



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

LIB - Liberal; ND - New Democrat; PC - Progressive Conservative

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, December 11, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), 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?

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): To the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba.

The petition of the undersigned, The Salvation Army Grace General Hospital, humbly sheweth:

THAT The Salvation Army Grace General Hospital Incorporation Act be amended to reflect the amalgamation of the Governing Council of The Salvation Army, Canada East, with the Governing Council of The Salvation Army, Canada West and forming the Governing Council of The Salvation Army in Canada, and further to permit The Salvation Army Grace General Hospital to own and/or operate one or more elderly and infirm persons' housing accommodations as referred to in The Elderly and Infirm Persons' Housing Act, including a personal care home or homes, and to reflect the current organizational structure.

WHEREFORE your petitioner humbly prays that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be pleased to pass an act for the purposes above mentioned.

AND as in duty bound your petitioner will ever pray.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mr. Leonard Evans (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the First Report of the committee on Public Accounts.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Your Standing Committee on Public Accounts presents the following as its First Report.

Your committee met on Tuesday, January 29, 1991, at 10 a.m., and Wednesday, January 30, 1991 at 2 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider Volumes 1 and 2 of the Public Accounts for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1989, the Provincial Auditor's Report and Supplement for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1989 and the Provincial Auditor's Report for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1990.

Your committee also met on Thursday, April 4, 1991, at 10 a.m. to consider the aforementioned reports and Volume 3 of the Public Accounts for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1989, and Volumes 1, 2 and 3 of the Public Accounts for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1990.

Your committee also met on December 10, 1991, at 10 a.m. to consider all of the aforementioned reports and the Supplement to the Provincial Auditor's Report for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1990.

On January 29, 1991, your committee elected Mr. Evans (Brandon East) as its Chairperson.

On January 29, 1991, your committee accepted the resignations of Mr. Sveinson, Mrs. Vodrey, Mr. McAlpine, Mrs. Render, Hon. Mr. Neufeld and Hon. Mr. Orchard as members of the committee, and elected Mrs. McIntosh, Mr. Reimer, Mr. Helwer, Mr. Laurendeau, Hon. Mr. Downey and Hon. Mrs. Mitchelson to replace them.

On January 30, 1991, your committee accepted the resignations of Hon. Mrs. Mitchelson, Mrs. McIntosh and Mr. Helwer as members of the committee and elected Mr. Rose, Hon. Mr. Neufeld and Hon. Mr. Orchard to replace them.

Your committee received all information desired by any member at the January 29, January 30, April 4 and December 10, 1991, meetings from the Minister of Finance, staff from the Department of Finance, and from Mr. Fred Jackson, Provincial Auditor. Mr. Stan Puchniak, Assistant Deputy Minister, provided information at the January 29 and 30, 1991, meetings. Mr. Rick Mayer, Director of Special Audits, provided information at the January 29, 1991, meeting. Mr. Charlie Curtis, Deputy Minister of the Department of Finance provided information at the April 4 and December 10, 1991,

meetings. Ms. Carol Bellringer, Assistant Provincial Auditor, and Mr. Warren Johnson, Director of Professional Practices, provided information at the December 10, 1991, meeting. Information was provided with respect to the receipts, expenditures and other matters pertaining to the business of the province. The fullest opportunity was accorded to all members of the committee to examine vouchers or any documents called for and no restriction was placed upon the line of examination.

Your committee finds that the receipts and expenditures of the monies have been carefully set forth and all monies properly accounted for.

At the December 10, 1991, meeting, your committee adopted the following motion:

"THAT the Public Accounts Committee adopt in principle the following recommendations of the Provincial Auditor for use in the operations of the Public Accounts Committee:

- 1) That the Committee, to be most effective, carry out its responsibilities on a more timely basis
- 2) That the Committee consider adopting a working agenda
- 3) that notice of factual questions which require reasonably detailed answers to be raised at committee meetings should be provided in advance of the meeting whenever possible."

Your committee has considered Volumes 1, 2 and 3 of the Public Accounts for the fiscal years ended March 31, 1989, and March 31, 1990, and the Report of the Provincial Auditor and Supplements for the fiscal years ended March 31, 1989 and 1990, and has adopted the same as presented.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I move, seconded by the honourable member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, over the last two days I attended the Council of Ministers of Education meeting and for the information of members in this House, I would like to table a communique on student financial assistance.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): I have the pleasure of tabling several reports: the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Annual Report for 1990-91; the Freedom of Information Act Annual Report for 1990; the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation Annual Report for 1990-91; the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Annual Report for 1990-91; and the Annual Report for 1990-91 for the Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 9—The Economic Innovation and Technology Council Act

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Downey), that Bill 9, The Economic Innovation and Technology Council Act; Loi sur le Conseil de l'innovation économique et de la technologie, 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.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable First Minister has tabled the report.

* (1335)

Bill 2—The Environmental Bill of Rights

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): I move that Bill 2, The Environmental Bill of Rights; Code de protection de l'environnement, be introduced and that the same be now received and read for the first time.

I would also like to take the opportunity to describe the principles of the bill.

It will be seconded by the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale).

Motion presented.

Ms. Cerilli: The principles behind this bill are that the public has the right to a healthy environment, and also that the public has the right to access the courts and tribunals, including the right to sue polluters to protect the environment. We need to have increased public participation in environmental decision making, that increased government responsibility and accountability for the environment

are required and that greater protection for employees who blow the whistle on polluting employers is required. This bill will ensure that residents and citizens of the province of Manitoba have the right to clean air, water and land.

Motion agreed to.

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

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), that Bill 5, The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil consultatif manitobain de la situation de la femme, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 6—The Denturists Amendment Act

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I move, seconded by the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger), that Bill 6, The Denturists Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les denturologistes, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 7—The Real Property Amendment Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Bill 7, The Real Property Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biens réels, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 8—The Garnishment Amendment Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Bill 8, The Garnishment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la saisie-arrêt, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

* (1340)

Bill 10—The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Hydro Act): I move, seconded by the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme), that Bill 10, The Manitoba Hydro Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Hydro-Manitoba, 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 also table the Lieutenant-Governor's report.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 11—The Bee-Keepers Repeal Act

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), that Bill 11, The Bee-Keepers Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur les apiculteurs, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 12—The Animal Husbandry Amendment Act

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Downey), that Bill 12, The Animal Husbandry Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'élevage, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 14—The Highways and Transportation Department Amendment Act

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), that Bill 14, The Highways and Transportation Department Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le ministère de la Voirie et du Transport, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 21—The Provincial Park Lands Amendment Act

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, 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 introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

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

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), 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 introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have with us today 20 parents and students from the Manitoba Association for Schooling at Home. They are under the direction of Judy Andrich.

