

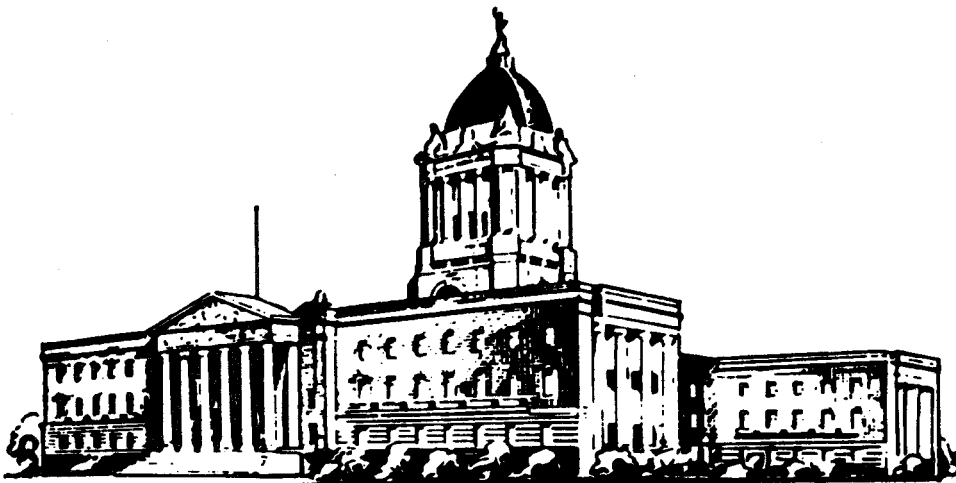


Third Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

39-40 Elizabeth II

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



VOL. XLI No. 15A - 1:30 p.m., MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 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
MALLOWAY, 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

Monday, February 24, 1992

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): It is my duty to inform the House that Mr. Speaker is unavoidably absent and therefore, in accordance with the statutes, I would ask the Deputy Speaker to take the Chair.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): I beg to present the petition of Rey Manguba, Ian McDougall, Brent Tierney, and others requesting the government show its strong commitment to dealing with child abuse by considering restoring the Fight Back Against Child Abuse campaign.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Madam Deputy Speaker (Louise Dacquay): 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)

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)

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. Wasylycia-Leis)

* (1335)

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): I would like to table the 1991 Annual Report of the North Portage Development Corporation.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to table the Quarterly Financial Report, nine months ending July 31, 1991, of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 55—The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (2)

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): I move, seconded by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that Bill 55, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Reid: To give a brief insight on the purpose of the bill, Madam Deputy Speaker, it is to afford protection for those who are continually ongoing, day in and day out throughout the year, putting their lives and the health and the financial security of their families at risk as they fulfill the requirements of their job in the protection of society so that we may afford them the same sense of security that the other members of our society have as a result of their activities. We bring this bill forward to provide that sense of security for those who are involved in the firefighting activities and other areas of our province, who provide that security for members of our communities.

Motion agreed to.

* (1340)

Bill 50—The Beverage Container Act

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): I move, seconded by the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), that Bill 50, The Beverage Container Act; Loi sur les contenants de boisson, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Deputy Speaker, it is time for beverage container legislation in this province to be effective. We have tried a voluntary system in the past, but even the most optimistic of estimates would indicate that it manages to recycle less than 50 percent, whereas container legislation similar to what we are proposing in the province of Alberta in fact has almost a 90 percent recovery rate. We think it is time for that type of action in the province of Manitoba, and we ask all members of the House to support the legislation.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 51—The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), that Bill 51, The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-maladie), be introduced and that the same be now received and read for a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Cheema: Madam Deputy Speaker, Canadian health care is under attack from all directions. This bill will safeguard the most essential principle which has made it the envy of many countries around the world. The five basic principles of medicare are public administration, comprehensiveness, universality, affordability and accessibility. These are found in the Canada Health Act. It is time that we also entrenched them as an administrative principle in Manitoba law, and this bill will do it.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 48—The Personal Property Security Amendment Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Bill 48, The Personal

Property Security Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les sûretés relatives aux biens personnels), be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 53—The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Amendment Act

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), that Bill 53, The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la manutention et le transport des marchandises dangereuses, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House. I am pleased to table his message.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Madam Deputy Speaker: Before we proceed, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon twenty-five Grade 9 students from Victor Mager School. They are under the direction of Mr. Larry Patrick. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme).

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

Also, we have seated in the public gallery twenty-seven Grade 5 students from Phoenix Elementary School under the direction of Mr. John Loadman. This school is situated in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Urban Affairs and Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst).

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

* (1345)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Economic Recession Social Programs

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, the recession has been hard on Manitobans and Canadians. There are 57,000 people unemployed now in this province, a

51 percent increase in welfare recipients in the city of Winnipeg alone. We have a lot of hardship in our province.

During the Speech from the Throne, the government stated that they are committed to maintaining and enhancing vital social programs for Manitobans who are in need or at risk. Again the government's Speech from the Throne promised that Manitoba's vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens would have an important obligation to carry out the partnership involving government and caregivers.

My question to the Premier is: Will he give the people of Manitoba and this Chamber the commitment that his government will not cut vital services and programs to people who are most vulnerable in our economy today?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Deputy Speaker, firstly, I want to say that we, I think, like all Canadians recognize with great regret the impact of the international recession under which the entire world is reeling these days. It is a recession that has gone on longer than most economic forecasters predicted, and it is a recession that none of us would choose to have facing our economy.

I know that if the Leader of the Opposition is doing his reading, he is well aware of how hard the recession is impacting other areas of the world, even areas that have heretofore maintained strength over previous decades, places like Germany, and so on. The United States is reeling very hard.

In our own country, under New Democratic administrations, we have in Ontario a situation in which 260,000 people have lost their jobs in the period of the recession. We have a situation in which the government of Ontario is implementing funding measures on hospitals, affecting our most vulnerable in society, that will cause the closure of an estimated 4,000 beds, Madam Deputy Speaker, something that we have not seen in this province since the New Democrats were in government themselves, when they closed beds at hospitals in Brandon and elsewhere in the province.

They also, of course, limited their transfers to schools, limited their transfers to education to 1 percent in Ontario, limited their transfers to municipalities and to others to, in many cases, zero percent. Under those circumstances, they have

caused tremendous pain and hardship for vulnerable people.

We, Madam Deputy Speaker, have said throughout the past couple of years that we have to be fair, we have to be reasonable, and we have to be balanced. The fact is that we have undertaken the review of Estimates this year on that basis of fairness, of balance and of reason as we look at all the services.

We will do everything possible to protect services for the vulnerable in our society.

* (1350)

Manitoba Tax Assistance Office Closure

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, I have a supplementary question to the Premier.

Does the decision of his government to close down the Manitoba Tax Assistance Office for purposes of helping people prepare their individual tax forms effective May 1, 1992—the 15,000 people at low incomes in Manitoba who receive help from the Manitoba Tax Assistance Office—does their reading of this document that says they will no longer be available for these vulnerable taxpayers after May 1, 1992, fit the criteria the Premier has just outlined, a balance of fairness, concern and meeting the needs of Manitobans who are most vulnerable? Does this fit the test the Premier has just outlined in the Chamber?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Madam Deputy Speaker, in keeping with the answer just provided by the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), decisions with respect to providing service and the evaluation of services, from time to time cause great difficulty, and indeed this is one of the areas of decisions made by this government whereby it was a difficult choice.

To maintain the highest priority of this government, to maintain keeping hospital beds open and maintain our health care commitment, certain decisions have to be made. I want to indicate to the Leader of the Opposition that we still prioritize those who have received free tax preparation services by the government to the extent that those who are shut-ins will continue to have that service provided to them by government.

Furthermore, we were ensured by officials and those people from the community that there is a

growing number of firms, indeed, Revenue Canada themselves, who are prepared to provide this service to our needy on a free basis.

That is what the community tends to do during difficult times. They tend to reach out and help those who cannot help themselves. That is what the community is indicating they are prepared to do for us and relieve some of the debt burden of government, help us to maintain health care services, and I would say, that is the better way.

Mr. Doer: Perhaps we could ask another question of the Minister of Finance.

How could he morally justify giving a \$7-million tax break to corporations in his last year's budget and cutting back a very small amount of money that is necessary in providing services to 15,000 of the lowest-income Manitobans? Is this the test of fairness and equity that we see from Conservatives across the way in tough times, in vulnerable times? Is this the kind of standard of fairness we see across the way?

Mr. Manness: In case the Leader of the Opposition does not recall, the benefactors of that reduction in taxes were those people who were going to be trained and retrained, because of course there was an offset. The reduction provided was an offset against the payroll tax instituted by these people across the way who have destroyed jobs in this province for years.

It all comes back in a tax way to the members across the way. They are the ones who have caused the wrack and ruin in some respects, and they have the gall to stand up here and challenge us for reducing taxes in support of training.

To the member opposite, I say shame. It comes back to you every time, does it not?

* (1355)

Manitoba Tax Assistance Office Closure

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Madam Deputy Speaker, yes, the government's fairness and equity program seems to be: Make the poor pay.

Since this Tory majority government was elected 18 months ago, they have cut student social allowances, ACCESS programs, home care and increased Pharmacare deductibles. Now we find that the Manitoba Tax Assistance Office will no

longer prepare income tax returns for low-income Manitobans.

Has the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) determined the impact this closure of this program will have on Manitobans who live on less than \$14,000 a year, which is the ceiling for preparation from this program? Has he determined what that impact is?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Madam Deputy Speaker, let me indicate, I am led to believe, and I can stand corrected on this, but I am led to believe that we are one of the few provinces, if not the only province, in Canada that has provided this service for a number of years.

Let not members across the way try and portray the fact that this is a service that is provided all across Canada. More importantly, why do the members opposite not acknowledge that the federal government, that Revenue Canada has an alternative for free tax preparation services next year, that the volunteer program under the co-ordination of Revenue Canada will be able to accommodate a substantial portion of the Tax Assistance Office's former clientele.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we are knowledgeable of the fact that many accounting firms in this province are providing their services through the organization free—I will say free—through Revenue Canada and are asking those people in society, those who earn \$14,000 and less, if they so wish, on a voluntary basis, to leave their names on a registry. Revenue Canada will match those names with the free services of the accounting firms in this province to set up free services for these people, who might be displaced under this program.

That is the community working. That is the community reaching out to the less advantaged in our society.

Ms. Barrett: Madam Deputy Speaker, did the Minister of Family Services consult with the Minister of Finance prior to the axing of this program, which will save the province less than \$50,000 a year while costing the most vulnerable low-income Manitobans upwards of a quarter of a million to half a million to have H&R Block prepare those taxes for them?

Mr. Manness: If the government had sensed that there was not a fall-back free system being provided by the community, indeed this decision may not have been made. If indeed what the member says, and using her supposition that everybody would

have been forced to pay extremely large fees to an accounting firm, maybe we would have looked at it differently, but after we were given the comfort that there were free services being offered by the community, then the decision was made.

The member may try to portray it as just another \$50,000, but it was that type of attitude that has the general purpose debt of this province at \$6 billion, courtesy of the members opposite.

* (1400)

Ms. Barrett: Will the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) now guarantee those tens of thousands, 15,000 last year, low-income Manitobans, many of whom are senior citizens and have no access to those volunteer groups that perform these functions, that those services which have been provided by this government for 20 years will do what this government's own program says and make sure that every Manitoban is entitled to all the benefits—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Manness: I do not know what the member opposite has against the community volunteering services to those in need. I do not know what about that model that the member finds objectionable.

I can say that Age and Opportunity, I am led to believe the Manitoba Society of Seniors are also organizing and co-ordinating the efforts of those in the community who are prepared to do this service freely to make sure that those lesser-advantaged in our community have opportunities to access this free service. I would say that that is the way the system should work, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Employment Retraining Programs Funding

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question is to the Minister of Finance.

Public faith in the political system is not enhanced when it appears that figures and dollars are manipulated by politicians of all political stripes.

On January 30, the federal government announced that Manitoba would be receiving \$75 million additionally in equalization payments with \$55 million coming this year and the additional \$20 million the following year. A little over two weeks later, this figure had been cut to \$25 million. On February 11, the provincial finance minister said that all of the \$55 million was spent, and there was

nothing available for the job retraining program that we encouraged him to initiate. Six days later, when the \$30 million disappeared off the table, the provincial Finance minister said that the deficit would not be affected because of a better performance in other provincial revenues.

My question is the following: Can the minister explain why he could find \$30 million in increased revenues on February 17, when he could not find those same \$30 million February 11, and why he cannot invest in job retraining in the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Let me correct the record in one respect, because it was attributed to me that there was a reduction in equalization. There was a reduction from the \$55 million in transfers that we were expecting, because there was a revision again within the corporate income tax and within the personal income tax area. As it was reported that the so-called additional good news, the \$55 million, was now going to be reduced by \$30 million, that is true in numbers but that is not true with respect to equalization. We got it on equalization, but we lost it on income tax and also on corporate income tax.

The net result is as a result of numbers coming in in a significant fashion, varying in large measure over the last month. Today we have fewer dollars to spend at the end of this fiscal year than we did exactly one month ago. Indeed, ministers of this Treasury bench will tell you it has impacted upon them and the decisions that they are making on a daily basis.

The reality is, Madam Deputy Speaker, that today we do not have the degree of windfall that we thought we did a month ago.

Provincial Revenues Additional Revenue Sources

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, that begs the question, the minister said he was using all of the \$55 million, and then when he learns that he in fact is not going to have all of that money, he made the statement: Although the reduction in payments is not good news, a better performance in other areas of provincial revenues will save the province from increasing its deficit.

Where is he coming up with this additional revenue?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Madam Deputy Speaker, I think it will be clear to the members opposite once I table the Third Quarterly Report. I will be doing that in advance of the budget. I expect to maybe do that even this week, if not, at the beginning of the next, at which time the forecasts of all the revenues and indeed the latest forecasts of expenditures will be evident. In that time, most of the questions that the member puts today will be answered.

Employment Retraining Programs Funding

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Deputy Speaker, will the Minister of Finance tell this House today why he cannot find monies for retraining, monies which are so desperately needed in the province of Manitoba when, by his own admission, he has increased revenues available to him?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, I had one source of revenue increase. I had equalization within the three transfer areas of federal transfer areas. That one area there was an increase.

I can say to the member opposite, I have also had reductions, and that will become evident when I table the Third Report. Sales tax revenues have dropped, consumption tax revenues have dropped, payroll tax revenues have dropped from forecasting, so the reality is then, when you look at the government as a whole, nearly \$5 billion of revenue decisions are made, not on one line of revenue, but the sum of all the lines of revenue.

Right today, the forecast of revenue for this fiscal year is no higher than it was when I brought the budget down some several months ago.

Home Care Program Nancy Whiteway Case

Ms. Judy Wasylcia-Léls (St. Johns): Madam Deputy Speaker, we have been documenting serious and growing concerns about home care on a regular basis in this House. The publicized case of Nancy Whiteway again points out the need for the Minister of Health to act now and to address a series of concerns, starting with the right of health care consumers to have some control and some say in health care, home care arrangements pertaining to

their own bodily functions, and in the privacy of their own homes.

I would like to ask the Minister of Health if he has addressed the specific request from Nancy Whiteway for a regular orderly in the evening to assist with a bowel procedure and exercise requirements. Has he moved to consider the general concerns of moving toward an independent-living-based home care model so that people like Nancy can be consulted as people with integrity and competency?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Madam Deputy Speaker, given that issue was in today's news, I attempted prior to Question Period, knowing that my honourable friend's research would be up to date, to try and determine how much we have been able to accomplish since the writing of that article.

I want to indicate to my honourable friend that we are providing a service. There was some difficulty in terms of communication with the individual's physician in allowing us to proceed with a resolution. We believe we have that resolved and that we will be able to provide the kind of service that will allow, as all of us wish to have happen, an independent living style for the individual in question.

Madam Deputy Speaker, to answer the second part of my honourable friend's question, we initiated some year and a half ago plans for a project wherein those requiring home care services might in effect undertake those with their own provision of service, budget provided by government. That is the self-managed care project which we have underway now.

I am not certain as I stand today whether the individual in question applied to access the self-managed care program that—

Point of Order

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Madam Deputy Speaker, I did not raise a single question about the self-managed home care program. That is a separate issue from the question of an independent-living-based home care model.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for St. Johns did not have a point of order. It is a dispute over facts.

* * *

Mr. Orchard: Madam Deputy Speaker, then I guess I will certainly look forward to my honourable friend's input in debate of the Estimates, because I believe when she indicated something to the nature of self-directed home care, that is really what the self-managed home care program is all about, where the individual is empowered to provide and retain their own service providers with dignity and with respect for their independent living opportunities.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: If the minister checks Hansard, he will know I was raising an independent—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Does the honourable member have a supplementary question?

