Core Area Initiative has served as a focus point and as a flash point, if you want to call it, for attracting additional private investment. I believe it was mentioned by the former minister that it generated almost, I believe it was, \$500 million in additional investment during the time of the Core Area Initiative, \$5 million which went into the economy, went to create jobs, and the jobs created taxes which this government needs to pay its bills. It becomes a cycle in a sense, so the investment is coming back to help us in a sense.

We must look at the impact not only to the visitors but, as it was said before, the people who are involved with the various programs. It gives them a sense of accomplishment, too. It becomes an ongoing circle.

I could not help but notice when the member was up, one of the items that she mentioned was the fact that the criticism that sometimes these things take and the fact that the now minister for some reason seems to be slow on the draw, in her opinion, but we have got to look back at when the Core Area Initiative was in effect which was from 1981 right up until, it is just finishing up now.

We have to look at the Urban Affairs ministers that were in government at that time. If we recall that the NDP ministers of Dolin, Desjardins and Doer were the ministers of Urban Affairs during that time. So we must look at these three former NDP ministers in a sense of what type of speedup or what type of involvement, what type of commitment they had with the Core Area Initiative, because the Core Area Initiative did come under the previous administration.

There was a fair amount of responsibility of slowdown or of speedup of decisions that had to be associated with the former government. The Urban Affairs minister at that time, during the last—I believe it was from 1986 to 1988, was the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer).

There was a fair amount of closeness and awareness by that minister as to the Core Area Initiative and its benefits. There is a responsibility not only for the present minister to go forth and try to bring back a reasonable settlement between the three levels, because the governments on the three levels must be aware of all aspects in negotiation of an agreement that is satisfactory not only for the city, but for the province and the federal government. The federal government must play a key role in the funding.

As mentioned, being a tripartite agreement, there must be the three levels of government. The federal government at this time is one that we must be aware of in its situation and the fact that funding in all areas has to be very paramount in what comes about.

The member is correct in saying that riverbanks and the riverbank enhancement and the beautification is a very important program not only here in Winnipeg, but in all areas. Here in Winnipeg, we are fortunate where we have the two rivers that flow right through the centre of town, if you want to call it. Any type of beautification along the river is something that must be enhanced and overseen in a very due and diligent manner.

The problem of bringing forth the design and the complications of design is something that is addressed on an ongoing basis, and with the termination and The Forks being the centre, if you want to call it, where the pathways and waterways come together, the walkways and the beautification of the river are very, very important.

In fact, if we remember rightly, back in the election campaign, back in 1987, I believe it was the then Premier Howard Pawley who made a commitment of spending \$100 million on the 10-year plan to clean up the Red River and the Assiniboine River. The campaign pledge was made during the election. However, shortly after the election I believe it was, and I am quoting from *The Globe and Mail* of January 5, 1987, that they, I do not think, were able to implement all the promises—until we get over the current financial restraints.

Here we have a government and a member telling us of the importance of the river campaign and the river cleanup, and at the same time the then former Premier Pawley is making a commitment of a 10-year \$100 million plan to clean up the Red and the Assiniboine Rivers and then shortly after reneging on the promise. Then the minister who was responsible at that time for Urban Affairs was the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer). One can wonder what type of influence and what type of concern he had in the cabinet, when being the Urban Affairs minister why he would not want to further pursue the fact that the importance of river cleanup and of the quality of water, not only coming into Winnipeg but going through Winnipeg and going up to the North, to where the Red River is used as a source of drinking water, that these things are not always kept in proper perspective and cleaning is properly followed.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

As mentioned, the river is something that must be under constant supervision and the fact that there is no commitment by the previous Urban Affairs minister under the Pawley government shows that these commitments are something must—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am interrupting the honourable member according to the rules. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) will have three minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Wednesday, February 19, 1992

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Reading and Receiving Petitions

Restoration of Child Abuse Program	
Barrett	510
Chomiak	510
Wasylycia-Leis	510

Ministerial Statements

Linnet Contract	
Manness	510
Doer	512
Carstairs	512

Tabling of Reports

Annual Reports:	
Legal Aid; Law Reform Commission;	
Manitoba Police Commission;	
Manitoba Human Rights Commission	
McCrae	512

Introduction of Bills

Bill 52, The Pas Health Complex	
Incorporation Amendment Act	
Lathlin	513

Oral Questions

Round Table on the Environment	
Doer; Filmon	514

Conawapa Dam Project	
Hickes; Downey; Carstairs;	517

Dutch Elm Disease	
Friesen; Ernst	519

Pharmacare	
Wasylycia-Leis; Orchard	519

Conawapa Dam Project	
Edwards; Downey	521

Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce	
Edwards; Filmon	521

Nonpolitical Statements

Manitoba Ladies Senior Curling	
Championship	
McAlpine	522
C. Evans	523

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Second Readings

Bill 5, Manitoba Advisory Council on the	
Status of Women Amendment Act	
Mitchelson	523
Carstairs	525

Bill 15, Highway Traffic Amendment Act	
Driedger	525

Debate on Second Readings

Bill 11, Bee-Keepers Repeal Act	
Carstairs	527

Bill 12, Animal Husbandry Amendment Act	
Carstairs	528

Bill 7, Real Property Amendment Act	
Ashton	529
Chomiak	535
Lamoureux	536

Bill 8, Garnishment Amendment Act	
Chomiak	537
Lamoureux	538

Private Members' Business

Proposed Resolutions

Res. 2, Renewal of Core Area Initiative	
Edwards	539
Ducharme	542
Friesen	545
Reimer	547