Also, from the Arborg Collegiate we have forty-two Grade 9 students. They are under the direction of Tara Kozub. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Cliff Evans).

Also, from the R. B. Russell Vocational School we have twenty-six Grade 12 students. They are under the direction of Mrs. Anne Laymen and Mr. Gerry Hays. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes).

From the St. George School we have thirty-five Grade 9 students. They are under the direction of Clint Harvey. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render).

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

* (1345)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Education System Funding Formula

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we have been outlining the job losses in the Manitoba economy over the last few days, in the private sector the construction jobs, the retail jobs, transportation jobs.

The private sector is not the only place where employment is going down in our province. Indeed, in the public sector employment opportunities are going down for Manitobans and in spite of the flowery words from the Speech from the Throne where the government says many improvements have been made in Manitoba's education system, we have now learned that up to 300 teachers and positions for education have been lost since the majority government under the funding formulas announced by the provincial government last year, and hundreds of other positions have been lost in our public education system, positions that are investment in our future and an investment in our youth.

I would ask the Premier how is he going to make up for the losses in the last year in terms of employment and investment in our youth in terms of the education system, and what will the policies of the government be in funding our education system for 1992? They are in a crisis situation, Mr. Speaker, and we would ask the Premier what type of leadership will he be providing for our youth and for our future.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, throughout the period of time that we have been in government, going on four years now, we have attempted to fund the public school system to levels that were commensurate with the ability of the taxpayer of Manitoba to be able to meet the needs in education. I might say that in the first three budgets we brought in they were consistently well above the rate of inflation, our increases to the public school system. In addition to that, of course, we faced some very, very difficult choices last year, choices that were pressed upon us as a result of reduction in cash transfers from Ottawa, choices that were brought upon us as a result of the loss of

revenue to the provincial government with the recession. We made some difficult choices but at the same time were able to pass along an increase of about 3 percent to public school funding in this province.

Under those circumstances, of course, that may not be as much as some would have chosen, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is that we have to live within the means that are available to us. The alternative to that, of course, would be to do what the opposition party, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), would have us do and that is to raise taxes. Raising taxes would only make it more difficult on people in our economy and would have resulted in more job losses. We did not want to face that kind of circumstance.

I know that higher taxes are a cradle of the New Democratic Party, Mr. Speaker, and they have proven in the past with the substantial job destruction that they wrecked upon this province in the 1980s that those policies do not work.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, that is a very, very long non-answer to the question dealing with education funding.

Mr. Speaker, this First Minister and his government front benches have been telling us in the Speech from the Throne and in questions we have been asking about the economy all week, that happy days are here again. The growth is going to be 4 percent next year, and Manitoba is in great shape.

* (1350)

Mr. Speaker, I have a letter in my hand addressed from his Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) telling the school divisions again that the recession is going to last. We are not having the recovery that we had predicted. He is also advising all school boards in Manitoba to expect no further funding increases for the next fiscal and school year.

I would ask the Premier what impact will that again have on the taxation levels for families, on the education and quality education levels in the education system? This is the largest crisis we have ever had, and the Premier is going to exasperate it with another year of zero funding to the education system.

Mr. Filmon: Well, actually, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is going to exasperate me. The fact of the matter is that we are attempting to be a very open government. We are laying before the

people of this province in the sectors that have to make decisions as much information as we can provide them with as they plan for their budget procedures.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) can appreciate that when the government passes along a 3 percent increase in funding for public schools and the public schools choose to increase the salary levels of their teachers by 5 percent and 6 percent, that creates a pressure on the system. That pressure likely results in jobs being lost as local school boards have to make decisions to downsize, because they cannot live within that pressure between the increases that we are passing along and the increases that they are giving to their teaching staff.

In those circumstances, we felt that it was important to share with the school divisions as much information as we could about our budgetary forecast so that they would be better able to plan for the forthcoming budget year, and in their negotiations with their staff and with their teachers be prepared for the kind of increase in expenditure and increase in funding that we could pass along. We feel that is open government, good planning, and an opportunity to share with these local governments as much information as possible.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I find it rather ironic when I look back in 1982 at the Premier's comments expressing dismay at a 12.9 percent increase and saying that is not enough in the public education system. Now the Premier, today, is standing up in the House and saying that he is supporting a zero percent grant to the school divisions.

Can he explain to the people of Manitoba, how many teachers are we going to lose, how many support staff are we going to lose, what is going to be the deterioration in our public education system as a result of two years of funding freezes, in essence, with the school divisions? How much more of a crisis can we take with our young people and our education system before the Premier stands up to his Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) who has let down the total province in terms of education policy in this province?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, our increase in expenditures in public schools last year was 3 percent, which I might say exceeded the 2 percent increase which the New Democratic government in 1986 with the member for Flin Flon

(Mr. Storie) as the Minister of Education—they passed along a 2 percent increase to school divisions at a time when their revenues were increasing, I might say, at three and four times that rate. They did that kind of expenditure control and priority choosing.

The fact of the matter is that we will do everything we can to work co-operatively with school boards to make sure that we let them know what circumstances face us and what circumstances we have to do in order to live within our means, because the last thing we want to do, Mr. Speaker, is to pass along massive increases in taxation. That is what the New Democrats did throughout the 1980s. That is something that could only hurt the economy and the individual taxpayer, and we do not want to do that.

Universities Funding Formula

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education recently wrote to all university presidents indicating that there will be no increase in funding next year. Between 1979 and 1991, full-time students in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Manitoba increased by 108 percent. Part-time students increased by 66 percent. The number of faculty members has declined by 8.3 percent. Class sizes of 200 to 300 are common, and libraries and essential services have been severely cut.

My question to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) is: How does the government defend this situation, and more importantly, how does it expect to attract and retain the knowledge-based industries when it withdraws support from the universities, the essential infrastructure of its economic strategy?

* (1355)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I guess it is fair to say that universities, our public school system and those who are involved in such things as teacher negotiations, staff negotiations want to know the ballpark of the type of funding they might be looking forward to in the coming year. When we did not signal any kind of a ballpark figure, indeed we were criticized that we were not sending out those signals early enough so that institutions such as universities and our public school system could not make the adjustments in the best timing.

Mr. Speaker, we have tried to indicate to the institutions at the post-secondary level at our school system as to the fiscal situation that our province is facing and that indeed, in that way, they can make their decisions based on the realities that this province faces today.