* (1410)

Advisory Committee

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Madam Deputy Speaker, would the minister now activate his own advisory committee entitled "advisory committee on consumer input" into the continuing care program set up two to three years ago, a committee which has not met for over a year and interestingly includes on its membership Nancy Whiteway as alternate for the Manitoba League of the Physically Handicapped?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Madam Deputy Speaker, again my honourable friend seems to not be consistent in her approach when she one day criticizes government for having too many committees and now today says we should activate and bring forward meetings with yet another committee.

I presume my honourable friend is referring to the implementation committee, and she will clarify this no doubt at her next answer, which was put together to attempt to bring forward action on recommendations emanating from the Price Waterhouse investigation of the Home Care Program, which was commissioned by my honourable friend when she was part of government.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I hope the minister studies his own briefing book which clearly—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member for St. Johns have a final question?

Advocacy Office

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): Would the minister now take steps to move on recommendations of the Price Waterhouse study, of his own task forces, of health care consumer advocates and organizations for an advocacy office and an independent review process so that people like Nancy, who are competent, who want to live independently, have a say when their home care services are being reduced or altered?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): My honourable friend might want to take this opportunity to table the page of my briefing book that she has. I may be able to update her with a new one, because I am not always certain that she is up to speed.

Let me deal with some of the issues that my honourable friend has raised in terms of the Price Waterhouse recommendation. We have implemented a substantial number of those recommendations. That has allowed us to make much better use of the ever growing Home Care budget which, as I pointed out to my honourable friend the other day, will exceed some \$57 million this year.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, Beauchesne's Citation 417 is very clear. Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not promote debate. I believe the minister has been out of order all three counts for most of this Question Period, and I would ask you to call him to order and to answer the very specific question asked by the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis).

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) does not have a point of order, but I would caution all honourable members to use brevity in phrasing their questions and respondents to also exercise the same brevity in responding to the questions.

Mr. Orchard: I will apologize to all members of the New Democratic Party if I have provoked debate by providing truth to the inaccurate accusations of cutbacks.

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: We just had reference to Beauchesne's, Madam Deputy Speaker, and now

the minister seems to be not only debating the issue but debating your ruling.

I would like to ask you once again to bring the minister to order and have him answer the questions that were put by our Health critic, the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis).

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Thompson does not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Orchard: Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe I had answered my honourable friend's question.

Board of Review Chaulk Hearing

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): My question is for the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General signed the Order-in-Council putting Robert Chaulk in custody. The minister appointed the review panel that reviewed his case, and the minister received notice of the Chaulk hearing and is a party to it.

Why did the minister or his department fail to make representations on behalf of the public at the Chaulk hearing?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Deputy Speaker, on January 29, I wrote to the Board of Review asking for further information with respect to their recommendation about the release of this individual into the community, asking that another psychiatric opinion be sought.

On February 5, the law of the land changed and the government of Manitoba had no part, no role in the release of what were formerly Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council Warrant individuals. A decision was made by the review board. It was the review board's decision. We have concerns about the process by which they arrived at that decision, and we are appealing on the basis of that process.

Government Representation

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Madam Deputy Speaker, my supplementary to the same minister is: What procedures is his department putting in place to ensure that when Orders-in-Council are in place, when a review committee sits, that the minister does make representation at the review panel hearings

that are held so an event of this kind does not repeat itself?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): The problem that we have, Madam Deputy Speaker, which stems from the Supreme Court of Canada ruling and the subsequent legislation that followed in the House of Commons of Canada, is that the government is basically out of the process. Our problem is, we face the future. It need not be a problem. We have at all times to respect the individual rights and liberties of individual Canadians in this country, but we also have a role in terms of protection of society. The procedure is now laid down in the Criminal Code that our role is relegated to that of appealing decisions of the Board of Review.

Pedlar Commission Recommendations

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Deputy Speaker, my final supplementary to the minister is: Why did the minister not follow the recommendations of his own Pedlar Commission at page 62 and notify family members and other interested individuals of the fact of the impending hearing and the possible release of Robert Chaulk?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): The honourable member's question is a good one. I will make sure that the Board of Review is made aware of that question, because it is the Board of Review, Madam Deputy Speaker, who releases these people. I would hope that the Board of Review would also accept the Pedlar review recommendation, which is indeed a good one.

Clarification Provincial Revenues

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to correct an impression that I left on the record with respect to an answer provided to the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs).

I would just like to say that I had made reference to the budget as being the last accurate forecast of revenues for the province. I should have referred to the Second Quarterly Report, which will be updated in the Third Quarterly Report sometime soon.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I thank the honourable minister for that point of clarification.

Health Care System Licensed Practical Nurses' Role

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): My question is for the Minister of Health.

I would like to ask the minister about the effective use of human resources in our health care system. Madam Deputy Speaker, there are about 2,400 licensed practical nurses in this province, and they see the future of their profession in grave danger. While the other provinces are improving education and expanding the role of the nursing profession, here in Manitoba we see a moratorium on the education of LPNs at Red River Community College and the coming closure of the LPN school at St. Boniface Hospital.

Can the minister tell us: What is the future of many dedicated and experienced LPNs in this province?

* (1420)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Madam Deputy Speaker, my honourable friend is correct in that there is a moratorium at Red River Community College in terms of the training program for licensed practical nursing. My honourable friend made reference to closure at a similar school at St. Boniface General Hospital. I would just like to indicate to my honourable friend that it has been discussed at the board level, but to my knowledge to date no decision has been made. I would not want my honourable friend to be possibly speculating around rumours that have circulated around that school of nursing at St. Boniface.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I cannot give my honourable friend a definitive answer today. What I can tell my honourable friend is how we are addressing the issue in terms of process. In January of this year, given similar rumours that my honourable friend had indicated and rumours around reorganization of staffing patterns which would see LPNs replaced with registered nurses, baccalaureate nurses and nurses aides, I had my deputy minister expedite an employer survey to indicate to the province what their current staffing structures are as of today and to give us their best projection on what those staffing patterns and needs should be five years out so that we can begin almost immediately to tailor educational programs to ensure the future of various trained disciplines in the nursing profession.

Mr. Cheema: Madam Deputy Speaker, we are talking about 2,400 very experienced health care professionals. Their future is in grave danger and we are simply asking a question.

Will the minister tell this House where the LPNs who are currently practising or who are about to complete their training will get a job in Manitoba in their own profession?

Mr. Orchard: Madam Deputy Speaker, of course I cannot, and that is not unusual, because ministers of health do not hire anybody to work in the health care field with the exception of staff directly employed by the ministry of Health. The responsibility of hiring and staffing patterns in our institutions, which is the question my honourable friend is no doubt posing, is the responsibility of administrators within the health care system. They have budgets under which they are required to deliver care, and within those budgets they determine the staffing patterns appropriate to assure that kind of patient care delivery.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I cannot tell my honourable friend what the institutions will hire in terms of new graduates from LPN no more than I can from RN or BN programs.

Mr. Cheema: Madam Deputy Speaker, can the minister at least guarantee that all LPNs will be provided with the training and education they need to practise the LPN profession in Manitoba?

It is a very simple question. The government set the policy. They are providing the funding. They should have the answer.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am not sure which direction my honourable friend was attempting to point Liberal policy.

Let me indicate to my honourable friend some of the background that I had shared with me in attempting to find out whether there was depth to the rumours surrounding, for instance, St. Boniface school of LPN nursing.

I asked the very obvious question: What has been the employment rate of graduates from that course over the last three graduating classes? I am disappointed to indicate to you and to my honourable friend that the percentage of employment has been decreasing to less than something like 19 percent in the last graduating class, only one of those individuals receiving full-time employment.

That is why we initiated a survey of current staffing patterns and disciplines with a projection into the future, so we can provide those kinds of answers my honourable friend wants for those entering the nursing profession.

Consumer Warning Odometer Rollbacks

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Deputy Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

On Friday, the RCMP seized six cars from a Winnipeg used-car lot on suspicion of odometer rollbacks. Today the RCMP are charging the owner with six charges of fraud under Section 380, subsection 1 of the Criminal Code and six counts under the Weights and Measures Act for rolling back odometers.

Since this practice may well be widespread elsewhere, I want to ask the minister if she has issued a consumer warning to alert the public.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Deputy Speaker, this issue has just been brought to my attention. I will be discussing it with my staff later this afternoon.

Business Practices Act Restitution

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Deputy Speaker, has the minister used provisions of The Business Practices Act to see if restitution can be obtained for anyone who has been a victim of such transactions since January 1, since this was made public last Friday?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Deputy Speaker, as I indicated earlier, this matter had just been brought to my attention today. We have received no complaints across my desk, have been informed of this through the media and, as I indicated, we will be discussing it this afternoon.

Consumer Protection Amendment Act Government Support

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Deputy Speaker, will this government support a private members' bill putting forward amendment to The Consumer Protection Act, since other provinces seem to have such legislation?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Deputy Speaker, as I indicated, I received no formal complaints on this issue. It has been brought to our attention today, and I will be discussing it with my staff later this afternoon.

GATT Supply Management Proposal

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Agriculture a question regarding the issue of supply management once again.

As the Deputy Speaker well knows and most of the members know, concern is deepening on this issue. My Leader has asked the Premier (Mr. Filmon), who gave no satisfactory answers on this issue on Friday. We have asked the Minister of Agriculture why he has refused to support the supply management system, the orderly market system in this country. He has refused to provide the unequivocal support, even though 11 percent of our production in this province is generated from the supply managed producers in this province.

I want to ask the minister: Since he refused to sign a document supporting this, will the minister admit that the tariffication proposal that is currently before GATT will, in fact, result in the loss of 80 percent of our production in the supply managed commodities and as high as 95 percent of our supply managed producers as a result of this being passed? Will he admit and is he prepared to sacrifice—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

* (1430)

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Deputy Speaker, on the question of supply management, I want to again, for about the fourteenth time, tell the member across the way: We unequivocally support all our farmers, including our supply management producers, our grains and oilseed producers, our red-meat producers. We are at a very, very critical stage in the history of agriculture in this province and western Canada with regard to a trade deal which will allow us to have market access for the 60 percent of the products that we have to export from this province to other consumers in the world.

We continue to support this dual-track, balanced Canadian position that was basically formulated by producers and governments right across this country, with everybody around the table. It was agreed to some two years ago, and we have continued to support that position. Without any weakening at all, we continue to support all our producers in this province and all producers across this country.

Mr. Plohman: Madam Deputy Speaker, in view of the fact that we have an existing situation—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Does the honourable member have a question?

Mr. Plohman: Yes, I do. I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Will the honourable member for Dauphin please put his question now.

Mr. Plohman: Yes, I would, Madam Deputy Speaker.

In view of the fact that we have some 1,500 producers who are dependent on this system at the present time, how can this minister say that his is a balanced position when, in fact, it is jeopardizing those 1,500 producers in this province? How is there any balance in the—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Deputy Speaker, all members of supply management national associations were at the table when the balanced Canadian position was negotiated, and they agreed to it completely and wholeheartedly. The members of those national associations and the provincial boards continue to say that they do support the dual-track, balanced approach for the Canadian position at the GATT table.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The time for Question Period has expired.

Nonpolitical Statements

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Madam Deputy Speaker, could I have leave for a nonpolitical statement?

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

Mr. Cheema: Madam Deputy Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise in this House to recognize

all participants in the Winter Olympics from Manitoba, namely, Shawn Ireland and Susan Auch in the area of speed skating; Cal Langford and Greg Haydenluck, Lorna Sasseville in the area of cross-country skiing; and Jacqueline Petr, who displayed the true Olympic spirit with her performance in ice dancing after sustaining a 22-stitch cut in her calf; Curt Giles and Trevor Kidd, who won the first silver medal in hockey.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would ask all members in this House to join with me in sending special thanks to the coaches, organizers, competitors and, above all, the families who have acted as good will ambassadors for Manitoba and Canada. In all respects, each one is a winner, and we are very proud of them.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Madam Deputy Speaker, I wonder if I might have leave of the House for a nonpolitical statement.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Health have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Leave? Leave has been granted.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that all members in this House will want to join with me, firstly, in congratulating the North foursome who won the mixed curling championship and will represent Manitoba in Grande Prairie this year.

I know, secondly, that all members in the House will want to join in congratulating the fine community of Manitou in hosting the mixed curling playdowns in Manitoba. The event was carried off flawlessly with the work of many, many dedicated volunteers in the community of Manitou, supported I might say, with an addition to the curling rink, which was supported by the Community Places Program and provided additional space for hosting of that event.

I think it is appropriate that we also congratulate Weston's for their foresight in sponsoring that very important mixed curling championship event in the province of Manitoba. Again, our congratulations to the North rink in achieving success at that mixed bonspiel.

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): 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? Leave? Leave has been granted.

Mr. Cliff Evans: Madam Deputy Speaker, we too on this side of the House, in accordance with my honourable member, congratulate all the Olympic participants throughout Canada who did their utmost, the coaches and such. The fact that we had done the best in many, many years with our medals, I think that all members here should congratulate everyone on the Canadian team, the members from Manitoba.

I would also like to extend congratulations from our side of the House to the mixed championship curling team, also the junior ladies curling team who this past weekend won its championship to represent Manitoba.

We here on this side of the House wish to offer our congratulations to all, in curling, and Olympians.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, would you call second readings of the bills as listed on the Order Paper, to be followed by debate on second readings in the order as shown on the Order Paper.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Second Readings: Bills 6, 9, 21, 22, 34, 42, 45, 46 and 47.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 6—The Denturists Amendment Act

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I move, seconded by the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Bill 6, The Denturists Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les denturologistes, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Orchard: Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to briefly indicate to all honourable members that this act deserves their support. A bit of background: The current legislation under the Statutes of Manitoba D35, The Denturists Act and Manitoba Regulation 229/85 under The Denturists Act make the Minister of Health responsible for the licensing and disciplining of members of the Denturist Association.

That has caused some difficulty internally with the denturists of Manitoba, and they asked some two years ago to have that authority vested in the association. This legislation proposes that the

Minister of Health be removed from both the process of licensing and disciplining denturists. That gives The Denturists Act similar operational procedures as The Dental Association Act and will allow the denturist board to licence and discipline its members.

These changes have been discussed with the Denturist Association and the Manitoba Dental Association, and both associations have agreed that they will support these legislative changes.

I can assure the House that the public interest will be protected in this change because government still retains appointments to the disciplinary boards of the Manitoba Denturist Association so that citizen representation is part and parcel of the amendments that will allow the denturists to self-discipline and license.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): I move, seconded by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), that debate on Bill 6 be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 9—The Economic Innovation and Technology Council Act

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Education and Training (Mrs. Vodrey), that Bill 9, The Economic Innovation and Technology Council Act; Loi sur le Conseil de l'innovation économique et de la technologie, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

*(1440)

Mr. Filmon: Madam Deputy Speaker, since the election of this government in 1988, we have been working to make Manitoba strong. Bill 9, The Economic Innovation and Technology Council Act, plays a very important role in our government's planning to build a strong Manitoba economy. Manitobans want a strong economy. They want an economy that provides the economic opportunities they desire for themselves and their families. Manitobans want an economy that supports the vital health, education and family services we rely upon.

The national recession, coupled with the legacy of high taxes and huge deficits left by past NDP governments, has made the task of rebuilding our economy even more difficult. Every province in this

country has been hit and hit hard by the recession. Comments of Premiers at the recent First Ministers' Conference on the economy served to confirm that fact. Premiers of every political stripe are now beginning to deal with the reality of their growing government spending, high taxes and higher deficits.

Madam Deputy Speaker, today those Premiers of all political stripes, those governments are talking about solutions that our government began to put in action back in 1988. To build a strong Manitoba and Canadian economy, we must control government spending. High government spending means higher taxes and higher deficits, 10 times out of 10. Increased taxes and deficits cost Manitobans and Canadians jobs.

We have made the difficult decisions necessary to lay a solid foundation for growth. We are working hard to create and maintain the positive climate that will attract investment and encourage Manitoba businesses to expand. That approach is working. Since 1988, our government has participated through loans or grants in business relocations and expansions that will create over 5,000 new jobs when all the projects reach completion. In addition, Manitoba is being identified across Canada and throughout the world as a good place in which to invest, to live and to work. I have led several trade and investment missions to a wide variety of destinations and, let me assure you, the world wants what Manitoba has to offer.

We have also begun to put in place a new structure for economic development in Manitoba. Government's traditional departmental approach must become more flexible. Key sectors must be involved: Education and Training, Natural Resources, Environment, and Health, in addition to the more traditional Departments of Finance and Industry, Trade and Tourism.