Ms. Friesen: What advice does the Minister of Education have for the young Manitobans at the University of Manitoba who, as a result of last year's funding, found that 1,100 students were turned away from first-year English, 617 students were turned away from first-year Psychology, 568 turned away from first-year Sociology, the foundation courses for the graduates in the social sciences and humanities?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, it is true that the enrollment at our universities has increased since last year, increased substantially. I have to also say that over 80 percent of our costs in education are personnel expenses. The money that goes to universities, a large amount of it, will find its way into salaries, but we have a fiscal reality before this province. Indeed the EPF transfers from the federal government have been diminishing, and this has created a great deal of pressure on us as a province.

Mr. Speaker, because of those realities, provinces throughout this country have met, as Ministers of Education, in the last two days to try and deal with the whole situation of student financial assistance and to impress upon our federal government that we have to update those financial assistance programs that have not been updated since 1984, and it is for that reason that I tabled that communique today to ensure that there is solidarity behind all the ministers of education in this country to impose upon the federal government the importance of post-secondary education in this country.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, is the minister aware that, if he proceeds with the zero percent increase to the University of Manitoba, the Arts faculty alone must absorb a \$1.3 million cut, and that Manitobans face the very real probability that the last remaining open faculties in this province will close their doors to our high school graduates?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, at each level of government, whether it is at the school board level or at the university level, there are some very difficult decisions that have to be made in times of economic restraint like we are living through. Those decisions

have to be those of the local institutions and the local school boards. Priorities have to be set, carefully weighed, and then programs implemented that will complement those kinds of priorities that have been set by the institutions and by school boards.

Social Assistance Abuse Rate

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Shortly after taking office, this government ordered a number of studies that were given out by way of untendered contract to firms such as Stevenson Kellogg Ernst & Whinney. One of those studies was a review of the social assistance program, and it found, Mr. Speaker, that there was a possibility of an abuse rate of less than 1 percent.

On the basis of that study, can the Minister of Finance tell us today what new information he has which would lead him to believe that people are collecting welfare when they could be working?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, there is no new information to add to the conclusions as found in that report at all. There was never any question in the mind of the government with respect to the findings of that particular review almost three years ago, and the state has not changed as of today.

Economic Growth Employment Creation Strategy

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Finance now admit clearly to the House that those people who find themselves regrettably on welfare are there because of this government's economic policies which are not creating jobs?

* (1400)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I totally and categorically reject the conclusion reached by the Leader of the Liberal Party. Nothing is further from the truth.

I take from the member's assertion that indeed what this government should be doing is going hundreds of millions of dollars further into debt in trying to buy wealth and job creation. That is an approach that has virtually bankrupt the nation. That has found to be not working. Indeed, sound economic foundations are built when discipline and good management exists. That is what this

government is providing to the people of this province.

Social Assistance Employment Training Programs

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): One of those sound foundations surely the minister refers to is the upgrading of skills.

Can the Minister of Finance explain why his government chooses to cut funding from single-parent mothers on welfare who are trying to go to school and puts a freeze on funding of students who are disabled as of now so that they cannot continue programs beginning in February?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, we have, within the Department of Family Services, a number of programs which assist recipients to find training and eventually get into the job market. Through our HROCs and HROPs, through the Gateway program, through the Single Parent Job Access Program and through the COPE program, we are providing opportunities for these people to enter the job market.

I think what the member is alluding to is the fact that we have a budget line which provides for education and training for a number of our recipients. That budget line is in excess of \$1.7 million. We have indicated to some who have been on a waiting list that we have expended a portion of that. We have committed the rest of it for the rest of this particular year, and we will have a new intake period starting with the new budget.

Education System Program Reductions

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education and Training.

In the new no-name funding model, the model that is approved by absolutely no one in the education community, the minister talked about the rich school divisions giving up at the expense of other school divisions.

Can the minister outline what rich programs these school divisions will give up, in light of the fact that last year these eight school divisions in the city of Winnipeg lost between them 118 jobs?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): It has been more than the three years that I have been in this portfolio that there has

been a cry for a new funding formula for school divisions in this province.

In announcing the new funding formula for the province, I might say that the response and the reaction has been very positive. I might say that the member opposite the critic for Education for the NDP criticized us for the lack of funding to Winnipeg No. 1 last year constantly. This formula puts more money into the Winnipeg No. 1 school division, which that member has not said a word about since then.

Mr. Speaker, the new funding formula also addresses the issues of special needs, of counselling, of library services, services which were not being funded before. To assist those school divisions that may not be receiving increases, the government of this province has put in \$12 million to phase in the impact of the funding formula as well.

Taxation Level Increase

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): The minister is aware that they will get zero like everyone else this year.

Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question to the minister is: Will there be another 10 percent tax increase at the local level this year as there was last year as a result of this minister and this government offloading onto school divisions?

Point of Order

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, that question is a budgetary matter. The budget has not been developed and I consider the question highly out of order.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable government House leader does not have a point of order.

* * *

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, in announcing the new funding formula in terms of the benefits to taxpayers, I might say that this government moved to remove one mill off the provincial ESL for all taxpayers in this province. That is a benefit to all taxpayers in Manitoba and will be an additional draw on general revenue of \$10.5 million in the first year of the program. That is a direct benefit to the taxpayers of this province.

Program Reductions

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): My final supplementary to the minister is: Can the minister outline where the rich programs are and what programs are going to be cut as a result of this inequitable funding formula that the minister has put in place together with this whole six pages of information about it?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, those are priorities that school divisions set. Local school divisions have not given up their local autonomy as yet, as I understand it, in this province. Indeed, it is their responsibility to determine what educational priorities they have within their divisions and then on that basis to decide the kind of special levy that they will set within their own school division areas.

Manitoba Liquor Control Commission Senior Employee Salary Review

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, this government often talks about restraint but it does not practise it very often when it is dealing with its senior management, presidents and CEOs of Crown corporations, its friends. Some time ago literally some tens of thousands of civil servants across the province were forced to take zero percent increase at the same time colleagues around them were losing their jobs and their workload was increasing.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister responsible for the Manitoba Liquor Commission. Can the minister explain to the people of Manitoba why senior management at the Liquor Commission can receive a 25 percent increase on a \$60,000 base salary while other civil servants earning \$15,000 are required to take zero?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister charged with the administration of The Liquor Control Act): I am pleased to respond to that question and to put the information requested on the record. I would like to begin, however, by saying that I have asked the chairman of the Liquor Control Commission to review once again the salaries that arose out of the reorganization that took place to determine whether or not they are too high, in light of the fact that civil servants have taken zero percent when we are all living through difficult times. I have asked, Mr. Speaker, that that review be done.