By focusing the policy development process in establishing a new organizational structure, we will be able to continue our emphasis on government's fiscal responsibilities through public sector reform and develop initiatives crucial to getting the economy growing. In November, we announced the creation of a new committee of cabinet responsible for Economic Development. The Economic Development Board will serve as a key focal point of our government's efforts to encourage entrepreneurship, economic growth and job creation.

That board will co-ordinate economic initiatives across government departments. It will create and maintain a positive climate for business and investment. It will promote economic linkages between industrial sectors in Manitoba. It will promote Manitoba's advantages worldwide. The Economic Development Board will also play a lead role with various agencies of government, including cabinet committees, to ensure economic development opportunities within government are identified and acted upon now.

The board will also, of course, ensure that the Crown Corporation Council is utilized to determine the best use of Crown corporations in stimulating economic growth. That board will liaise with the Round Table on Environment and Economy to ensure our commitment to economic development in harmony with the environment is maintained. That board of course will interface with the Treasury Board to prioritize government's economic support expenditures, investments and policies.

The Economic Development Board will be supported by the second element of our new structure, the Economic Development Secretariat. The third and final piece of this new structure is the Economic Innovation and Technology Council. During the 1990 election campaign I said that innovation would be a cornerstone of the economic framework for Manitoba in this decade.

Indeed, most industrialized countries have come to the conclusion that innovation and investment in technology are key components for improving their competitive position. Similarly, Manitoba's economic future is directly related to the province's ability to adapt, create and apply new ideas to create goods and services that are competitive in international markets.

The Economic Innovation and Technology Council will strengthen the working relationship between government and the private sector by providing a forum for consultation and dialogue. The council will have the ability to identify the needs of industry and make recommendations for a long-term strategy to help Manitoba businesses take advantage of developing technologies.

A new \$10-million fund and the entrepreneurial spirit of Manitobans will drive the new council. The fund, financed by proceeds from the sale of Manitoba Data Services, will be used to provide loans, grants and other financial incentives for

research, economic restructuring and commercial technology transfer.

The Economic Innovation and Technology Council has been created through a restructuring of the Manitoba Research Council. The technical operation of the Manitoba Research Council will continue without interruption under a division of the new council. However, to increase effectiveness and broaden the range of Manitoba businesses and economic opportunities, this new organization has been given wider representation and expertise bases, as well as a wider scope than the former Manitoba Research Council.

As I said earlier, a \$10 million fund will support this initiative, but it will be driven by Manitobans. Only a few weeks ago, on January 15, I announced the appointment of 29 individuals who will spearhead the activities of the Economic Innovation and Technology Council. They are outstanding examples of our province's greatest resource, Manitobans themselves. These men and women are innovators. It is appropriate that they be on this new council which will highlight new ideas and new directions.

The 29 council members appointed represent the academic, business, labour and research sectors of our province. Russ Hood, who is vice-president of UMA Engineering Ltd., will chair the Economic Innovation and Technology Council. Mr. Hood's experience and demonstrated ability as the chair of the Manitoba Research Council will be a valuable asset in co-ordinating a rapid start on the work ahead of these special Manitobans.

The council will draw upon the experience, ideas and strengths of Manitobans by promoting dialogue, co-operation and consultation between the major stakeholders in our economy: government, business, labour, the research community and the general public. By widening our scope and identifying new economic growth opportunities, we will harness these new ideas and put them to work for Manitobans.

The council has begun consultation with Manitobans. It has also initiated the preparation and development of the council's operation and mandate. The council will immediately begin to look at all phases of development and commercialization, including government institutions and the allocation of government resources. Their findings will form the basis of

long-term recommendations aimed at taking advantage of developing technologies.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Economic Innovation and Technology Council gives Manitobans an important opportunity to play key roles in building a strong economy. I have said many times that government alone cannot generate real economic growth. Our government has worked hard to create a positive climate for investment and economic development, but it is Manitoba's entrepreneurs and innovators who create real jobs and real growth. The Economic Innovation and Technology Council will bring together all groups with a stake in a stronger economy, from the business that develops the technology to the employee who ultimately benefits from the new jobs that technology helps create.

I believe Manitoba can excel. We have the natural advantages—a central location, a skilled work force, and a low-cost, high-quality lifestyle—that have many companies and entrepreneurs from other provinces and other countries giving Manitoba careful consideration, and above all, we have our greatest strength, Manitobans themselves.

Manitobans have a tradition of working together in good times and in bad. Our undeniable spirit and determination have helped us endure the most difficult circumstances encountered in our past. They are the solid foundation on which we have built our lives in our province, and they are the keystone to a bright and secure future. Manitobans have the will and the desire to succeed. Our government will stand with them to build a strong Manitoba. Each of us, as elected representatives of the Manitoba people, have the duty, the responsibility and the honour to listen and to lead.

I am giving every member of the House the opportunity to do that today. I ask all members of this Legislative Assembly to join with us, stand alongside your fellow Manitobans, help to build a strong Manitoba for ourselves and for our children. I urge all members of this House to join in support of Bill 9, The Economic Innovation and Technology Council Act.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Filn Flon): Madam Deputy Speaker, although it is perhaps a little unusual, I would like to respond, I guess, to the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) invitation, first of all, to become a part of

this—at least to add our voice to the purpose of this bill, and I would like to do that.

I listened with interest to the First Minister's words, and it struck me that I have heard those words from this minister on many occasions. The unfortunate fact of the matter is, however, that this government's words seldom, if ever, match its actions.

* (1450)

Madam Deputy Speaker, we just have to think about the bill introduced in 1989 by the Minister of Environment with respect to The Waste Reduction and Protection Act. The government's commitment to that bill has been thoroughly wanting. We only have to think about the Chamber of Commerce's recent disclosure and comments with respect to the government's Sustainable Development Initiative. This government talks and talks and talks, but when it comes down to actually doing something, this government seldom gets off the mark.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to be very clear, just so the First Minister knows that no one is being buffaloes by this latest initiative. In the 1989 Estimates book, this government produced a set of Estimates for the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism which included \$500,000 which it set aside for a Manitoba Innovations Council—\$500,000.

Madam Deputy Speaker, of course we have now seen the refinement of that concept and the Premier's announcement to creation of an Economic Innovation and Technology Council. We would assume, if you were listening to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), that the establishment of this new council would have meant a significant increase in budget, a significant increase in mandate and role, a further commitment to research and development initiative to technology commercialization in the province of Manitoba.

The fact of the matter is, Madam Deputy Speaker, there will be no new money at all in this proposal. The First Minister (Mr. Filmon) wants to say \$10 million. The creation of a \$10-million fund will never, first of all, be spent in three years. The current Manitoba Research Council received, prior to cutbacks by this government, approximately \$2.7 million per year.

Madam Deputy Speaker, unless the First Minister is telling this House that he is going to add \$10 million every year to this new Economic and Innovations Council, then the government is actually reducing its commitment once again for the

opportunities of businesses, the research community, the university community, to contribute to our economic development.

Madam Deputy Speaker, before the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) hobbles off on his crutches, he should also know that not only did the government introduce a new budget line for the Manitoba Innovations Council, and the same page in the same department, they reduced at the same time the Manitoba Research Council's grant by \$700,000. The net effect was a reduction in commitment by this government to innovation and technology commercialization by \$200,000 in the first year.

Madam Deputy Speaker, unless the First Minister is prepared to stand up right now and put on record that the \$10 million commitment he spoke of will be an annual commitment, this is actually a reduction in commitment to research and development in the province of Manitoba.

Madam Deputy Speaker, but even of perhaps more concern—we are not expecting this particular Tory government to be any different than Tory governments elsewhere in the world—their commitment on paper to research and development is extremely good. Their commitment in practice is zero. Just like the Prime Minister of this country, just like Mr. Mulroney, Mr. Filmon's proposal will not enhance research and development in the province of Manitoba at all.

I ask the First Minister (Mr. Filmon): Where are the programs like the technology commercialization program? Where are the other initiatives from this government which would lend some credence to the words that the First Minister put on record today? They have done nothing, nothing when it comes to research and development except cut the resources available to agencies that are actually doing the research, whether it is our universities or groups like the Manitoba Research Council— [interjection] Well, the First Minister says, no way. It is in his own Estimates book. It is in his own budget, tabled in this House back in March of 1981, or April. I cannot remember which now.

Madam Deputy Speaker, once again, we have to look at the structure of this council. We have to look at the structure of this council and determine whether in fact it will ever be able to meet its mandate. I have no quarrel with the 29 individuals who are appointed to this council. As individuals, they represent much of what is good in our province:

the innovative, the creative, the successful, the dynamic. I have looked over the list of the individuals, and I can find no fault with the names that have been chosen for this council.

Is the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) going to tell this House that a council of 29, that may expand at some future date, is going to be a decision-making body, the kind of decision-making body that is going to select the winner that is going to participate with the university research institutions, private, nonprofit groups, labour, others who have innovative ideas to contribute? Madam Deputy Speaker, this was not set up to succeed. It is window-dressing of the worst sort. It is a continuation of government as PR release, government as public relations effort, just as the Chamber of Commerce said, just as we have said on many occasions when we talked about the WRAP proposals, when we talked about the real commitment to The Ozone Depleting Substance Act.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the bottom line for the people of Manitoba is that Bill 9 means no substantive improvement at all. Unless the government devises its current approach to the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, to economic development in the province, unless it means that there is going to be additional financial commitment, Bill 9 will be nothing more than another bunch of words put on paper by the First Minister and his public relations crew to make Manitobans believe that there is action where there is actually no action.

Madam Deputy Speaker, just look at the principles that the First Minister enunciated as being the rule of this new council. The Economic Innovation and Technology Council is supposed to do these five things. First, the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) says it is going to provide a forum for consultation and dialogue. We all know that innovation and change happen in areas sometimes where it is least expected. This forum, the creation of this body, is not a necessary tool to take advantage of change in our economy, change in manufacturing technology, changes that are occurring in terms of research and development that is ongoing at our universities in particular. The Manitoba Research Council was doing the same kind of thing.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to talk to the First Minister about opportunities that this government has missed, opportunities that the government has

missed that would have provided a much greater impetus, particularly to the manufacturing sector, had they been willing to take a stand at the time.

Madam Deputy Speaker, let us first of all talk about the National Research Council building on Ellice. When the federal government first planned that building, it was to support the introduction, the creation of manufacturing technology for the province of Manitoba. The current First Minister (Mr. Filmon), who was then in opposition, was virtually silent on Manitoba's need to have that kind of institution to support our manufacturing base.

The federal government, in 1984, when the Conservative government was elected, what did they do to the plans for that building? Instead of having it directed at developing manufacturing technology, which is sorely needed in the province, they turned it again into a PR exercise. They solicited a number of private sector companies, offered them inexpensive or free rent in the building if they would at least put up storefront operations and say they were conducting primary research.

* (1500)

Madam Deputy Speaker, very little constructiveness has come about as a result of a spending of some \$100 million of taxpayers' money on a building, the frittering away of an opportunity to secure an innovative organization, agency to create manufacturing technology, enhance manufacturing technology in the province of Manitoba.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the federal government and perhaps the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) and some of his ministers have realized that that restructuring of the National Research Centre has not worked. They are now in the process of evicting the tenants who are already there. They are talking about now a new format, the new role for that particular building, which is going to focus a little more on some health-related technology. Maybe that will be good, but the fact of the matter is that the original intent of that building, the intention to have researchers here to review, consider, expand and create new opportunities in manufacturing technology, would have fit so well with our own economy.

Unfortunately, we did not get the centre as it was originally envisaged. Unfortunately, since that time and the last three years in particular, we have seen really the decimation of the manufacturing sector in the province. The Conservative governments, both

federally and provincially, were essentially silent as all of that happened. We find it a little ironic and perhaps a little sad that today we have the introduction for second reading of The Economic Innovation and Technology Council Act perhaps several years, perhaps three years, four years too late to really salvage Manitoba's manufacturing sector.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that the government and the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) are going to use every opportunity to promote the introduction of this act as some monumental achievement in terms of restructuring Manitoba's economy. I just want it to be on the record that this group—an interesting group of individuals have been appointed—their contribution at this point is going to be, in my opinion, ineffective for two fundamental reasons.

It is going to be ineffective because this government has already missed the boat. They have watched the manufacturing sector be decimated—[interjection] Ten out of 10, as my colleague from Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) suggests.

This government has stood idly by as our investment in manufacturing has fallen, as the manufacturing shipments have sunk to unacceptable levels. As of the end of November, Manitoba was 10 out of 10 in the value of manufacturing shipments compared to 1990, so what good is this latest PR exercise?

We need some concrete action, and we need some action now. I do not care how quickly this council formulates itself, how quickly it reviews its mandate internally, how quickly it decides on a course of action, how quickly it begins to review innovative proposals that come before it, it is going to be three years too late. Every day, every month, every year that ticks by, Manitoba's economy is going to get further and further behind.

I believe that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) believes that this PR exercise is necessary at this time because the government is unwilling to make any other kind of major commitment.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the government's preferred path to supporting the economy appears to be twofold: Keep your hands firmly tied behind your back, and sell off whatever assets you can and call it progress.

I just want to talk for a minute about innovation. When Manitoba Data Services was created in the Province of Manitoba, it was one of the most innovative ideas across the country. Let us look at what the government has done. It is now saying that it is taking \$10 million out of the sale of MDS to create that economic innovations council fund.

First of all, again unless we get some commitment from the government, we know that a three-year commitment to the Manitoba Research Council at a previous funding level would have meant more than \$10 million being spent on technology innovation. We want to see whether in fact the government's commitment is not another well-disguised, in this case, cut in innovations research, which I predict it is going to be; that is the intent.

What is more is that the government, in its wisdom, sold the Manitoba Data Services, a company which provided approximately \$3 million in profit to the government of Manitoba on an annual basis. They have turned that asset, creating wealth for the province, into a \$10-million fund which, with all due respect, is likely to be frittered away by the innovations council in a very short period of time.

Madam Deputy Speaker, if the government had intended to create something worthwhile, something that was to have an impact on our ability to compete, I think they could have done a better job.

I suppose others will have their time to comment on this bill. Whether in fact this is worthy of support, it seems to me, is an open question right now. Whether in fact it will live up to its very limited mandate I think is an answer that needs still to be debated further. The mandate that it has been given is extremely weak, extremely wishy-washy; and, of course, the format, as I said, the structure of the council itself, I do not think lends itself to responsible, responsive decision making.

Although, of course, if the government proceeds with the legislation, we will have to wait the test of time, obviously, to see whether we can say that this council has been any more responsive than the Manitoba Research Council, than other programs supported and directed by the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, which in my view has been very effective.

We see the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) and other ministers referring to the Health Industry Initiative, which again was a program that was created by the

previous government and which has been quite successful in many respects.

I believe that the government has decided to introduce this at this time to cover up some other fundamental and I think quite serious errors in judgment, in logic, in reasoning that have been put forward by ministers of the Crown over the past several months.

We heard today the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) criticize members on this side for their role in the province's economy as members of the previous government. As I noted earlier, this government has had a chance to illustrate in a very tangible way its commitment to research and development, and we have seen financial cutbacks.

We have also seen the government willing to lay the blame of its current economic crisis and the crisis the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) referenced today, and that is the continuing decline in revenues to the province from income tax and corporate income tax—serious problems—and the government still wants to blame the previous government.

The Minister of Finance said today that the problem was the payroll tax. The Minister of Finance has tabled four budgets. This government has not eliminated the payroll tax for the vast majority of small businesses, medium-sized businesses who were eligible to pay a payroll tax. Just so the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) does not continue to put falsehoods on the record, let us say—

Point of Order

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): I have not put falsehoods on the record. I have not said anything. He is pointing his finger at me and falsely accusing me of putting falsehoods on the record. I would ask him for an apology, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Downey) does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over facts.

* * *

Mr. Storle: Just so that the Minister of Northern Affairs, Energy and Mines does not misconstrue what I have said, from his seat the Minister of Energy and Mines said that they reduced the payroll tax for

the majority of small businesses in the province. That is clearly wrong.

When the payroll tax was introduced, two-thirds of Manitoba businesses did not apply to begin with. Subsequent to that, Madam Deputy Speaker, there were some changes which reduced the number of businesses that were affected by the payroll tax by approximately 30 percent. This government made some additional small changes which reduced the payroll liability to a number of others.

* (1510)

I do not even want to debate how many businesses remained on the payroll tax after this government's four budgets. If they believed that this was such a detriment, would they not have acted? Are they so stupid, so incompetent that they cannot decide what is important to do? Clearly, all of what we have heard from members opposite on payroll taxes is either inconsistent or irrelevant as far as they are concerned or they would have done something about it.

I want also put on the record the findings of an independent group with respect to business costs in the province of Manitoba. Canadian Federation of Independent Business, which is certainly no political supporter necessarily of New Democrats, has done its own study on the taxation question. In a research bulletin released by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business entitled "Taxing Ourselves to Death," what did they find about the comparison between Manitoba and other jurisdictions of the United States? Let me read from their document, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Their analysis shows—and I hope members are listening and jotting this down for future reference because we would not want to get these facts get lost in some future debate—that payroll taxes are higher in the U.S. than in Manitoba. Let me read that again. Payroll taxes are higher in the U.S. than in Manitoba. No, let me read that again. Payroll taxes are higher in the U.S. than they are in Manitoba. I think I would have to read it five times for the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) before he would really understand it. This is due to the Manitoba payroll tax exemption—listen to this, Madam Deputy Speaker—for small firms and the high payroll tax at the federal level in the U.S. The corporate income taxes are similar in Manitoba, Minnesota and North Dakota, while the absence of any corporate income tax at the state level in South

Dakota reduces the burden of this tax for small businesses.

Finally, the provincial sales tax systems are very similar among these four regions. Taxes that are within the purview of the provincial government are not out of line. What does this study conclude? The study concludes that the principal guilty party, if there is one, is the municipal level of government, which has tax levels as much as 50 and 100 percent higher than a similar jurisdiction of the United States.

I relate this only because it is important if we are going to really, as the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) suggested we do, become less partisan and more constructive. If we are going to deal with the problems that confront small business and medium-size business in this province, or the problems of large business for that matter, we have to deal from a basis of fact. We cannot continue to say this is the enemy or that is the enemy when facts clearly refute that position. This government is as guilty of that kind of behaviour as anyone.

The press releases from the First Minister and bills like The Economic Innovation and Technology Council Act, the restructuring of the cabinet committees, the formation of the Economic Development Board of Cabinet, the Northern Economic Development Commission by the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) go absolutely nowhere in terms of solving any of the problems that face us. They are PR exercises in the worst sense of the word. They do nothing to inform. They are not really designed to initiate, Madam Deputy Speaker. They are designed to obfuscate and procrastinate, and not to resolve the fundamental problems that we face. That is what is wrong with this particular act, not that it could not serve a purpose under certain circumstances, not that there is anything wrong with the individuals who have been appointed, but that it does not solve the fundamental problems, the very real problems that our small businesses, our businesses face today.

It is not going to be able, because of the structure of that council, to take ideas that are out there today and turn them into opportunities in six months or a year, Madam Deputy Speaker. This council will not be up and operating, will not be providing support, research support directly or indirectly for months at least. That is a tragedy because there are 57,000 people unemployed today, the highest level ever in the history of this province. We have record numbers of bankruptcies. We have businesses

closing and moving to the United States. The only response of this government is another PR exercise. That in itself is a tragedy.

For the 57,000 people who are unemployed and hoping for opportunity, that is not good enough. For the small business and the businesses today who are closing their doors, not because they are bankrupt but because they are not making any money and they do not foresee the opportunity to make money, for them, closing their doors, it is a tragedy. Madam Deputy Speaker, we have been asking this government for months, years now, certainly for the last two and a half years, to come up with an economic strategy that made sense, to do something—[interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) is right; they have been listening. It appears that they will continue to listen and not act, and that is unfortunate. If you are a small businessman waiting for some help, if you are someone at the university with a great idea, with an opportunity and waiting for the government to get outside and come to your aid, then that is also a tragedy.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that there are other members who want to speak on the bill. I am prepared to conclude my remarks, but I urge all members of this House, including members opposite, to review what this bill is really intended to do. If the government really believes that this council has a role to play, perhaps not in the short term but in the medium and long term, then I ask them to make the financial commitment to the fund that will signify that commitment, that a \$10-million fund, which if the fund is not fully committed in three years, will actually have been a reduction to the commitment to research and technology commercialization. Then the people of Manitoba will have been misled and our time will have been wasted.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Madam Deputy Speaker, I listened with interest to the remarks of the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), which I believe he opened by stating that he was going to do a nonpartisan discussion in support of this particular bill. I am waiting with some interest to hear his partisan speeches.

I am going to make a few remarks on this. I am going to be the only speaker for our party, and I am going to ask the House to pass this bill today.

I share some of the concerns which have been expressed by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), and I want to frame them. I do not want to spend a whole lot of time talking about what is wrong with what we are doing right now. I want to suggest that we get on with doing something right.

There is a problem with the way this particular bill is structured. I am going to talk about that in some detail in committee, but I want to step back and just talk a little bit about what we are trying to accomplish here.

We have an economy that is very, very fragile and very risky. We know from research, which has been conducted exhaustively and not in this last year but in this last decade or two, that if you want to modernize your economy, if you want to be competitive in the global economy which is upon us now, you have to invest heavily in research and development, so heavily that they are talking about investments in the order of 2.5 percent to 3 percent of your gross national product. In this province that would be an investment in excess of the total budget of the Family Services department. It would be an investment between \$650 million and \$700 million.

Now that investment level, it has never been suggested that government do all of that. In some countries of the world, the government plays a very small role. In the U.S., the government directly influences the R & D expenditures in that country; they directly contribute about 50 percent.

* (1520)

One of the things that we know in this province is that private-sector investment, because of the relatively small base and the relative fragility of this economy, follows public-sector investment. We are currently investing in research and development, if you squeeze the figures as hard as you can, at about one-third the level we should be. So an initiative which comes along which says that we are going to focus our intention on investing—and I think I liked one of the lines here in this bill, Section (c) of the Objects. It says, working to bring about a substantial shift in the Manitoba economy towards an economy based more upon innovation and technology.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe we have to make that shift. I believe if we are to survive, if we are not to shrink any further, if we are to grow in this decade and into the year 2000, that we have to make exactly that shift. I think that what is stated

here in the objectives of this council is precisely right.

I note with some interest that the same observation was made back in the late '70s and early '80s. There was an attempt, through the early '80s, to build exactly that kind of base here in Manitoba with the National Research building, with the centre for microtech, with the centre for transportation. The intention was to build as large a critical mass of researchers and research activities as we possibly could in this province, because that is the base upon which wealth is going to be built.

I note also with some interest a meeting I had a couple of weeks ago with some people from the telecommunications research group in Alberta, which are struggling with this same issue: How do you get up to a size where you can truly have the base of research, the base of resources, to be effective?

You know, simply funding a research, or funding somebody to do some pure research in this area, while it may be interesting, is not going to have the kind of ability to shift the economic base of this province unless you build a critical mass in your research community that allows you to truly interact with the global community and truly gives access to local manufacturers to commercialize and to bring into production and to bring ultimately to sale the products of this research.

The problem that I have—I think there are two or three of them that I want to point out, and I am going to attempt to discuss these with the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and hopefully we can see some friendly amendments to this bill to attempt to step back from one of the problems that I fear.

Let me just deal with one small item. The member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) talked about it—a \$10-million commitment versus a \$400-million shortfall is unsubstantial and insignificant. Any money in this area is good and you cannot immediately move from zero to say a \$200-million commitment overnight. You have to build up to it. I think the government has to recognize if it is not to be guilty of the charge of window dressing that we are looking for a very substantial commitment over time, that the government has to divert more and more of its resources into this area if we are going to see the kind of economic growth in this province that we wish to receive.

We have an opportunity; an opportunity is going to be upon us come 1994-1995. As the very heavy investment in the northern part of this province begins to bear fruit we will see an opportunity in the growth in this province. I would hope that the government would increase its investment so that we can get it up somewhere approaching what are considered to be acceptable standards, at least internationally, in this province. I think in a small province one has to exceed international standards if one is going to have the kind of impact that the government hopes to have with the passage of this bill and the institution of this council.

The problem I have is that I think the government has founded the council on very, very shaky ground. I think it is simply going to create the same problem that it is now attempting to undo that was created earlier. It is critical of what the former government did, so it is going to undo that and it is going to rebutton things together in its own form. All of the appointments to this council are by Order-in-Council. All of the major decisions are controlled through Order-in-Council. There is no ownership of this council by the stakeholders and there is no depoliticization of this very important activity.

If I have one recommendation to make to the government, it is that we look for a mechanism that allows the government to step back from this council, that allows the government to truly root it in this province in a way that, should the government change, that the council is able to continue and do its work.

I would ask the government to seek the advice of the opposition, and I say this quite seriously, to ensure that the people who are appointed to that council are the kind of people that this Chamber is going to support. I would go so far as to suggest that we look for ratification of the leaders of this council so that, should the government change, the council not change. You cannot have well-structured research going on to create the kind of change you want to change if you are going to change the people who are doing it every four or eight years. All we are going to have is exactly what the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) was referencing, which is a bone thrown to those people in that community, not a sincere and serious attempt to change the structure of the economy in this province.

We have an opportunity coming. We have an opportunity to build a significant and important research base in this province. We need it desperately. I am going to be asking the government to consider through two or three mechanisms the ways in which they may involve the stakeholders in this community a little more heavily in the operation and ongoing management of this council.

A small item is the way in which the board is structured. I do wonder about a council of 35 people. I wonder about the effectiveness in a body of that size in making the kinds of decisions it has to make and doing the kind of targeting that it has to do. I have serious concerns about the degree to which the cabinet is involved in the operation of this council. I think the fact that all members are appointed for one term and there is no staggering in the appointments means you are going to see tremendous instability in the way in which the council is structured.

I will, as I have said, come forward with the Premier (Mr. Filmon) who is the sponsor of this bill, with some discussions on how it might be restructured that would give it the unanimous support of this Chamber, and I think it is too important for it to have less. With that, I would ask that this bill get passed so that we can get down to the work of getting the council going.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I move, seconded by the honourable member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), that the debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 21—The Provincial Park Lands Amendment Act

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), that Bill 21, The Provincial Park Lands Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les parcs provinciaux), be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Enns: I was testing the mood of the House, Madam Deputy Speaker, to see whether or not the bill might not be passed. There is no incumbency on anybody to explain the bill unless somebody asks for an explanation or waive introduction, but I am

pleased to provide a brief explanation of the bill before us.

Bill 21 is not a complicated or a long piece of legislation. It is a bill that has to do with fairness, and honourable members will recognize it as such. Having said that, I do not suggest that there will not be some concerns expressed. It can, I suppose, be regarded as a taxation bill, if you like, of some kind.

* (1530)

Over the years, it has been drawn to the attention of the provincial government—not just this government, but I know to my predecessors of the New Democratic Party as well—that a situation was developing in our park system that needed to be addressed, namely this, that a growing number of Manitobans chose to make their parks their permanent residence. We have situations that are getting to concern local and municipal governments, particularly up in the LGD of Consol and The Pas area, where the Clearwater Lake Provincial Park is just adjacent to the community of The Pas.

We have a growing number of residents who found it convenient to make the park their principal residence, but in doing so, avoid paying any and all local and municipal taxes. It is simply not fair, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The school division sends in school buses. The provincial government, we find ourselves having to maintain and plow all those roads on a year-round basis, because the Minister of Education and Training (Mrs. Vodrey) would not think highly of her colleague the Minister of parks and Natural Resources if I failed to do that. I think there is even a provision in the education act that commands me to do so. All of this is being done, and there is no legislative means available to collect taxes.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this is a somewhat arbitrary measure. It has been suggested that—in fact, the cabinet of this government passed this measure I believe some two years ago, two summers ago, that because we do not have an assessment process within the park system that an arbitrary figure, and it has been talked of in the area of \$500, be assessed as a fair measure to bring Bill 21, The Park Lands Amendment Act, which makes it possible for the government to bring in some fairness to the taxation regime for those persons who have chosen to make the park their permanent residence.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we have another group of people who in a similar way have managed to avoid taxation—well, it is not really fair to say taxation—fees or charges that we impose under The Park Lands Act, and that is, we have people, and this may be not known to all, particularly in one of our major parks, the Whiteshell Park, we have pockets of private landholdings. I send out invoices to all of the 3,400 or 3,500 cottage owners in the Whiteshell to pay their annual fee rental for the site and for the services that the government provides, whether it is garbage, snowplow and then maintenance.

These people who live on private property within the park do not have to pay it. Most of them have paid it in the past, but growing numbers of them in recent years have found out that if they do not pay it, there is nothing this Minister of Natural Resources or any other Minister of Natural Resources or parks commissioner could do about it. We have had a growing number of people simply taking advantage of it, and our accounts receivable have been growing, or uncollectible have been growing.

Again, it is a question of fairness, Madam Deputy Speaker, that just about half of the people who are in such a situation on private land do not legally have to pay, do pay their service charges that the department sends them, because they acknowledge the fact that they are in fact getting services, and nothing is free in this world.

You can understand that if their neighbours are not paying, that creates a situation that is not satisfactory. While none of us particularly enjoys any new imposition of fees or taxation, we particularly do not like them if we feel that they are not being fairly imposed and fairly dealt with.

Madam Deputy Speaker, these in essence are the two brief amendments that are contained in Bill 21. I would ask honourable members to allow the bill to proceed to committee. There will no doubt be representations made at committee.

I know for instance particularly that there is an association of private landowners within the parks. Their position really has been not so much that they object to the payment of these fees but they would like a greater voice in the types and kinds of services required or demanded by the park users. That is fair ball. We will no doubt expect to hear from some of these people when this bill is at committee stage.

Madam Deputy Speaker, with those few words I commend Bill 21 for the consideration of members opposite in the hope that it is a fairly straightforward bill and that it could be dealt with with some expedition. Thank you.

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that the debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 22—The Lodge Operators and Outfitters Licensing and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Deputy Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst), that Bill 22, The Lodge Operators and Outfitters Licensing and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi sur les permis relatifs aux exploitants de camps de chasse et de pêche et aux pourvoyeurs et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres dispositions législatives), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Enns: Madam Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme) indicates that this initiative sounds like a very good idea. I want to assure him it is.

It is not a complicated bill. What it in essence does though is, it moves the unit within government that has the responsibility of supervising, licensing and dealing with lodges and outfitters in Manitoba from the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism to the Department of Natural Resources.

There has always been a very close relationship between the two departments. It is essentially the Department of Natural Resources that is required to do the background work, the investigation. An application comes in for a tourist lodge or a fly-in fish camp to be located in the province of Manitoba, officials of the Department of Natural Resources are asked in the first instance to respond as to the suitability of the application, availability of the resource. Again, the Department of Natural Resources and its officials have to do the negotiations with other users of the resource if there is a competition involved. Certainly, the

Department of Natural Resources have to be involved in dealing with people of the aboriginal communities if it involves their already having access to the same resource.

It was felt, in the interests of simply making it a little easier to do business with the government, that it would be a suitable move to move this function of government, namely, the unit—it is not a large unit—that looks after the affairs of lodges and outfitters, into the Department of Natural Resources, in essence, Madam Deputy Speaker, a housekeeping change in where the shop is going to be housed from the Trade and Technology department to the Department of Natural Resources.

Again, I commend the bill to the House, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): I move, seconded by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

* (1540)

Bill 34—The Surveys Amendment Act

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme), that Bill 34, The Surveys Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'arpentage), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Let us pass this one just to show how it can be done. Come on, Clif.

Mr. Enns: Madam Deputy Speaker, encouraged as I am by my colleague the Minister of Health, let us see if we cannot set into motion, in the spirit of co-operation, this very substantive bill that is before us, Bill 34.

Madam Deputy Speaker, all that this bill does is, in that very interesting part of my department called Surveys and Mapping, which is the department that produces a host of maps and other information, that it be allowed, by ministerial regulations, from time to time, to make changes to the costs of the products provided. Right now, it has to be done by costly Order-in-Council amendment. Order-in-Council is a costly procedure.

Very often, simply not getting it on a cabinet agenda can mean that a new product line that this division reports does not get priced properly and can mean losses of generation of revenue upwards of a hundred thousand dollars, I am told, to the province of Manitoba, if we do not get the right price.

I would ask honourable members to look at this particular bill and see whether or not we cannot mark progress today by having the bill committed to the committee. I assure the honourable members that, if there is any question with respect to technicalities of the bill, they will have an opportunity to ask them directly of the director, Mr. Leeman, of the branch, who would make himself available at committee stage to answer any questions.

With those few words, Madam Deputy Speaker, I commend Bill 34 to the consideration by honourable members of this Chamber and hope that it will survive the rigorous examination by honourable members opposite and be speedily passed into law. Thank you.

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that the debate be adjourned.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Madam Deputy Speaker, with leave, I would like to address this bill.