I would, however, like to just correct some information, because I do like reviews to be taken in light of correct information as I am sure all members of the House do. I would like to indicate in terms of answering the request for the rationale. The rationale presented to me by the Liquor Commission, which I have asked to have reviewed—I am presenting just the information requested—is that the previous vice-president of licensing who retired in April was not replaced. Her salary of approximately \$75,000 was to be eliminated. Subsequently, the remaining senior staff were asked to assume those duties, and they have received the following increases in light of the reorganization or they proposed they receive the increases of \$2,900—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Storle: Mr. Speaker, there is a very obvious question in all this and who is in charge.

My question is to the minister responsible for the Liquor Commission. Will she indicate to this House when she learned that there would be a 26 percent increase to senior staff of the Liquor Commission, what information she was providing—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

* (1410)

Mrs. McIntosh: To complete the answer to the first question, Mr. Speaker, if I may—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable minister to deal with the matter raised.

Mrs. McIntosh: When I received the information that the Liquor Control Commission was undergoing a reorganization—and you must understand that I have no authority to order particular salaries in an independent. I can ask for a review which I have done to ensure that they are not too high in light of what the civil servants have had to take.

I would indicate, however, to correct the information that was put forward, that the average increase given the remaining senior staff who have picked up the duties of the vice-president who was not replaced, the average increase recommended they be receiving by the commission is 7.4 percent, and the net saving that has been indicated to me to the commission is about \$50,000.

Chairperson Resignation Request

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): My question to the minister responsible for the Manitoba Liquor Commission is: Will she immediately remove the chair, Mr. Charles Birt, a former PC member in this Legislature? Will she instruct the board of the Manitoba Liquor Commission to remove that \$26,000—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister charged with the administration of The Liquor Control Act): Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, when the bottom line on the net savings that would accrue to the Liquor Commission was presented to me and I was told that \$53,000 would be saved as a result of the reorganization, the percentage salary increases were not at that time given to me. I now have them. I have asked the chairman of the Liquor Control Commission to review again this situation to see if a 7.4 percent increase for assuming the duties of that retired vice-president is excessive.

Health Care System Surgery Waiting Lists

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

A senior citizen who is a constituent of the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) is deeply concerned because she needs a knee replacement operation and she cannot get it. Her physicians have told her—and I will table the letter later on—that due to cutbacks, she will not be able to get surgery until 1993, and by that time, she may be permanently impaired and disabled.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of other Manitobans who are suffering the same kind of situation. The waiting period has gone from months to 18 months for many procedures. We will tell the minister that, by selling pizza and perfumes, he will not solve the problems of health care.

Can the minister tell this House what has he done to reduce the waiting period for such operations for the last three and a half years?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): In simple terms, increased the funding in every single year that we have brought down a budget to the hospitals of the province of Manitoba so they can

undertake not less but more services, not cutbacks but increased activity.

I reject my honourable friend's accusations.

Mr. Cheema: Accusations are based on the facts.

Will the minister tell this House why the waiting period for cardiac surgery has gone up since he has taken over? We have repeated that request many times in this House. People are waiting for more than 18 months. Can the minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, maybe my honourable friend could share a little honesty with the House and indicate that, in every single year that we have budgeted for open-heart surgery, we have done more procedures in each succeeding year, not less, as my honourable friend would have the allegations.

Physicians who do the scheduling for surgery determine which candidates receive the surgery in what order. They prioritize those waiting lists according to the most urgent needs. That is a medical judgment which governments in the past have not chosen to dictate on the basis of phone calls to MLAs or ministers' offices how that list ought to be intervened with. Surely my honourable friend is not wanting to break that tradition.

Mr. Cheema: If the minister has chosen to.

Anesthetist Shortage

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Will the minister tell this House why he has not done anything about the shortage of anesthetists, because that is one of the reasons why there are delays in surgical procedures?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, during the negotiating period with the MMA who have had the exclusive—except for some very modest funds—allocation of over \$300 million in medical fees paid by the taxpayers to some 2,000 physicians, under that schedule of redistribution, anesthetists have been left out of the increases by the MMA as their bargaining agent and union.

We have tried, in the past, working with the MMA to focus more of limited resources to the anesthetists. We have had some modest success but not enough. We look forward to the next round of arbitration with the MMA to see if they are willing to solve the problem of anesthetists' fee schedule

from within the \$300-plus million we currently provide.

Civil Service Commission Political Interference

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, my question is in regard to the continuing concerns that members of the opposition have about hiring practices with this government. On Monday, I asked both the Premier and the minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission how many jobs the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) had interfered with in terms of the hiring. Today, I would like to give the minister himself the opportunity to come clean to this House.

I would like to ask him specifically, Mr. Speaker, how many positions did he interfere with in terms of the hiring process in this province? Specifically, what positions did he interfere with as minister that led to a suspension of hiring?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for The Civil Service Act): Mr. Speaker, as we indicated to the member for Thompson last Monday, decisions in the Civil Service Commission withdraw or adhere based on their internal working documents, which are not in the possession of the government or the minister. They are internal working documents. The commission made a decision as it did in 1984 when Maureen Hemphill was minister.

Mr. Ashton: Can the Minister of Education who knows obviously how many positions he interfered with in the hiring process, can the minister indicate how many positions—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): The question just drips with innuendo. Mr. Speaker, questions by your guideline are those to seek specific information dealing with a specific, in this case, obvious situation. The member now is extending that far beyond the good guidelines that you have set down within your questions.

I would ask you to call him to order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, I cannot think of any question that is more in order and is asking more specifically for information that has nothing to do with innuendo than asking the Minister

of Education how many positions he interfered with in terms of the hiring process within his department.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised and the specific Beauchesne's citation which I cannot get my finger on right now—but anyway, on the point of order raised, I would like to remind the honourable member for Thompson that his question is repeating in substance a question which was previously asked and is, therefore, out of order.

* * *

Mr. Ashton: Well, Mr. Speaker, if I can then rephrase my question in regard to another aspect with the minister, we have been told that the minister's hiring authority has been suspended by the Civil Service Commission for whatever reason.

Can the minister, can the Premier, can anyone on the government side indicate why the Minister of Education is continuing to deal with personnel matters, in fact, continues to sign Orders-in-Council related to personnel matters if his hiring authority has been taken away?

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, the member for Thompson, in his question, has stated a number of things which I think must be corrected. First of all, it is not the minister's hiring authority, it is the Department of Education's hiring authority. The minister makes it sound as if hiring authority is—(interjection)—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

*(1420)

Mr. Praznik: No—but, an important point that hiring authority is delegated to each of us as ministers. It is not. It is delegated to departments.