I have no objection to it remaining standing in the name of my friend. However, I would like to make my comments today.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member for St. James have leave to now speak to this bill? Agreed? Leave has been granted.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Deputy Speaker, I have listened intently to the minister's comments. I must say I am a long way towards being persuaded that this looks to be in the public interest. I do not say that without reservation, because I have learned from experience that is important, of course, to canvass these matters completely at the committee stage. I acknowledge and appreciate that the minister will be bringing further officials from his department to explain the complete ramifications of this bill.

I recall, I believe, last year or a couple of sessions ago, when we had a similar such bill in this similar area, we did have some strong debate. There were some representations from the surveyors' association, I believe, and there was a problem which, frankly, I would not have caught and I do not

think my friends did, in either of the other two parties, until— [interjection] We are all friends in this House, for the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard)—the association showed up at the committee stage and pointed something out to us. I recall that there were amendments made, so I want to remain cautious and open minded with respect to any indications which would make me think otherwise.

I generally, of course, as an opposition member, like to see things go through the Legislature as opposed to going through by executive authority and Orders-in-Council, because it is not a good way to make legislation without going through the Legislature. However, the regulation-making power is an essential part of a modern parliamentary system. There has to be some way to set things differently in an ongoing fashion, as long as they do not deal with the principles involved in the bill. If they are working out the principles in the bill, then that is one thing, and regulations are appropriate to be made in those circumstances.

By giving to the minister the ability to establish the tariff fees that may be charged for these materials, I do not see a major problem, I must say. I think it is important to give the minister that ability to charge reasonable fees to Manitobans for the services rendered by the department.

I look forward to consideration of this matter at committee stage. I do, of course, appreciate the commitment that there will be experts available to answer all questions and talk about the fees as they have been and also give us some indication of where they are going and what increases are expected.

With those, our party will close comments on this bill. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam Deputy Speaker: As previously agreed, this bill will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans).

Bill 42—The Amusements Amendment Act

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): 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 now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Motion presented.

Mr. Praznik: I can see my colleague the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) is eager, obviously, to debate this particular piece of legislation in due course, whether it be today or on another occasion.

This particular piece of legislation, as members gather, is the repeal of the licensing provisions under The Amusements Act for projectionists. I must say that it is a piece of legislation that I inherited, as I think most Ministers of Labour have done over the years, that represents a licensing scheme for which technology has passed on and made quite redundant.

It seems this piece of legislation comes up or has come up on a regular basis for well over a decade. Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe that it has been brought forward by numerous Ministers of Labour.

This same provision was included, I believe, in statute law amendment last year. The president of the projectionists' union appeared before that committee and raised some concerns. We withdrew it. I had the opportunity to speak with that particular individual and have a discussion about the history of these provisions and the concern that the projectionists' union had.

* (1550)

Just by way of history, Mr. Acting Speaker, this particular legislation was initially introduced several decades ago. It was designed to provide protection for the filmgoing or the movie-house-going public.

Given the nature of the flammable film and carbon-arc lamps that were used in theatres decades ago throughout most of our province—some are still in place in terms of carbon-arc lamps—this legislation was designed to ensure that projectionists operating in the province were very familiar with the carbon-arc lamp technology of the day and the highly flammable film that was being used and that they would know how to operate what were essentially very dangerous materials and equipment.

However, since that time the type of technology used in movie theatres, the type of projection equipment, the type of film have changed dramatically and the risk for which this legislation was intended have long since left.

What I would like to raise for members opposite, just by way of history, is back in the late '70s and early '80s, theatre owners from across, particularly rural Manitoba, complained regularly that given the change in the equipment and the film, they were having great difficulty in securing licensed projectionists in rural Manitoba. The Labour minister of the day, in the late '70s, early '80s, moved to repeal this legislation. This comes to me from information that the head of the projectionists' union gave to me by telephone last winter and there was Mr. MacMaster, who was minister of the day.

The compromise that was worked out interesting enough, that that individual, the president told me that he had worked out with Mr. MacMaster, was that the legislation could be repealed for rural theatres but would remain in place for theatres located, I believe, in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson with the minister having the power to exempt the licensing requirements in Thompson and Brandon.

Now, if one just thinks about this for a moment, what the Legislature of the day said was that it is okay to be in a so-called dangerous situation in rural theatres or in Brandon and Thompson, but not in Winnipeg. Quite frankly, there was no danger or very limited danger because, again, the technology had changed. The licensing provisions remained, by and large, because the projectionists' union in Manitoba felt at that time that they gave them some ability to command better wages or better benefits in their agreements, but their members were by and large restricted to operation in the city of Winnipeg. The Legislature of the day kept in place these provisions essentially for the city of Winnipeg and removed them for the rest of the province.

Well, you cannot just logically maintain a set of standards that are applicable in one jurisdiction in your province while not in the other. Quite frankly, it was an arrangement that I think was worked out to accommodate the projectionists' union. The difficulty, of course, today as we review our legislation, and other Ministers of Labour, through the decade that followed that amendment, have obviously looked at this legislation and have come to the conclusion that there really is no need for today, given the improvements in technology and film. It has become a redundant piece of regulation.

I would just like to refer all honourable members to some of the facts with relation to this licensing provision. The last exam written under this legislation was on December 12, 1988. Prior to

that, we averaged some seven exams in '86, '87 and '88, but we have not had one request for an examination since December of 1988.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I would also like to refer other members in my discussions with the president of the union and recognizing their concern with respect to their qualifications and their negotiating room, we negotiated with the president and with the projectionists' union. The Department of Labour issued to the current members of the projectionists' union who were licensed under that act, some 44 individuals, we issued a certificate of proficiency certifying that they had completed the requirements for registration as a projectionist. I would like to table a copy of the certificate that the department has issued to the 44 individuals who are currently members of that projectionists' union and have licences under the act, so I table that for the information of the House.

I would also, and I am sure the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) will take note of this particular fact—we noted in the collective agreements that the projectionists' union has signed with various theatre companies. I would like to refer to their most recent one, the agreement of Local 299 of the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees and Moving Picture Machine Operators of the United States and Canada. In their most recent collective agreement with Famous Players—and the same provisions are in their agreement with Cineplex Odeon Corporation, I believe—and this particular collective agreement was filed with the Department of Labour on August 17, 1990. In this agreement, the union, which has the right to provide, under the agreement, projectionists for the employer, indicates that, and I would like to quote Section 2.03 where the agreement says: And the union, I quote, hereby agrees to furnish competent projectionists to perform work as required by the employer under the terms of this agreement.

Also, Section 2.05, and I quote: the union agrees to furnish competent and efficient projectionists to perform work as required by the company under the provisions of the collective agreement.

Furthermore, there is no reference in this agreement to the licensing provisions or carrying them out, although they do make reference to ensuring that none of their activities contravene the provisions of The Employment Standards Act. Also, in this agreement, in Article 9.01, the

projectionists agree to provide training for new projectionists coming into the field and working with the employer to ensure that new projectionists are properly trained. Nowhere in these collective agreements—and I am sure the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) will take note of this particular fact—nowhere in these collective agreements does the projectionists' union require or indicate that they will provide licensed projectionists to the employers, only competent projectionists.

The same kind of provision, a very similar provision, was in place in their agreement which they signed—I would have the member for Thompson take note of this fact—in their collective agreement dated 1st of May 1987 with Cineplex Odeon Corporation. The same provision is in the agreement that they would furnish competent projectionists, not licensed projectionists. So it is clear, Mr. Acting Speaker, that the projectionists' union has recognized that the licensing requirements are not really required as they were decades ago when we had very flammable film and we used carbon arc lamp projectors throughout the province. They have recognized that in their collective agreement.

We have worked the union to provide a certificate of proficiency to the current holders of that licensing agreements. It is the position of the government that it is time to update our safety legislation to ensure that it is realistic. As far as the concern that the union president reflected at the committee about their concern about providing qualified people for projectionists, they do not even reference the licensing provisions in their collective agreement. We have provided the certificate of proficiency, and we think that with this particular piece of legislation that provides for no safety whatsoever in rural Manitoba, it is time to update this legislation and bring it into the modern decade and that is why we were asking for this particular appeal.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): I move, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), that the debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 45—The City of Winnipeg Amendment, Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): I move, seconded by the Minister of Government

Services (Mr. Ducharme), that Bill 45, The City of Winnipeg Amendment, Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg, la Loi sur les municipalités et d'autres dispositions législatives, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

* (1600)

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Acting Speaker, Bill 45, before us today, contains legislation which will enable Headingley to withdraw from the City of Winnipeg's boundaries to form a separate rural municipality. Since 1987 the Headingley community has continued to petition the provincial government for secession from the City of Winnipeg. Headingley residents believed that their property taxes are too high, relative to the limited type of municipal services they receive from the City of Winnipeg.

Unlike most suburban residential communities in Winnipeg, Headingley is a semirural community with no municipal sewer or water service, a limited bus service and unpaved roads. The majority of the land area north and south of the Assiniboine River is agricultural. In short, Headingley has more in common with its neighbouring rural municipalities than it does with Winnipeg, in terms of land uses and levels of municipal services available in particular.

This bill, Mr. Acting Speaker, represents the culmination of protracted and contentious deliberations on the future of Headingley. The government's decision to permit Headingley to hold a referendum on secession and its decision to bring forward this bill were not made lightly. In 1986, the Cherniack Commission recognized the problems related to Headingley, and I would like to comment briefly from the Cherniack Commission on page 73. They are referring to the Headingley area.

It says in part—

An Honourable Member: Was Cherniack the elder or the younger?

Mr. Ernst: The younger. The committee is not in a position to provide a specific description of the western boundary at this time—western boundary, in this report, refers to the western boundary of the City of Winnipeg and/or the eastern boundary of Headingley, as the case may be. Again in part, it says, we recommend, however, that an immediate study of the alternatives for precise boundaries and

for Headingley's future municipal status be undertaken and concluded within 12 months.

That was in 1986; today it is six years later. During this period a busy planning statement or development plan should be prepared as the study goes on for the area. One of the main objectives of this plan should be to establish policies and an official land-use plan to safeguard Headingley's future as a predominantly rural environment adjacent to the city. Headingley's residents must be given the opportunity to participate fully in this process and in the decisions that may be taken as a result. That is what the Cherniack Commission said in 1986 with regard to the Headingley area.

In 1987, Mr. Acting Speaker, a study on the viable options for the future governance of Headingley was commissioned by the then Minister of Urban Affairs, now the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), the father of the secession of Headingley. There we have the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) as the captain who launched the ship of independence for Headingley—the captain who launched the ship of independence for the community of Headingley.

Mr. Acting Speaker, a strategy for community improvements was developed and adopted by both levels of government, provincial and municipal governments. The city was given the opportunity to prepare an effective action plan that would articulate the community's future development objectives within the city of Winnipeg. That approach failed.

The province recommended to the city the use of a lower rate of taxation for unserved large lot residential areas such as Headingley. That approach failed. Unfortunately, Mr. Acting Speaker, a workable solution satisfactory to all parties could not be reached, and the Headingley community renewed its request that the government permit a referendum on secession to be held.

Unable to find a satisfactory resolution to Headingley's concerns, the government agreed to let the Headingley community vote on whether it wished to withdraw from Winnipeg to form a rural municipality. Of the persons voting in the November 14, 1991, referendum, 86.7 percent supported secession. Of those voters who are resident in the community, Mr. Acting Speaker, that number rises to 92 percent. This can hardly be called a slim majority. The government will honour the overwhelming wish of the Headingley community to form their own separate municipality.

Mr. Acting Speaker, many have criticized the government's decision to allow Headingley to secede on the grounds that it signals the beginning of the end of Unicity. [interjection]

There is the perception that by permitting Headingley to withdraw from the city of Winnipeg—to begin again, Mr. Acting Speaker—many have criticized the government's decision to allow Headingley to secede on the grounds that it signals the beginning of the end of Unicity. There is the perception that by permitting Headingley to withdraw from the City of Winnipeg, the government is turning back time, and undoing the concept of one unified city. There is concern that a precedent has been set whereby any part of the city which is discontent for one reason or another will in future be able to secede.

Let me assure the House that the government is fully committed to the concept of Unicity. The government does not encourage or support the dismantling of Unicity. In our view, this would be counterproductive. To conclude that because we agreed to Headingley's secession we would therefore permit any other community to become an independent municipality is also an incorrect assumption. In fact, this bill does not allow for the creation of cities at all. This bill allows for rural municipalities, towns and villages only.

Headingley is fundamentally different from most areas in the city of Winnipeg. This community shares little in common with the city of Winnipeg. As I noted earlier, Headingley is a predominately agricultural, semi-rural community. By comparison, most residential areas in Winnipeg have street lighting throughout their neighbourhoods, municipal sewer and water service, paved streets, and are at a closer proximity to cultural, recreational and other services.

Equally important is the fact that under current plans of the City of Winnipeg, Headingley will be unable to access most city services for decades, and only their taxes will increase. Given these differences in character of Headingley, the government believes that neither this community nor the city of Winnipeg is well served by the inclusion of Headingley within the city's jurisdiction.

The cost to Winnipeg to service Headingley would be prohibitively high. The community wishes to retain its semi-rural nature with accompanying levels of taxation by becoming a rural municipality.

There is not enough unifying Headingley with the remainder of Winnipeg to let the status quo remain. Therefore, given the very special circumstances of Headingley, I would suggest to the members that there is no legitimate basis for concluding that allowing Headingley to secede means other communities will be permitted to withdraw one by one over time. I can assure you this is not the government's intention, nor will that happen.

Another concern, which has been expressed repeatedly about the prospect of Headingley seceding, is the notion that the government, in allowing Headingley to establish its own rural municipality, would be encouraging urban sprawl and leap-frog development outside of Winnipeg. There is a fear that rapid uncontrolled suburban residential development will take place in Headingley. That fear is unfounded.

The government is extremely concerned about the management of orderly and timely development within the Winnipeg region. Municipal governments and the provincial government have scarce resources. No one stands to gain from a premature expansion that is not economically viable.

The provincial government has as much at stake as taxpayers and local governments when unplanned premature development occurs. Provincial funding is affected in terms of new schools which may require building, library grants, ambulance grants, hospital costs, roads, and a variety of other costs that land on the shoulders of the provincial government.

There are existing planning controls in place to ensure orderly growth and development. Under this proposed bill, Plan Winnipeg and the city's zoning provisions will remain in force and effect in the new Rural Municipality of Headingley until the community prepares and adopts its own planning provisions. Any changes will require provincial review and approval.

As well, the government established the Winnipeg Region Committee to bring together Winnipeg and surrounding municipalities to address planning and development issues which affect them collectively as a region. The new R.M. of Headingley would now be invited to join the Winnipeg Region Committee.

* (1610)

Let me turn now to the particulars of the bill, Mr. Acting Speaker, and give you a general indication

of the process which we hope to follow, in the coming weeks, with respect to creating the Rural Municipality of Headingley.

The provisions in Bill 45 allow for the creation of the Rural Municipality of Headingley by a regulation to be passed under The Municipal Act. To ensure an orderly transition, the regulation-making authority includes the authority to require the City of Winnipeg to continue services and administrative duties to Headingley for an interim period of time to be specified in the regulation. We must ensure that residents of Headingley are not at risk during the transition process to a new municipality. Similarly, all City of Winnipeg by-laws will remain in effect until the R.M. of Headingley is ready to replace them with its own by-laws.

The regulation establishing Headingley would also specify the date on which the first council of Headingley shall be elected. In order to give the new council of Headingley sufficient time to familiarize itself with the operations of municipal government and the preparation of a 1993 budget, it is necessary to try and hold a civic election in Headingley as early as possible in 1992. This is important so that any arrangements for the delivery of municipal services to Headingley residents will be negotiated and concluded by representatives elected by Headingley residents. The Municipal Board is expected to report its recommendations on the boundary dividing Winnipeg and Headingley within the next few weeks.

With the co-operation of all members of the House in passing this bill, the government intends to pass a regulation to establish Headingley and its boundaries and to schedule the June 1992 civic election. This would leave the R.M. of Headingley approximately six months to prepare itself to assume full responsibility for running its municipality on January 1, 1993. For a host of logistical reasons, it is imperative that division between Winnipeg and Headingley occur at the City of Winnipeg's year-end. Therefore, timely passage of this bill is crucial to completing the process of establishing the R.M. of Headingley for a June 1992 civic election and for finalizing all electoral wards in the city of Winnipeg for the October elections.

The government's decision to allow Headingley to withdraw from Winnipeg was not made without much careful thought to the ramifications for all parties affected by this decision. In the final analysis, after four years of deliberations over the

advantages and disadvantages of Headingley's secession, the government believes it has made the best choice, under the circumstances, for the future governance of Headingley.

In conclusion, I would recommend Bill 45 to all honourable members of this Legislature, for their consideration and adoption. Thank you.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), that debate on Bill 45 be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 46—The Jury Amendment Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), that Bill 46, The Jury Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jurés), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Acting Speaker, the amendments proposed to The Jury Act are intended to protect the jobs of employees who are called to serve on juries. Under the amendments, an employer would be required to grant an employee summoned as a juror a leave of absence with or without pay. The employee would have to be reinstated in his or her position, or the employer would have to provide alternative work of a comparable nature at not less than the pay the employee was receiving at the time of the summons for jury duty.

In addition, the legislation will require that these steps be taken without loss of seniority or benefits up to the time of the leave of absence. A penalty of up to \$5,000, or imprisonment for three months, or both may be imposed onto an employer for violation of these provisions.

The Law Reform Commission of Canada has recommended tighter protection for citizens serving on juries. At present, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec have protective legislative in this field. It is only fair that the Manitoba citizens called to participate in such a fundamental exercise of our justice system as jury service should also have their jobs and benefits protected while they are acting as jurors.

I would like also to thank honourable members for what I think will be their support for this measure. I think it only makes sense that people called to do

their civic duty not have to worry about their job security when they perform their duties as citizens.

I would like to thank the members of the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench for bringing this matter to my attention, and I am pleased today to bring this bill forward and to commend it to the attention of honourable members and to their support. I would hope in future that they would be a little more careful when they are denying members of this side the opportunity to bring these things forward.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I was not going to participate in debate on this bill until the last comments made by the minister. This minister ought not to lecture members of this House in an area, Mr. Acting Speaker, I think the minister should have learned a lesson from. If there is any Legislature in this country that has shown a respect for due process in terms of dealing with bills, it is the Manitoba Legislature.

One only need look at the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), who stood in this House—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member that we should be staying close to the bill, please.

Mr. Ashton: I am responding directly to comments made by the minister in moving the second reading—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. This is not a format for debate. At this time the honourable member is to be speaking to the Bill 46, The Jury Amendment Act.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Acting Speaker, referring to the comments of the minister in introducing for second reading this bill, I want to say that members of this House make no apologies for following the proper procedure in dealing with bills such as this bill which requires certain notice procedures. That has been respected in this House since the time of establishment of Manitoba as a province.

This minister ought not to lecture that members of the opposition, in following the due process—in fact, he should show the respect, particularly as Minister of Justice, in following through the due process in terms of dealing with bills.

Once we were aware of the nature of this bill and the specific nature that was not communicated to members of this House beyond even the most

vague generalities, we indicated we would be debating it on the second reading at the first opportunity. This indeed is the first opportunity. In fact, the press release in regards to this bill went out on February 21. If this government thinks that it has the right to hijack the Legislative process and act at will, they have another thing coming.

* (1620)

This bill, Mr. Acting Speaker, would have been better served by a Justice minister who understood the rules and, instead of attempting to grandstand in this House as he did only a few minutes ago, would actually consult with members of the opposition and obtain the kind of co-operative spirit that is necessary for the proper functioning of this House. In fact, it is because of the substance of this bill and in no way, shape or form the efforts of the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) that our critic will indeed be speaking on this bill, and we will indeed be passing this through to committee.

The bottom line is, we in the opposition will not be intimidated by a government that seems to feel that it can dictate to members of this Legislature how the business of the Legislature will be conducted. We will fight for our rights as an opposition for due process, proper scrutiny of bills and, indeed, we will debate this bill as we do other bills, in the proper process established under our rules. We need no lectures from the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae).

The bottom line is, we will have one more speaker. We will be passing this through to committee, and we will be happy to deal with this matter in committee as expeditiously as possible. As opposition House leader, I have communicated to the minister in charge of House business, the government House leader (Mr. Manness), our willingness to do that with this and other bills passed through to committee.

Indeed, with those few words, I move to our critic and hope that the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) will not waste the time of this Legislature with the type of irrelevant comments we saw on his introduction in terms of this bill for second reading.

Point of Order

Mr. McCrae: I just want to respond to the outburst by—[interjection]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. The honourable Minister of Justice on a point of order.

Mr. McCrae: I just wanted to ask, is it something I said?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): The honourable minister did not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): As indicated by our House leader, I will be the final speaker for our side of the House with respect to this, and out of a spirit of co-operation and generally trying to do its best to assist the citizens of Manitoba, we will be passing this bill into the committee stage this afternoon following my brief comments, many of which will, of course, be referenced from the minister's press release when he attempted to inappropriately, as I understand it, introduce the bill on Friday, dealing with the amendments to The Jury Act, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I did have a chance to review the provisions in the amendments to the bill. We on this side of the House certainly cannot see any substantive reason why we would hold up passage of this particular amendment. It seems to be in line with provision and legislation, that occurs in other provinces in the country. It certainly is in line with the spirit and duty that an individual undertakes when they participate in jury duty. In fact, in all honesty I was quite surprised that such a provision was not already included in our legislation which would permit an individual to return to their position without any penalty and without any damage to their seniority or any other aspect of their employment purposes.

For that purpose we, of course, on this side of the House, in the spirit of the sense of justice that must be injected into the system and which is very important to the functioning of the system, we on this side of the House agree with the provisions in this bill and will do our utmost, subject to some amendments we may want to make in committee or subject to some specific points which we may wish to make with respect to the bill in committee, we will pass the bill certainly subject to the third opposition party.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is the House ready for the question?

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Acting Speaker, what a pleasure it was to listen to my friend's comments and the minister's comments on this piece of legislation, which is a relatively short

piece of legislation, but does have a very important result.

I certainly want to indicate that we support the principle of this legislation, which of course is to grant security to potential jurors that their employment will not be adversely affected by doing their civic duty by serving on a jury so that people can be judged by their peers in what is the engine of the British justice system and that is the jury trials.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I do have some concern with the specifics of this legislation. I want to just highlight for the minister my concern that the penalty amount, which is a maximum of \$5,000, just is not enough. We are talking about discipline, potentially discharge, of someone from their employment for serving on a jury and being absent perhaps days, perhaps weeks in some cases, and the maximum penalty is \$5,000. That is not a very big penalty when you are talking about ending someone's job. Compare that to the Workplace Health and Safety Act, which has a penalty for any discipline which is the result of someone complaining legitimately under that act, the penalty is a maximum of \$15,000. That surely is a minimum for this act. I simply draw that to the minister's attention because I do not think that amount—and it is not a minimum, I stress, it is a maximum—ultimately it is up to the court to decide what the penalty is, but you hamstringing the court at \$5,000 and it just does not provide in my view for that contingency that the penalty should be far greater in some circumstances.

I will be bringing that up at the committee stage and I want to bring that to the minister's attention. I do not think it grants enough leeway to a court and in the worst case scenario which we can all imagine in which a long-term employee does have their employment severed as a result of jury duty, and we would want a penalty far greater than \$5,000.

The only other comment I have is that I wonder if this is not something that should be put under the auspices of the Labour Board. We have many pieces of legislation in this province, mostly in the employment area, and the minister is a former critic for Labour, so I know that he will be familiar with those pieces of legislation which refer employment related matters to the Labour Board for adjudication.

The Labour Board has the advantage that it is a board of expertise in the labour relations area. Secondly, it offers, we hope, a more expedited process with a more informal process as well. It

does not necessitate all of the trappings and all of the pretrial things that one has to go through in a criminal prosecution such as this. Therefore, I wonder if we would not be better advised to put this under the jurisdiction of the Labour Board.

With those two points, Mr. Acting Speaker—and they are important points, because I think they speak to more effectively achieving what the minister seeks to achieve in this legislation, which we support. I am pleased to refer this matter on behalf of our caucus or accede to it going expeditiously to committee stage and look forward to a further debate on those points that I have raised, as well as others, with the minister and his officials.

Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 46. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 47—The Petty Trespasses Amendment Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Bill 47, The Petty Trespasses Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'intrusion), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Acting Speaker, the proposed amendments to The Petty Trespasses Act are intended to strengthen the provisions of trespass protection as they apply to certain types of communally owned property; namely, religious communities such as Hutterite colonies.

The present act has made it possible for police to assist most owners or occupiers of land by responding to trespass situations, but because of the unique nature of some religious communities, they have not been able to use this statute. In other words, sometimes there has been a problem in establishing that a trespass has occurred. This is because technically if a disruptive outsider is on the premises of a religious community with the permission of even one resident, the outsider would

not appear to be trespassing under the law. Consequently, situations have arisen where the police have considered themselves unable to use The Petty Trespasses Act to stop the disruptive activity.

The amendments correct this defect in the legislation. They will make it possible, although not mandatory, for a religious community to authorize one or more of its members to restrict or rescind the invitation under which nonresidents are present on community property. A nonresident asked to leave by such an authorized resident would become a trespasser by refusing to do so.

* (1630)

These ends are accomplished by adding a special definition of owner, tenant, or occupier to refer to those members who have been authorized to act on the community's behalf.

However, there are two important restrictions: First, the amendments apply only to religious communities and not to other forms of communal land holding, such as common areas in a condominium; second, they apply only to nonresidents so they could not be used as a summary way of evicting dissident members of a religious community.

There appears to be no other such legislation in Canada. No other Manitoba legislation is affected, and no new or amended regulations will be needed. However, the amendments are strongly supported by our Hutterite colonies, since they would remove an important irritant in their community life.

We are also proposing an amendment concerning all types of occupants of land to correct an apparent oversight in the current act. It will allow any lawful occupant of land to apprehend a trespasser without a warrant. The present provision refers only to the actual owner of the property.

With those brief comments, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would commend this bill to the attention and support of honourable members.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), that debate be adjourned.

Motion presented.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Acting Speaker, with leave, I have no objection to the bill remaining in the name of my friend. I would seek leave for the House to address the bill at this time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. Leave will be required for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak).

Is there leave for the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak)?

An Honourable Member: Leave.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Leave.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Acting Speaker, I have listened to the minister's comments, and I must say, after reviewing the bill and listening to those comments, that I have grave concerns about this bill, in particular the indications in the bill, Section 1(5) of the bill—[interjection] I will be interested in time to hear my friends' comments from the New Democratic Party.

We all know that various Hutterite colonies have had a lot of difficulty with people, and similarly certain members have had difficulty with the colony, where they have disagreed with how things are being run.

Hutterites pose legally a very difficult problem because: Is it a communal property owned by the community and therefore decisions to be made by the appointed heads, or is it property which is shared between the members such that they can take with them when they leave, or lay claim on their pro rata share of the assets in the land?

This legislation, it seems to me, could potentially be extremely dangerous in deciding that issue if we are saying that the designated head of the colony, whoever that happens to be, or for that matter any other religious community, can say to someone who disagrees that they are a trespasser and essentially get legal authority to evict them. Mr. Acting Speaker, that, I think—and I will be interested to know the genesis of this bill, but we all have seen the difficulties that have taken up time in the courthouse between dissident members of Hutterite colonies and the leadership in the colonies themselves.

Now I know that the minister would not want to take sides in a partisan battle, and that battle, by the way, continues in the Court of Queen's Bench, to my knowledge, in at least one case. I do not think that we would want, by The Petty Trespasses Act, to be saying that the individual who happens to be designated—and I am reading from the section itself: the official of the organization who has been

designated by the by-laws or articles—that that person and that person alone, speaks for the community, in terms of trespass, because the ramification of that is that person, that official, could essentially say to the dissident that they must leave the land, that they would be trespassing, because that—[interjection]

The minister says that cannot happen. I wonder what the genesis for this bill is, and I look forward to hearing it in greater detail because, of course, that is the nature of the applications which have come to court. The Hutterite communities have come to court looking to evict, essentially, kick off the land, the communal property, those individuals who have disagreed. [interjection]

The minister says this is not for eviction. However, if you look at The Trespasses Act, in particular Section 2, let us look at the remedy that is available to the person who alleges trespass legitimately, and that would be the official in this case. The remedy is that he may, without a warrant—not just by a peace officer—but the owner himself, the official himself or herself, without a warrant, may apprehend the trespasser and take him or her to the nearest justice as soon as reasonably practical. This is a private arrest essentially which is justified by this act, and to take a person to a justice and to force them off the land and to say that the official who is designated, the official, has the sole right to determine who stays and who is a trespasser.

That is going to be an extremely controversial issue and I put the minister on notice now that I want that issue addressed at the committee stage, because I want no part of pre-empting what I know are litigious issues today in the Court of Queen's Bench in which the communities involved have sought to have certain individuals evicted, who have become dissidents, or so-called dissidents, on the Hutterite colonies.

So we are prepared to have this go to committee, but with that caveat that we want to have a full explanation of the genesis and the impact of this bill, because this is an extremely difficult area, one fraught with pitfalls both for this government and for the individuals involved. Of course, the major group really is the Hutterites, although there are other, I am sure, communally-owned properties which would qualify under this bill. We must be careful because the division between what is individual rights and how far individual rights go as opposed to communal

rights is not easily defined. Really, in every case the facts are going to be different, and I would hate for this Legislature to have any part in those difficulties which, as I have said, in recent years have been the subject matter of various court actions.

Mr. Acting Speaker, with those comments I look forward to a fuller discussion at committee stage. In particular, if the minister would take under advisement my comments, I would look forward to a response in that respect.

Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

* (1640)

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

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

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second readings, Bills 5, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 20 and 38.

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

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), (Bill 5, The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act) standing in the name of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Deputy Speaker, just last week the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) had stood up inside the Chamber and had commented and made reference to Bill 5 and suggested that our caucus would be prepared at that point in time to see the bill go into the committee stage.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is only because of some incidences that occurred the following day that we had somewhat decided it was probably in our best interest as a caucus just to review some of the comments that were put on the record that one could really question in terms of the validity and the truthfulness of those comments. So I want to take this opportunity to try to correct or to rectify a few of those concerns that, in particular, the member for

St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) and the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) had, in fact, put on the record.

I should start right off, Madam Deputy Speaker, by commending the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) because the following day, after making one of the assertions that she did put on the record, she stood up in an honourable way and in fact apologized. I am very grateful for that because that was actually one of the things I would have commented on fairly extensively had she not chosen to stand up and apologize to the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs). I know how important the vigils have been in terms of attending them and giving them the attention that they deserve and warrant from the Leader of the Liberal Party. She has likely attended more of the vigils than any of the other members who sit in this Chamber. There might be one or two that might have attended one or two more, but she has made an effort at being at every vigil unless she is out of province or absolutely unable to attend. It has always been a priority for her to be at the vigils, no matter what type of notice is given to it.

Having said that, I wanted to move right into some of the concerns that the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) has put on the record. We have to understand and appreciate where the member for St. Johns is actually coming from. This whole bill is before us today because of a committee stage back last year in the month of July. At that time, the government was passing through a bill that included, as part of the bill, this particular amendment. At the time, I wanted to read verbatim from that particular committee meeting, because it is important that the New Democratic Party—not all of them were there. In fact, I believe the member for St. Johns more so trapped herself into a box and felt somewhat obligated to say some of the things that in fact she has said, and now once again has trapped herself into another box and, unfortunately, has put words on the record again, and I will go through those words that really are not in the best interests of the women of this province.

I am going to go over, in terms of what actually took place at that committee meeting where we had the minister—[interjection] The member says, my interpretation. I encourage the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) to in fact read through what the minister—and I am going to quote a letter that we had based primarily the concern as to why it is

the amendment was being proposed. In fact, the minister has told me that this is the reason why it was brought forward.

I wanted to quote a specific letter that came from the advisory group itself. I quote, that the—and this was a letter that was sent to the minister: The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women has since its inception had ongoing difficulties with the confusion between ourselves and the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. The confusion exists in the minds of the media as well as the general public. As a result we get their mail and vice versa. The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women is quoted in the media as having said something that was actually stated by the action committee, or statements by the councils chair are attributed to the action committee. Even some MLAs are not sure of the difference between the two organizations. After some deliberations in consultation with the council members we would like to suggest that the name of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women be changed by an act of the Legislature to Women's Advisory Council of Manitoba. We hope this proposal meets with your approval, et cetera.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this was a letter that came from the organization and we have to take the minister at her word when she was sitting at the table assuring both opposition parties that, in fact, this is something that the women themselves were wanting to change, but the New Democratic critic took exception to the fact that this is something that just came before her, that she did not have any opportunity to discuss the matter within caucus, that she did not have the opportunity to consult with women.