Secondly, the member makes reference to signatures on an Order-in-Council. Members opposite know well that there are appointments made in government that are made by Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council which are not part of the regular hiring process of the Civil Service. Similar methods have been used by governments over decades. I am not sure what the member's question is, Mr. Speaker.

Department of Education Hiring Authority

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I ask this question perhaps to the Premier in the hopes that he can clarify it.

Can the Premier indicate then what is happening in terms of hiring authority within the Department of Education? Can he now indicate why the minister, who has had his hiring authority suspended, is continuing to be involved with personnel matters and why he has not come clean to the people of the province of Manitoba as to exactly how many positions were tainted by the Tory interference in the hiring process in this province?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I realize that the member for Thompson has never been in cabinet and does not understand procedures of government so I will try and briefly explain to him that there is authority for government hiring that comes under the aegis of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, which is cabinet. That authority remains the authority of any government in office.

Aside from that there is another authority that comes under the Civil Service Commission and its act. The matter that has been dealt with—that authority can be delegated to a department. That is traditionally done. From time to time that authority is removed on a temporary basis as it was when the NDP was in government in 1984 when Maureen Hemphill was the Minister of Education, and Ron Duhamel was the Deputy Minister of Education, that hiring authority was temporarily removed for one year from the Department of Education.

An Honourable Member: Why was it removed?

Mr. Filmon: I do not know why. I was not in government at the time. That NDP government was so embarrassed about it that it swept it under the carpet. They hid it, hid it from all public view. We have been very open about this, Mr. Speaker. The Civil Service Commission has made certain determination and that determination has been carried out.

Social Assistance - Students Reductions

Mr. George Hickey (Point Douglas): My question is for the Minister of Education.

According to the throne speech the government recognizes the importance of education. Sadly, this minister and his counterpart in Family Services have shown by their actions that they do not share this belief. First they cut the student social allowances and then the high school bursaries. Now we find they are cutting CRISP payments to treaty Indians. Why is the minister labelling ACCESS programs as

welfare benefits and thereby cutting eligible students off CRISP?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I do not know the particulars of that particular question. I will take that as notice and get back to the member.

Social Assistance - Students Program Reductions

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): If the minister does support education, why was a constituent cut off CRISP after receiving funding for two years under the ACCESS program? Is this another example of the government picking on the poor when they transfer over—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, there are specific guidelines for the CRISP program and we would ensure that all citizens of Manitoba get fair treatment. If the member wants to give me the information on a specific case, we will be happy to take a look at it.

Mr. Hickes: Will the minister agree if the constituent is meeting the guidelines that they will reinstate the benefits to the student immediately?

Mr. Gilleshammer: As I have indicated, there are specific guidelines for these programs. I am not familiar with the specific case that the member is bringing forward, but we would assure him that he would get fair treatment. If you will give me the particulars, we will give you some details on it.

Education System Curriculum Development

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, if this government is committed to education in rural Manitoba, as they say they are, why has the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) cut funding to curriculum services and consultants in language arts? These are prime examples of offloading which will have a much greater effect on rural people than it will on urban people.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, we have not cut funding to development of curriculum in this province. As a matter of fact, in the new funding formula there is specific mention of how we will assist in professional development to ensure that

our teachers in this province are better qualified and have the better skills to conduct the programs.

Mr. Speaker, there is a reorganization within the Department of Education and Training in terms of how programs are delivered, but it is simply incorrect to say that there is less service being provided to the field.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, five consultants have been cut and school divisions are having to pick up additional costs.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Question, please.

Funding Formula - Rural Schools

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Can the Minister of Education tell this House whether teaching English 300 and 301 at the same time in the classroom, and teaching Science 100 and 101 at the same time in the classroom are what he considers effective education, because this is what is happening in the Duck Mountain School Division as a result of cutbacks.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, those are the realities of small schools in rural Manitoba where you may have only three or four students in each grade in a small high school. It is for that reason that we have invested money in the program for Distance Education in this province to ensure that students in rural schools where there are small populations will have the availability to take programs through Distance Education that will give them a better opportunity of a quality of education than they have had in the past. I am glad to say that we have now installed over 90 satellite dishes in our small schools throughout rural Manitoba to ensure that they can access quality programs from Distance Education.

Ms. Wowchuk: What assurances can this minister give to rural Manitobans that our children will have the opportunity to get some of these additional classes that are needed to fit into the work force today, instead of having additional cutbacks and offloading onto the taxpayers in the rural communities?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I wish the member for Swan River would talk to the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), because the new funding formula that was announced puts greater sums of money into many of our rural school divisions. In that way, it enables those rural school divisions to deliver programs. Especially school divisions like Duck

Mountain, like the member talks about, will have a greater opportunity to deliver programs and a greater variety of programs to students within that particular school division.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: The adjourned debate, fourth day of debate, on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) for an address to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor in answer to his speech at the opening of the session and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) and amendment thereto and the proposed subamendment to the honourable member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) and further amendment thereto, open.

Mr. Edward Connery (Portage la Prairie): It is a pleasure once again to rise in this House and to speak on a throne speech. Mr. Speaker, I want to say it is nice to see you back in your chair in your usual jovial way and keeping track of what is happening in this House, and also to the Deputy Speaker, I want to wish well for the coming session.

I think a special word to the new pages who we have, I think it is a pleasure to see the new faces and to see the opportunities afforded them to see how government works. In some cases, they will be very disappointed. In other cases, they might have their eyes open and maybe have some better understanding of the political ramifications that go on in this building.

I also want to say congratulations to the Sergeant-at-Arms, the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms and the staff who have done us well through the years we have been here, and also to welcome all members back from all sides of the House and to extend to them the best for this coming holiday season.

* (1430)

An Honourable Member: Even Reverend Blackjack.

Mr. Connery: Yes, even Reverend Blackjack. We welcome all to have a very good holiday season.

I do want to make one comment about the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld). When I heard of his retiring from cabinet, I felt sad that this

province would be losing a very good mind and very honest individual from the cabinet of this government. It is no surprise to me, Mr. Speaker, that now people are saying, well, he is a great person, he speaks the truth, he speaks his mind, because it was in last year's throne speech that I said the member for Rossmere was one of our best cabinet ministers and a very good servant of this Legislature.

Much of the debate unfortunately that we see in throne speech and budget speech debate is, I would consider, much wasted time. We have a lot of fun in chastising each other, poking fun at each other. A lot of it is really a waste of time.

Especially, I was very disappointed in the speech of the Leader of the official opposition this year, which I found very distracted, no cohesiveness. I do not know if he knew what he wanted to say or what message he wanted to give to the people, but one of the very poorest that I have seen the Leader of the official opposition give and not one that I think is deserving of that individual. He should have a better one.

I would say that the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) made one of the best speeches I have heard her make in this Legislature. She spoke with reason. I do not agree with all of the reasons she put forward, but she did, and she made some very constructive suggestions that I think we should look at. They were put forward, I think, in the right way, so I must compliment the Leader of the Liberal Party for that.

Mr. Speaker, in last year's throne speech, I made mention that I supported more additional aid to the handicapped. It was not long ago that the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme) announced that there would be an additional \$8 million going to the physically handicapped. I want to compliment the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) for that. I think the Minister of Family Services needs to be complimented on many of the initiatives that he has taken on behalf of the people of Manitoba and those who are in need. Sure, I know the minister would love to do an awful lot more, but under the constraints of a recession and of the times that there is not enough money to do all of the things that we would like to do.

There were two things in the throne speech, and there were many things in the throne speech that I appreciated but there were two in particular. One

was the introduction of establishing a Children's Advocate office which I think is long overdue and for the children of this province I think the minister should be complimented.

The other one is the developing of a fair funding formula for women's shelters. Mr. Speaker, I have a soft spot in my heart for the women's shelters. I have had a fair bit to do with the one in Portage and it was only a couple of weeks ago that I had the opportunity to visit the one in Portage. I was very disappointed in the facilities that they had, they were very small. The rooms were small for the people who have been forced to leave their homes and seek shelter, very small, especially if there were children involved in that separation from the family, but the good news is that the government is now renovating a much larger facility for a new and much expanded women's shelter in Portage la Prairie which services a large area in the Portage district. I think this is something that is overdue, but I must compliment the government for taking these initiatives.

I think all of us in this Legislature are offended when we see the violence against women. I compliment the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) for the efforts that he has made to curb violence against women and family violence which occurs. Usually, it is the male against the female or the children of the family. It really is unfortunate that we have to have shelters because it is a sad commentary on our society today.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to see—and I guess I will say a little finally—I was hoping that it would have been proclaimed a little sooner, but The Business Practices Act will take effect January 1. I think this is a piece of legislation that has been needed for many, many, many years, one that the previous NDP government had in their books, looked at, but I guess it did not carry enough political votes. They knew they would not get a lot of fanfare for protecting the consumers of Manitoba and did nothing to do it, but I am very pleased that the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh) has now finally proclaimed the legislation and as of January 1, we will see much stricter legislation protecting the consumers of this province and also for the businesses in this provinces who do not want to have to try to compete against unscrupulous and, I guess you could call, shyster businesses. I compliment the minister for putting this in place.

Mr. Speaker, when we took over government in 1988 we inherited a lot of messes, but at the Workers Compensation Board we inherited one of the worst financial messes that I think any department of this government could have been in.

An Honourable Member: Compliments of Jay Cowan.

Mr. Connery: Mr. Speaker, yes, and the members point out the member for, I think it was Churchill, Jay Cowan, was the minister who started off the demise of the Workers Compensation Board. When he took over, I think there was something like a \$30-million surplus. They got involved with the politics. There was a tremendous amount of political interference. When we took office, there was a deficit of \$232 million. We were seeing annual increases to the premiums that employers had to pay of 20 percent every year, but at the same time, injured workers were not being properly looked after.

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

In the King Report, when you read the detail, you saw the comments made about the lack of concern for injured workers, and that was during the NDP time of reign. When you look at what the NDP were doing, they were raising the deficit, raising the premium and, at the same time, not caring for injured workers. Madam Deputy Speaker, what did this do to the business climate of Manitoba? The CFIB listed it as the greatest deterrent at that time to business development.

Members opposite are wailing away about jobs today, but had we not come in and cleaned up the Workers Compensation Board and put it on an economic basis that is properly managed and looking after the real needs of injured workers on a more timely basis than was before, we would have had more job losses because businesses were very concerned about the cost of workers compensation.

This year, and we are announcing early so that businesses can budget, they are announcing in December that there will be a 6 percent decrease in premiums for next year. The opposition should be glad that this is an incentive for business, but what does the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) say? He says: I am appalled at this 6 percent reduction, said MLA Daryl Reid, Transcona, his party's WCB critic. They are just forcing injured workers onto welfare. The WCB should be into preventative measures.

We have to have stricter workplace enforcement, safety measures, not investigation after the fact.

I wonder where the member has been. We have introduced safety programs in the heavy construction industry. In the construction industry, we have been working with Workplace Safety to ensure that the workplaces are much safer. He is suggesting that it should be done. Well, they did not do it when they were in power, and of course, he cannot believe that any government would do it. It is being done, and the current minister of workers compensation is carrying on with that worthwhile program.

Let me just—and I just got it this morning, and I thank the Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board (Mr. Praznik). It is from Ontario. It says Dear Stakeholder: In an effort to continue the openness of the Workers Compensation Board, we are releasing our third quarter financial report, a first for the board. In Manitoba, we have been doing that for years so that the business people would have an understanding, so that the opposition and the government members would have an understanding of what was happening. This has been going on. It is finally happening in Ontario. It says here, the net results in the third quarter, the unfunded liability increased by \$280 million as compared to \$89 million in 1990. Madam Deputy Speaker, the unfunded liability of the Ontario Workers' Compensation is \$9.9 billion.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I really think it is tragic that the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) would insist or think that a decrease in premiums to Manitoba employers is bad when it is an incentive to work and we are not taking things away from injured workers that is coming to them.

* (1440)

I want to mention a little bit about Highways. I want to compliment the government and the Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger) for the maintaining of the \$100 million capital budget annually that is going into Highways, especially in rural Manitoba. When we see a lot of the rail line abandonment that is happening, we are attempting to maintain the highway infrastructure that is so important for Manitobans to get to the marketplace. As you know, under the NDP government, this had been reduced to something around \$80-plus million, so the importance of highways is very crucial to Manitobans.

I do want to thank the minister for finally, after some 55 years of lobbying, that Highway 240 to St. Claude will be completed to the final oiling in the next year or two. We are going to be starting on Highway 227 north of Portage, but also, I want to thank the minister for the overpass that we did open on, I think it was, October 9—finally opened to the people of Manitoba. It is a safety measure for all of the people driving down the Trans-Canada Highway because Highway 240 is a very major intersection going to the south area of Portage and also to Southport, which as you know, Madam Deputy Speaker, is where the privatized training will take place, and we hope to see some great things take place in Southport in the very near future.