Well, in fairness, and I do not necessarily like defending the government, but I do believe that it is important that I defend the Leader. This is all in part of defending some of the remarks that the Conservatives—because the New Democrats put on the record, not only did they say it was the Conservatives, but they also had the tenacity to say that it was the Liberals and Conservatives. Having said that, this is why I think it is important that the New Democrats do not think that I am defending the Conservatives. Having said that, the NDP had ample opportunity to advise to caucus, because this particular bill was before the NDP caucus for weeks. Why did they not check or consult with the women's groups during that time period, before it even went

to the committee stage, but instead, they pleaded—[interjection]

The member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) says I am talking about something that happened in July. Well, this is the reason why we have the bill before us today. Had the NDP been more prepared as a caucus, as the official opposition, that we might not necessarily have the situation, this bill, before us today. In fact, had the NDP been on top of their responsibilities and brought to the committee's attention that the women had not been consulted and in fact try to mobilize some sort of forces or to run it by the government or to ask questions of the government, we would not have this bill here today, but rather they waited for the very last second and then they brought it up.

They opposed something, at least on the surface, and we have to appreciate that the minister is not misleading the Chamber on purpose, in the sense saying that there are women's groups that have been consulted, that this is a letter. I hope to goodness that in fact the letter that I just read actually exists. If it does not exist, I would retract everything that I have said and apologize to the New Democratic Party. If the NDP can prove that point, then I would be more than happy to do just that. This is one of the roles that the official opposition is supposed to be taking seriously, but they really and truly have not been.

* (1650)

In the introduction of the bill, there was reference made and I take personal exception to the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) by saying that I am not listening to what the women of the province want, that I support the Conservative Party on this issue. That is nowhere near close to the truth. I support what the women of the province are in fact saying, unlike the New Democratic Party who already knows what they want this particular group to be called. They have already figured out the name. I would hazard a guess that they will do whatever possible to ensure that their name is selected, that they will bring forward an amendment. They will do whatever is necessary in order to prove their point.

Madam Deputy Speaker, then we go down to what other organizations in fact supported it. Again, I have to rely on the Conservative minister's word that these groups were in fact consulted, because I am in a situation where I am with the multicultural

act in which I somewhat call into question in terms of if the minister is in fact consulting with some organizations.

Here she has gone the extra mile by saying these are the organizations that the government says that they have discussed the issue with—the Manitoba Women's Institute, 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 the Women.

The only one that I—I should not say the only one, unfortunately, the minister did not consult with the two opposition parties—but especially the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), Madam Deputy Speaker, because ultimately, as far as they are concerned, if they do not support it, it does not matter what the women of the province have to say, they are the ones who are going to decide.

I wanted to go into in terms of what it is. I asked the member for St. Johns, what is your position on the bill? She was very, very clear—if I can quote from the Deputy Premier, let me make it very clear. Well, she made it very clear. She said, I quote: I will say it in no uncertain terms that I will have to oppose Bill 5, in no uncertain terms.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the New Democratic Party, whether the women want it or not, have already made up their minds. It is garbage as far as they are concerned. It does not matter what the women of the province really and truly want, but rather—and when it comes to the official opposition of this Chamber, it is a question of, we have to oppose in the name of opposing. It does not matter if it is good for the province or, in this case, if it is good for the women. Once again we see a party that has absolutely no principles when it comes to dealing with the real issues.

I wanted to make another quote from the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) when she made specific reference to the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs). It goes: It has been a clear decision on the part of women in the Conservative and the Liberal parties to choose the terminology, Mrs., M-R-S, when being addressed in this Chamber or outside this Chamber. It has been a clear and deliberate choice on the part of women on this side of the House to choose the terminology, Ms. as in M-S.

Madam Deputy Speaker, what is most important here is that the Liberal Party believes in choice. Who are the New Democrats to say that women do not have the choice? Should not women have the choice if they want to be addressed by M-R-S or M-I-S-S or M-S? Why not allow them to have the choice?

The Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) does not oppose anyone who might want to address the Leader of the Liberal Party as M-S. She is not going to oppose it if her personal preference is to be addressed as M-R-S. Albeit, who are they to say that any woman in this province who says they have to be addressed by M-S are less than what the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) or the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) or the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) are? Shame on them. Have they no integrity? Do they not believe that the women of this province know? Do they not believe that the women of this province have a choice? It is unbelievable that the New Democratic Party would be so antiwomen.

Madam Deputy Speaker, actions speak louder than words. What is the record of the New Democratic Party? I wanted to touch on just a few of those. First, I understand they resolved the strike that is ongoing. Today it was resolved. The New Democratic Party, the workers, for those who do not know—I am sure everyone in the Chamber knows—went on strike. Why did they go on strike? Would you believe in part because they were unable to negotiate maternity benefits? The party that says maternity benefits is something that benefits every worker and then they refuse to negotiate maternity benefits with their own staff—what a bunch of hypocrites. Once again, they have absolutely no principles.

Then we have the whole question of pay equity. This is a government, when in government, they come up and they introduce legislation that ensures that there will never be pay equity, never. Madam Deputy Speaker, I would hazard a guess that this is the only political party in Canada, in fact in North America, that has legislated to ensure that pay equity will never come into being. That is another action.

Then we hear from the Leader of the New Democratic Party, who has said that it is imperative that we get more women inside this Chamber. In fact, the NDP are so committed to it that they will have 50 percent of their candidates being female

candidates in the election. I commend—[interjection] Well, if it is not true then I would encourage the Leader of the New Democratic Party to stand up and tell me where I am wrong. The commitment was there that 50 percent—[interjection] Again, we gave him the opportunity and the bottom line—if the Leader of the New Democratic Party wants to stand up to answer the question—Madam Deputy Speaker, would it be appropriate, and I ask for your advice, to allow the Leader to stand up on a point of order. Just stand up on a point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): It is not a point of order. I was asked the question—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. If the honourable member for Concordia does not have a point of order, the honourable member for Inkster will resume debate.

Mr. Doer: On a point of order, I believe the member for Inkster sat down and completed his speech and offered the opportunity for the member for Concordia to answer the question. I never suggested for a moment that I would get up on a point of order. I just suggested to the member for Inkster he should do some homework and understand the facts before he makes statements.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Concordia did not have a point of order. The honourable member for Inkster, to resume debate.

* * *

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Deputy Speaker, I can appreciate that the Leader of the New Democratic Party is very edgy when it comes to dealing with the issues of women, because every time they try to do something they do it in such a backward motion. I made reference to the pay equity and the mess that the Leader of the New Democratic Party led the whole issue on pay equity. We made reference to the strike that was ongoing and how he himself denied opportunities or denied the workers or the staff people to maternity benefits. It is amazing and there is really and truly absolutely no excuse.

Let me make it very clear what the Liberal Party's position is on this bill. I am going to make it very, very clear for the edification of the New Democratic Party, that the Liberal Party will support what the

women of the province of Manitoba want. We have not drawn to the conclusion, Madam Deputy Speaker, like the NDP party has done—in fact, I will quote the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett). What does the member for Wellington say? She urges to the government, I would urge her to bring in an amendment to her own bill that changes the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the Status of Women Advisory Council in Manitoba.

Madam Deputy Speaker, is it not the same thing that the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) is saying? Yes, they have already made up their minds. They know what they want already. They are going to do whatever they can in order to get what they want and their decision is already made up. So who cares, who cares what the women want to say when it comes to the New Democratic Party. They have no respect for the women in the province of Manitoba, because if they had respect for the women in the province of Manitoba—[interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour, when this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) will have 21 minutes remaining.

* (1700)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

House Business

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Madam Deputy Speaker, I wonder if I may have leave to make some changes to the sponsorship of private members' resolutions.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member for Gimli have leave to make changes related to the proposed resolutions for private members' business, change in name? Leave? Leave has been granted.

Mr. Helwer: Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that sponsorship of Resolution 34, First Year Distance Education Program, currently standing in the name of Mrs. Vodrey be transferred to Mrs. Render.

I move, seconded by the member—[interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. We have to go through them one at a time, please.

It has been moved by the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), seconded by the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that sponsorship of Resolution 34, First Year Distance Education Program, currently standing in the name of the honourable member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), be transferred to the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render). Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Mr. Bob Rose (Turtle Mountain): Madam Deputy Speaker, given the fact that private members' Resolution 28 deals with events that may take place on the 1st of March, is there a willingness among the members to debate private members' Resolution 28 at this time?

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to have Resolution 28, Postal Rate Increases for Rural Newspapers, proposed by the honourable member for Turtle Mountain moved to be dealt with now?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Point of Order

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Madam Deputy Speaker, I declare a conflict on this issue due to my employment and will be leaving the Chamber accordingly during the course of this debate on this resolution.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for St. James does not have a point of order, but the record will show indeed that the honourable member for St. James has a potential conflict and will be leaving the Chamber for the discussion on this matter.

Res. 28—Postal Rate Increases for Rural Newspapers

Mr. Bob Rose (Turtle Mountain): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Cliff Evans), that

WHEREAS rural community newspapers in Manitoba have a profound centralizing influence in rural centres, speaking for these communities, reflecting their views and solidifying their sense of purpose; and

WHEREAS if such newspapers were allowed to flounder, there would be no locally published source of rural views and information, leaving this service in the hands of urban-based dailies, thus removing

from communities a direct voice of their own and a direct means of promoting the development and welfare of such communities; and

WHEREAS the federal Department of Communications is phasing out its Publication Distribution Assistance Program in a way that is extremely hurtful to Manitoba's community newspapers; and

WHEREAS Canada Post has interpreted the decision in such a way that, as of March 1, 1992, postal rates for weekly newspapers will rise from between 300 and 1,000 percent, the average increase being 420 percent, while leaving paid periodicals free from major increases; and

WHEREAS as of March 1, 1992, the mailing rate for Macleans from Toronto to a rural area will be 6.7 cents, while the rate charged a rural newspaper to mail an edition to Toronto will be 33 cents, over six times the present rate of 5.2 cents; and

WHEREAS the possibility exists that effective March 1, 1994, community newspapers will lose their "free zones" under which a certain number of papers are mailed free within the weekly newspaper's 65-kilometer marketing area, and should this occur, community newspaper rates will rise even more dramatically; and

WHEREAS for example, an eastern Manitoba paper, the Springfield Leader of Lac du Bonnet with a circulation of nearly 1,800, will have its present annual postage costs of \$370 rise on March 1, 1992, to between \$1,700 and \$2,300 depending on the number of papers mailed to no-direct-delivery homes and to letter-delivery homes; and rising on March 1, 1994, to between \$10,600 and \$11,250 if the postage-free zone were eliminated, representing a total percentage increase of between 2,865 percent and 3,040 percent; and

WHEREAS for example, a southwestern Manitoba paper, the Boisvevain Recorder with a circulation of 2,100, will have its present annual postage cost of \$2,400 rise on March 1, 1992, to between \$10,200 and \$15,300, depending on the number of papers mailed to no-direct-delivery homes and to letter-delivery homes; and rising on March 1, 1994, to between \$16,700 and \$21,800 if the postage-free zone were eliminated, representing a total percentage increase of between 696 and 908 percent; and

WHEREAS, for example, a northwestern Manitoba paper, the Swan River Star and Times,

with a circulation of 4,600, will have its present annual postage costs of \$5,700 rise on March 1, 1992, to between \$18,600 and \$22,200, depending on the number of papers mailed to no-direct-delivery homes and to letter-delivery homes and rising on March 1, 1994, to between \$31,600 and \$35,900, if the postage-free zone were eliminated, representing a total percentage increase of between 554 percent and 630 percent; and

WHEREAS all these rates do not take into account any rise in actual postage rates that may apply after March 1, 1992, nor do they take into account the GST which would adversely affect subscribers; and

WHEREAS these combined burdens will have an absolutely disastrous effect on weekly newspapers and on their paid subscription lists, which even now are being reduced as readers cancel subscriptions in anticipation of rising postal costs; and

WHEREAS the community newspapers accept the fact that postal rates should rise, it is apparent that the community newspapers are being unfairly hurt by the changes and potential changes compared with rates applied to paid periodicals and to advertising flyers, which Canada Post handles for under three cents each; and

WHEREAS the new rate system may cause the closure of a number of community newspapers that are so important to the stability and growth of rural Manitoba;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba direct the Clerk of the House to forward a copy of this resolution to the federal Minister of Communications, the federal Minister responsible for Canada Post, and the Prime Minister of Canada to seek a more equitable and just system of postal rates for Canada's community newspapers, the bedrock of journalism in this nation.

Motion presented.

* (1710)

Mr. Rose: About 14 months ago, I made my very first presentation to this House. At the time, I think I made the point that I thought the citizens of Manitoba felt that it was time that their politicians worked together on as many issues as they possibly could, recognizing, of course, that there are philosophical differences between parties.

It is particularly gratifying for me today to bring the very first piece of, not legislation, but at least a resolution to this floor, that I hope or am very confident will be accepted by all honourable members and to have the support to the extent of being seconded by the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans), a member of the NDP, as we all know.

I also want to recognize the co-operation and the support of the Liberal Party and, in fact, all honourable members of the House for allowing this debate to take place this afternoon as it is indeed very timely.

I am going to be very brief, because I know there are many other members who wish to put some comments on the record. We did cover a few points in the preamble as you perhaps noticed, so I will just, very briefly, say that I think we need to remember that community newspapers, the weeklies that we are familiar with, are newspapers that are put out by ordinary Canadians for ordinary Canadians.

In the ongoing debate on national unity the point is often made, and rightly so, that the more often we talk to one another or gain some understanding with what is going on in other parts of Canada, the better understanding we have of each other. I would suggest to the honourable members that for community newspapers that have a total circulation in Canada of over four million, many of that circulation occurs outside their own small community.

So we are not just talking about a little business and a little community in small-town Canada; we are talking about community newspapers that are distributed all across Canada to people that have moved from those communities. They are almost like a weekly letter from home. I think it is worthwhile thinking of it in those terms.

We might suggest—and we certainly need a national magazine like Macleans and perhaps it contributes to national unity, but I think the community newspapers do. In fact, I think in the fabric of Canada, the community newspapers are one of the very strong threads. I urge all honourable members to support this resolution so we may bring our concerns to those people responsible.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today and speak on this resolution that we had, of course, brought

forth some time ago. I do want to extend my appreciation to the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) for including me in the resolution to be the seconder for the motion. The resolution, as such, and perhaps not as such, was introduced last May, I believe, with Resolution 9. It was my hope at that time—

An Honourable Member: Who brought it in?

Mr. Clif Evans: The honourable member for the Interlake. It was my hope then that we could have gotten together, as I had asked the Assembly and had spoken on the fact, the costs and the great weight that the postal rate increases would be to the newspapers. I recall that the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureaux) had fully supported the resolution at that time, and I hope that the third opposition does, at this time again, support this resolution that we are putting through today as a combined unit.

I believe, that when I brought Resolution 9 in last year, that we were hoping to send a message, an unequivocal message, to the federal government that we here in Manitoba would not accept these unfair rates nor would the people who own and operate these community newspapers also put up with it.

Just last week I spoke to the publisher of the Interlake Spectator at an event, and he informed me that even since the initial discussion about increasing the rates, some of the rates, as my honourable colleague from Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) has stated, would go up over 1,000 percent, some almost 2,000 percent. His statement was to me that perhaps some of the larger, more secure rural newspapers that we do have in rural Manitoba would survive to a point perhaps through cutbacks or through other situations. The smaller newspapers with the smaller distribution would be the ones who would be most greatly affected.

We, on this side, put the resolution through again to be brought before the House, and as luck would have it of course, the draw put my honourable colleague's resolution before ours, but I do not think, Madam Deputy Speaker, which resolution gets debated and passed, since essentially we all here are for the same resolution and for the same idea.

The critical thing today, again, is that the federal government receives the message, and to this, I am pleased on behalf of my caucus to have been able to second the resolution, as I have noted repeatedly that these costs would be ruinous to many of the

smaller newspapers in Manitoba. The newspaper The Northland Times just went into operation approximately a year ago, had in fact been able to expand its circulation, expand its publishing from once a month or once every six weeks to twice a month, biweekly. With this increase coming in, and speaking again to that publisher, the costs will be so horrendous that they will probably either have to go back to once every two or three months and cut staff.

It is shameful that the federal government is proceeding with these increases. We here on this side are disappointed that none of the federal rural members of Parliament have taken on an initiative and a stand to support the fact that the increases should be done away with. Many of them are representing rural communities where perhaps they may have three, four or five newspapers within their constituencies, and we do not hear anything from the federal government. I guess it is up to us from here, from the Assembly, to say our piece and force the federal M.P.s to take a stand and to force the federal ministers responsible for these increases to look at it and to keep them at a rate where the rural newspapers in the communities can survive.

On March 1, unless we are successful, another part of rural Manitoba will probably die as small newspapers are forced to curtail circulation. They will have to raise rates or take other measures simply to survive these rate increases.