This session is about economic stimulation. It is about job creations. It is about income. It is about creating wealth to do the social services that the people of this province deserve.

I will say, I have been a constant critic of our government's thrust in the economic side, and I continue to be critical of our performance. I think that we are finally getting into it, and I welcome that thrust. It is unfortunate that, I guess, from my own perspective, I have never once been asked my views on economic development for Manitoba, and I do not think that many of our caucus members have. I think this is tragic because I think we have a lot of ability in caucus, and I think members opposite can make a lot of very constructive suggestions to us. I am pleased, though, that we are seeing an Economic Development Committee of Cabinet, chaired by the Premier (Mr. Filmon), put into place. I think that is a very good start, late, as I have said, but it is a very good start.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is absolutely imperative that the business community be part of the economic thrust of this province. The business people are the ones who know what programs will work, what programs are necessary to help make the economy get off the ground. I know we cannot make the economy of Manitoba a utopia when all around us other provinces, other countries in the world are in a recession, but it is like any manager or any business person or any farmer, a good manager can make better during tough times than a poor manager, and I would hope that we would be better managers.

We have to bring in the business community to be part of the solution. They have to buy into the solution and want to be part of it. I think there is

another very important group that we have to bring in and that is labour. Business is only, Madam Deputy Speaker, the vehicle we need to create jobs, to create economic activity, to create wealth that we can do the things we need, but if we do not include business into the equation, then we are not going to succeed in the way we should.

Labour knows very well some of the concerns they have. They have to be encouraged at times to accept some of the responsibilities that they have for making things work well. We have to be a much more competitive province. Industries have to be more competitive and that includes government, business and labour. We are all part of the solution and if one does not opt in, then the solution will not come very readily.

I do want to make mention of the Crocus Investment Fund, and I think it is a little ironic that here is a program put forth by a union so that employees can take over companies that are maybe going broke or the individual people do not want to be part of and want to get out of and the employees see it as a worthwhile venture and a way to make a living. The Crocus Investment Fund is part of this, but it is ironic that it is brought in by two Conservative governments who are supposed to be antilabour, so I do give credit to our government and to the federal government for working with labour to bring in a program that will help us save businesses and create more jobs.

I think that employee ownership, Madam Deputy Speaker, is very healthy and I think we need to encourage it. We can look at Vent-Air that the employees took over when the firm was being sold and I think there were some problems with the management or the ownership, and it is doing very well. We can look at the rotary engine repair at Bristol and it was a very small part of their operation and not worthy of their endeavours to keep it going. The employees took it over and the employees are doing a very good job keeping their jobs in place and jobs of others and the economic activity.

An Honourable Member: Could have saved Paulin-Chambers, the biscuit company here, if that government would have had that in place.

Mr. Connery: That is right. I have said, Madam Deputy Speaker, that labour is a very major part of the equation, but labour is also a very big problem that we have today, and labour unions.

I want to be very clear that we separate the words when I talk about unions, but I am not talking about the rank and file union worker or nonunionized worker. I am talking about the self-serving, dictatorial, bullying leaders of some labour unions. There are some labour unions, or union leaders whom I have had the opportunity to work with, who are excellent and have the interests of the employees who are in their union at the best of heart, but we see a lot of union leaders who are out there for their own self-serving interests.

Now the unfortunate part is that the unions have bought and paid for the NDP party. They have bought the NDP government body and soul and this is unfortunate.

Madam Deputy Speaker, when we talk about labour and we talk about the liberties that we have and our freedoms—I was listening to the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) and the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) speak yesterday. I think it was the member for Wolseley who was talking about the powerful and how the powerful had a profound effect on other people, and there was only about 2 percent who were in that category. Unfortunately, the union bosses are in that 2 percent. They are the powerful who are putting their viewpoints and their authority over the workers whom they are supposed to be working for.

If anybody in a union dares to challenge these bully union leaders, what do they say. We have seen people in the last PSAC strike who wanted to go to work, who did not think there should be a strike. There are union workers, and I have talked to a lot of them, who believe, yes, we are in a time of recession, we are in difficult times, that maybe this is not the time for greater income but to keep the jobs, and we are quite happy to go to work without an increase in pay.

We saw during the PSAC strike some of the ugliest union measures that we can see, bullying, death threats—

An Honourable Member: And Reverend Blackjack marched the picket line—

Mr. Connery: Yes, the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) walked with those union leaders -(interjection)- and the member for Thompson. He likes to be associated -(interjection)- Yes, well, they all have -(interjection)- Well, Madam Deputy Speaker -(interjection)-

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Connery: Daryl Bean is the president of the 170,000-strong Public Service Alliance of Canada. Now, there were three women who were wanting to go to work and had been intimidated, threatened, bullied going through the picket line, and they wrote letters -(interjection)- Yes, as one member says, grandmothers.

They wrote a letter to Mr. Bean complaining that their rights and privileges were infringed upon by union workers. What was the reply that Daryl Bean sent back to these three women, grandmothers? He says, after God had finished the rattlesnake, the toad and the vampire, he had some awful stuff left with which he made a scab.

A scab is a two-legged animal with a corkscrew soul, a waterlogged brain and a backbone of jelly and glue. Where others have heart, he carries a tumor of rotten principles. No man has a right to scab as long as there is a pool of water to drown his carcass in or a rope long enough to hang his body with.

Now that is what the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) and that is what the members of the NDP support. They talk about freedom—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

* (1450)

Point of Order

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): I am having a great deal of difficulty, Madam Deputy Speaker, in hearing the comments of the honourable member for Portage la Prairie, and I would ask you to call the members to order, please.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Transcona does have a point of order, and I indeed was attempting to regain order in the Chamber.

* * *

Mr. Connery: It was quite interesting that the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) yesterday was talking about fascists and fascism, that she was so happy that these people had been put out of the way. I think she was talking about Hitler and some of these people who were so against the freedoms of people. She was talking about it, and yet she is part of the party that is bought and paid for and owned by Daryl Bean and people like him. Because those are the people who fund the NDP party and

when the NDP are in power they put forward the programs that are asked for by some of these, I call them—well, the words I would like to use would not be fit for this Legislature.

So it really disturbs me when we are trying to put an economy back in place and we have union leaders who would resort to this sort of tactic. This is in Canada where we have a Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but it is not respected or believed by the unions, and the NDP support those particular union leaders.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, it is a sad day for Canada and for this province and for this legislation to see this sort of thing going on, and for the NDP party to continue to support people who would make those sorts of comments. No man has a right to scab as long as there is a pool to drown his carcass in or a rope long enough to hang his body with. You talk about freedoms, you talk.