I feel though that, as the honourable member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) has indicated, this is a resolution that we all should stand by together in support of and again to let the federal ministers know that we are all, here from the Manitoba Assembly, in favour of keeping these increases down, if not put through at all.

So on behalf of myself I wish to say that we here will support the resolution and hopefully that our message will get across to the federal people that it is very important to listen to the rural newspapers and to the communities of Canada. Thank you.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Deputy Speaker, I think that it is important that all three political parties, in fact, endorse the resolution. The member himself from the Interlake (Mr. Cliff Evans) also has a resolution dealing with the rural papers. I think that enforces the point or reinforces the point, I should say, in terms of the importance of our rural newspapers and how much it means to the rural Manitobans. There are aspects the rural papers

bring to Manitobans that our major daily papers, and particularly in Winnipeg and Brandon, cannot offer or provide for those rural Manitobans, things in terms of the whole community news, what is happening within different communities, the smaller communities, the larger rural communities and so forth, things like the local businesses. For local advertising you have many of the rural community papers that have your editorial opinions that are, no doubt, different from what the major newspapers have.

* (1720)

The backbone of rural Manitoba relies very heavily on these rural community papers, and it goes without saying that anything that this Chamber can do to further the cause of those rural newspapers is most definitely worthwhile supporting. To that end we will be supporting the member's resolution in hopes that, in fact, the current government in Ottawa will take very seriously what all three political parties in this Chamber believe is very important, not only here in Manitoba but also throughout Canada.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): I just want to say a few words about the resolution placed before us. For the reasons outlined by the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) we too had a resolution on this issue last May in the Chamber of this House, because we felt it was very important that last year when the government was formulating their decisions that we should have an early all-party consensus to speak out against the proposal by the federal Conservative government to radically raise postal rates and totally undermine the community newspapers of this country.

The postal rate issue for community newspapers goes right to one of the fundamental principles of our being in a democracy, and that is freedom of the press. An unfettered press has to have access to all citizens, and it must be affordable in all communities. It must have a variety of forums so that we are not just dominated by big media and big media voices, particularly out of central Canada, the so-called golden triangle, into the regions of this country. It is rather ironic that a federal government, especially with so many members from western Canada, especially with so many federal members from cabinet from Manitoba, would be so insensitive and would lose so much of what brought them here years ago, that they have become that insensitive—this federal Conservative cabinet with

their federal Conservative caucus members—that they are able to pass on these cavalier increases to our rural community newspapers and to change the provisions of those community newspapers so that the kind of distribution policies will be quadrupled and multi increases for the community newspapers of their distribution.

That is why we brought a resolution in last year. We support the freedom of the press. We try not to, on our individual comments, attack the media. We try not, on our individual comments, to attack individual members of the media, and we try too, Madam Deputy Speaker, to keep our comments to the media—we want to put our emphasis on the issues—but we try, I think, all in this Chamber to keep our comments germane to the issues at hand.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to say a few things about this resolution also in terms of the process of this resolution, because the government House leader is here. He is a person I respect, and I think it is very important I say a few things about how this resolution was produced in this House. We have obviously never been opposed to moving resolutions forward in an all-party way in this Chamber. We have always had a process where a House leader takes under advisement any resolution from the government House leader and brings it back to our caucus and we come to an agreement about when these resolutions should come forward. Madam Deputy Speaker, I would say that in this resolution, given the fact that we were the ones who brought it in to begin with last year, there would have been no difficulty in following that pattern.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) says that he wants to work in an all-party way with all political parties, and I respect him for saying that, but I was really upset when there was a press release out last week saying the NDP was opposed to rural newspapers with a member's name on it. I did not put out a contrary press release saying it was the member opposite who talked this motion out last year, because I do not think that would serve us well.

We are here to work together. I pledge to the government House leader, we will work with them always. Sometimes it might take a day or two while we get things through our caucus, as it will take a day or two for the government to get things through their caucus, as it will with the Liberals. If we agree to disagree and the government wants to put out a

press release saying we are for or against something, so be it. When we are only trying to deal with in our own caucus something we already had proposed ourselves in this Chamber, I would ask for the sake of another principle in this Chamber, that is, the principle of the rights of members in a democracy, that we try to balance off those two principles as best we can.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we support the resolution of the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose). We have supported it before it was in this Chamber, and we will support it after. We think it is important, especially for government members who may have some relationship with the Conservative Party in Ottawa and may have some relationship with the seven members in the Conservative caucus from Manitoba and may have some relationship with two cabinet ministers from Manitoba, many members of which share adjacent constituencies. We think it is important that this resolution is passed. We believe in freedom of the press.

We think this proposal, this hike from the federal government, works against our community newspapers and whether we have an agreement or not on a lot of issues in this Chamber, I think the resolution from the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) is worthy of support. We will support the government resolution, and we will support any measure the government House leader and the sponsor of this resolution wants to have with the clerk to get that message through loud and clear to Ottawa about this House voting in a unanimous way.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I just wanted to make those few points about the process, because we are going to have a lot of other private members' resolutions in this House. Let us try to work together as the member for Turtle Mountain has asked us to do. Let us not try to work apart. Let us try to work together and especially in areas where we have already been on record before. Let us continue to work together on behalf of all Manitobans, and let us pass this resolution in this Chamber today. Thank you very much.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Madam Deputy Speaker, I will confine my remarks, because I know there are several members who want to be associated with this resolution.

I think, obviously, the concerns that rural Manitobans are expressing about the ramifications of these postal changes are serious. When we look

at the role that the rural newspapers play, you see some of the most salient, pungent and, frankly, pertinent information brought out to the people in the community regarding issues that are not only important locally but important across the province.

I do not think there is anyone here or anyone in Canada Post that would, in reality, believe that they should be moving to restrict the opportunity for local newspapers to have access to the system for the delivery of their message within rural Manitoba. I do not see this so much as a restriction of freedom of the press, I see it as a bad case of judgment whereby someone is firmly holding the belief that this is a cost that can easily be borne and easily be passed on.

Madam Deputy Speaker, you do not put a kid on a bike and tell him to deliver newspapers in rural Manitoba for a minimum amount of money. This is a situation where newspapers are difficult to get into the hands of the reader. They are performing a unique and a very valued role in rural Manitoba, a role that I think Canada Post has forgotten in terms of the changes that are being proposed at this time to come forward in the spring.

I would insist, and I would support this House insisting, that Canada Post take a look at this issue as a priority compared to some of the other costs that are associated with handling mail and the type of mail that is delivered in this country. Certainly, this is an unfair attack on an opportunity for rural Manitobans particularly to obtain the information that they need, and they have come to expect over the last number of decades. We see a shrinking number of rural Manitoba newspapers as it is, and this is the type of additional pressure that, frankly, they do not need and many of them will not be able to withstand.

Let me simply say to Canada Post, look at this in relationship to the costs of other materials that are being delivered. I am sure they will find that this is an increase they will not need to pass through, that there are other sources of revenue, that they can meet the obligations they have as a transporter of mail and information in this country without destroying what I believe, and what I think every member of this House believes, is a valued service in rural Manitoba.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Deputy Speaker, I just have a few brief comments.

First of all, in terms of the background of the resolution, it certainly has been covered by our members. It should be noted that similar resolutions have been introduced in the past. I think we should reflect on what has happened in private members' hour in the context of this resolution. Unfortunately, all too often, resolutions are introduced that either never reach the Order Paper because of the volume of resolutions or else, if they do reach the Order Paper, are simply spoken out.

I think we should perhaps recognize, in the context of our rules, the fact that to give the kind of weight to private members' hour and resolutions such as this we need to see more of what is going to take place today. Certainly, if our side has anything to do with it, and that is this will go to a vote, this will not be simply talked off the Order Paper as have previous resolutions.

* (1730)

I think, unfortunately, our rules lend themselves to the opposite sort of spirit from what the member opposite referred to in introducing the resolution, in that, instead of coming together on matters where there is general agreement, we end up with political gamesmanship and one-upmanship in this House at private members' hour. Indeed, Madam Deputy Speaker, this is private members' hour, this is private members' business, and I think we all should reflect on that fact as we do see how a resolution can be passed by all members of this Chamber.

I want to reflect just very briefly on the importance of community newspapers. I happen to believe personally it is one of the things that defines Canada, far-flung country that we are.

If one is to compare, for example, the access to media that one finds in most other countries, you will find that there are literally thousands of more newspapers in a country the size say of Canada in terms of population than one would find in most European countries with two, three or four times the population.

Community newspapers are more than just a chronicle of events in communities. They announce our weddings, our baptisms and, of course, deaths, community events, sporting achievements, personal achievements. That is what community newspapers are all about, and anything that would move in this direction as the post office is doing would kill those community newspapers, a viable thread that keeps our country,

as isolated as it is geographically, together. The very word community newspaper reflects the key element, the community aspect.

I just want to indicate for the record as well that in Thompson we have an excellent newspaper, actually the Thompson Citizen and the Nickel Belt News. I want to reflect too just very briefly how important I think it is to recognize their contribution, because one thing about small communities is that everybody knows everybody else. Thompson is perhaps larger than most small communities, but it is still a small community, and I reflected upon this recently.

If there is anyone that gets criticized more than politicians in small communities, although certainly we do, it is the community newspapers, because, of course, everybody knows our bias but everybody also knows the political thoughts and the biases of newspaper owners and editors as they are printed in editorials or expressed during elections.

There is always a fear, I know, of potential bias in terms of newspapers. When I recently reflected on the tenth election of myself to the Legislature, one thing that I had wanted to do at the time was to indicate to the owners and editors of the local newspaper in Thompson how I thought, despite our disagreements in many different ways, I thought they had been absolutely uncompromisingly fair in their coverage. I wanted to write a note, and I just did not ever get around to it. It was one of those things, you wondered if it was appropriate or not.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I may have used the Legislature to do that, and when I say that, I am talking about the rights—and I do not mean this in any way, shape or form to try and stop them from criticizing the NDP in future editorials, I know they will not—but it is to show that many people can be individuals, they can have their personal views and that does not affect the journalistic integrity of the newspapers. That is particularly the case in community newspapers, because when we have the Free Press we do not know who always is writing the editorials although we do know now one we can get a hint of, the former member for Crescentwood. In a small community we all know who writes the headlines, who writes the editorials no matter who it is attributed to. I would say that what is the case in Thompson is probably the case in virtually every other rural and northern community in Manitoba, and that is that the standard of journalism is something we never credit people for. We criticize,

and people in communities criticize, but you know I do not think people would recognize the importance of many of these newspapers until they were gone. That is why I am very concerned about what the Post Office is suggesting. We may lose some of those valuable assets before people even realize it, so I will be absolutely supporting this resolution.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Madam Deputy Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise on this very important resolution. I am glad it is being debated here today. I thank all members of the House, as my colleague has, for allowing it to come forward in this fashion.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it would be tragic if we did not have our rural newspapers. When one today looks at the structural change that our rural areas have undergone over the past 20 years, by the forecasts of some, will continue to undergo over the next decade, into the next century, I can assure you, as most speakers have, that rural newspapers take on a special significance. They always have; they have for generations.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in the society in which we now live, where of course there is great attention paid to events in a smaller global village, particularly with the turn of a knob on our TV set or flick of a switch, I think all of us have an opportunity to listen to what is happening in the bigger world. As is becoming the case, too often we are not always familiar with what activity is happening within our rural environs.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the rural newspaper always has had a significant role, of course, in providing information, providing the latest understanding of situations, and indeed the latest intrigue around what extended family members were doing, indeed the expanded members of the community and friends as to the celebration of events, as to the loss of property, and I could go on and on—situations which are not reported in the larger media. It would be tragic if through a corporate change of Canada Post, whatever the driving forces are, that there should be, because of a significant increase in postage rates, a cause that would—well, let us say, something that caused the demise of our rural newspapers.

Madam Deputy Speaker, that is why I am so glad that all members of this House have seen fit, and without much pleading—I acknowledge that the process, we went through some little difficulty in

process. I will assume my responsibility for that, as I think others may want to. I am the government House leader, but I still think there is good will around this and other issues, and we should not let that deflect from other good areas where indeed we agree in principle and in concept so that other items should come forward.

Nevertheless, Madam Deputy Speaker, I am glad to lend my support to the resolution. I hope that this House passes it in an expeditious manner. I hope also that it is forwarded very promptly by the Clerk of our Assembly to those powers that be in Ottawa or wherever so that the federal cabinet and/or whoever it is that sanctions these types of increased rates will have an opportunity to be apprised of our agreed-upon sentiments from our province. Madam Deputy Speaker, I thank all those who have spoken to this and I am hoping that the vote will occur, certainly, in or after 10 to 6.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to give my support to this resolution and compliment all members and recommend it to all members and I am sure the support will be there for it.

Most has been said as to the importance of the rural newspapers. There is one other element that should be added, and I say it as the former Minister of Rural Development, that there is another component within our rural newspapers that add a service to rural Manitoba, and that of course is the commerce and the trading of items and advertising of activities that take place throughout our small communities. A lot of people look to rural newspapers to convey the news as to what is happening, whether it is in the area of machinery, equipment, produce. Generally—[interjection]

* (1740)

Yes, that is right—thank you. I thank the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) for jogging my memory—for auction sales, which are of course—I declare that I could have a conflict in saying this but I will gamble on it anyway. [interjection] It is an important vehicle or tool for the advertising of many events and the community auctions are one which are extremely important as well.

So I say that is a service, an important service, and it would be extremely unfortunate if we were to see the loss of any of our rural newspapers through irresponsible charges that cannot be handled through the charges that are to be imposed on them. So I am pleased to support my colleague for Turtle Mountain's (Mr. Rose) resolution and would hope that each and every member would support it. Thank you.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is the proposed resolution of the honourable member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose). All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Deputy Speaker: All those opposed, please say nay. The motion has been passed.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, if you canvass the House, I would believe there might be an inclination to rise and call it six o'clock.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will reconvene at 8 p.m.

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Monday, February 24, 1992

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Presenting Petitions

Fight Back Against Child Abuse Campaign
Reid 617

Reading and Receiving Petitions

Fight Back Against Child Abuse Campaign
Barrett 617
Chomiak 617
Wasylycia-Leis 617

Tabling of Reports

Annual Report,
North Portage Development Corporation
Ernst 618

Quarterly Financial Report, MPIC
Manness 618

Introduction of Bills

Bill 55, Workers Compensation
Amendment Act (2)
Reid 618

Bill 50, Beverage Container Act
Carstairs 618

Bill 51, Health Services Insurance
Amendment Act
Cheema 618

Bill 48, Personal Property Security
Amendment Act
McCrae 618

Bill 53, Dangerous Goods Handling
and Transportation Amendment Act
Cummings 619

Oral Questions

Economic Recession
Doer; Filmon 619

Manitoba Tax Assistance Office
Doer; Manness; Barrett 620

Employment Retraining Programs
Carstairs; Manness 621

Provincial Revenues
Carstairs; Manness 622

Employment Retraining Programs
Carstairs; Manness 622

Home Care Program
Wasylycia-Leis; Orchard 622

Board of Review
Chomiak; McCrae 624

Pedlar Commission
Chomiak; McCrae 625

Clarification (Provincial Revenues)
Manness 625

Health Care System
Cheema; Orchard 625

Consumer Warning
Maloway; McIntosh 626

Business Practices Act
Maloway; McIntosh 626

Consumer Protection Amendment Act
Maloway; McIntosh 626

GATT
Plohman; Findlay 627

Nonpolitical Statements

Winter Olympics, Manitoba Participants
Cheema 627

Mixed Curling Championship
Orchard 628

Winter Olympics; Curling Championship
C. Evans 628

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Second Readings

Bill 6, Denturists Amendment Act
Orchard 628

Bill 9, Economic Innovation and
Technology Council Act
Filmon 629
Storie 631
Alcock 636

Bill 21, Provincial Park Lands Amendment Act		Bill 47, Petty Trespasses Amendment Act	
Enns	638	McCrae	648
		Edwards	649
Bill 22, Lodge Operators and Outfitters Licensing and Consequential Amendments Act		Debate on Second Readings	
Enns	639	Bill 5, Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act	
Bill 34, Surveys Amedment Act		Lamoureux	650
Enns	640		
Edwards	640	Private Members' Business	
Bill 42, Amusements Amendment Act		Proposed Resolutions	
Praznik	641	Res. 28, Postal Rate Increases for Rural Newspapers	
Bill 45, City of Winnipeg Amendment, Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act		Rose	654
Ernst	643	C. Evans	656
Bill 46, Jury Amendment Act		Lamoureux	657
McCrae	646	Doer	657
Ashton	646	Cummings	658
Chomiak	647	Ashton	659
Edwards	647	Manness	660
		Downey	661