The member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), Madam Deputy Speaker, marched with the casino workers, and I think they were on strike for two months. The tragedy is that the union leaders knew at that point there would be no increase in salaries for those casino workers. They knew it, and they did not get anything more after two months. What did they lose? They lost income; they lost security. Those people were in severe jeopardy and those people, the NDP and the member for Burrows, marched along with those workers knowing that they were getting the shaft and he is proud of that.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we can take a look at the nurses' strike when that went on. The nurses were complaining that they did not have an opportunity for a private vote, for a secret ballot to vote on what was being put forward. Once again, the union leaders dragged them into a protracted strike knowing there was no more money, and the NDP supported that, and they say that they are for the workers of Manitoba. Well, I hope that there would be a change of heart amongst the NDP and join with all of us. Maybe we need a change of heart in some of our thinking, and I think all of us can use some change of heart and work in the best interest of all of the people of Manitoba.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe that we as a government need to take a hands-on approach to job creation. I do not believe in the type of job creation that the NDP went through with the Jobs Fund. I am not sure what the total number of tens of

millions that we finally had to write off for the band-aid jobs that the NDP put forward, but that is not the sort of hands-on approach that I believe we need in job creation. We want to have the sort of long-term jobs that we are seeing right now in the manufacturing industry which was pointed out that we are increasing our jobs in the manufacturing industry. I know the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson) agrees with that approach, that we need to look at jobs that are going to be paying for themselves, going to be long-term jobs and that will raise the income that we as a province need to fund our social services.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I think we need to do a lot of things in job creation. I think we need to enhance the department. Well, first of all, let me say, I think we need to dismantle the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, then I think we need to rebuild it and enhance it. I do not have the greatest respect for the department as it now exists, and I hope that the minister will do a lot to renovate it. I have those great hopes that this will take place.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I believe that we need an extension department within industry who will do much like the extension department in Agriculture did to go into crop diversification. There is a lot of expertise in this province that is not being made use of to its fullest extent. There is a lot of product that is coming into this province that I think people in Manitoba can replace.

An import replacement needs to be the first goal of this government for the smaller entrepreneur. We do have the Palliser's and the large companies that are very capable of completing on the international marketplace, but there are a lot of people here in this province and a lot of small businesses that could manufacture or produce a lot of the goods that are coming in. What we need to do is to show those entrepreneurs out there what they can do, and it might take some money. I am prepared to see money put into job creation, because after all this is the most important thing that we have to do in this province.

Jobs is the most important thing that a person wants. Nobody—I should not say nobody, but most people do not want to be on welfare. Most people want a job, so job creation is what we need to do. We need to, as a department and as a government, work. -(interjection)- One member says their health before money. Well, I think that is a given, we hope that everybody has good health.

Before we can do all of the things that we want to do in social services and expand our health care farther than what it is, we have to have the revenue to be able to do it. I support the thrust of this government trying to keep our deficit under control. If we let the deficit run, we are eventually going to pay the price. We saw a lot of students in this Legislature and the galleries earlier, and those would be the people who would pay the price for our foolishness today. So we have to work very carefully to keep the deficit under control.

At the same time, we need to stimulate the economy of this province, and I would look forward to the government working to marry people and product and to work to make the industry come about. I think there are a lot of ideas out there, and if we work with the industry people, I think this can happen. I remember when Sid Spivak was Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism and he had the little drummer boy. He had those little decals all over Winnipeg and rural Manitoba drumming up enthusiasm for industry.

I think that we need to once again drum up enthusiasm. We need to drum up enthusiasm for the businesses to become more competitive. We need to drum up the enthusiasm of employees to be more competitive and to produce the kind of work and quality of work that is so necessary.

I will say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I still am opposed to free trade with Mexico. I have not seen anything that has been indicated to me that free trade with Mexico will benefit Manitoba. Maybe there is some, but I have not seen it. I guess I am from Missouri, I want to be shown that free trade with Mexico will benefit Manitobans and Canada.

Madam Deputy Speaker, one of the areas of job creation that I think our government should put more emphasis on is tourism. I think we need a stand-alone Department of Tourism, not that the minister who currently has it is not a very competent minister, but he has a very heavy portfolio. I think that a stand-alone Department of Tourism would go a long way to creating more jobs in this province, and I think there are a lot of people in the industry. I think the tourism people of Winnipeg would be quite happy to see a stand-alone tourism department.

* (1500)

Madam Deputy Speaker, agriculture is the backbone of rural Manitoba, and I have to say that

I am pleased with the thrust that we as a government have done to help the farmers of Manitoba. I will also compliment the federal government, although I am rather critical of the federal government. I think the federal government of Brian Mulroney has given more aid to farmers in western Canada than any other government dreamed of doing. We can remember what Pierre Elliott Trudeau said about farmers and their wheat and the gestures—well, the words that he used, I do not think, would be appropriate for this House, Madam Deputy Speaker, so I would pass on it, but he also made some gestures.

The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) sincerely has been attempting to work with the federal government to bring the sort of programs forward that farmers can at least stay alive while we are through this crisis with the United States and the European Common Market fighting with subsidies, and it has really destroyed our agricultural sector in the grains and oil seeds.

Having said that it is the grains and oil seeds that are in trouble, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would now—

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Rural Development): Put carrots in.

Mr. Connery: Well, we could put carrots in, as the Minister of Rural Development said, carrots, which our farm grows, yes, we could. They are doing better than the grains and oil seeds. There are a lot of other crops, though, that could be grown by Manitoba farmers. Maybe we could be enhancing our cattle production, maybe hogs. There are a lot of areas outside of the grains and oil seeds that we could do.

I think we need to have our Department of Agriculture's extension part enhanced to quite a degree. I think, over the years, especially over the NDP years, we saw the Extension Department cut down, and I have not seen it rebuilt in the period that we have been in government, so I would encourage the minister to solicit Treasury Board. Some Treasury Board members are here, and I would hope that they would look at enhancing the Extension Department of the Department of Agriculture so that we can work with those farmers to develop new crops and new ideas and expand on those where there are markets because, yes, even in carrots, we have sales that are now going into Minneapolis and indeed even Texas, because we have that kind of quality in Manitoba.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I do not think anybody in the province of Manitoba begrudges any of the money that we have spent on farmers. I think most people would even support more help to the farmers because they are the backbone of rural Manitoba. A healthy rural Manitoba makes for a healthy rural Winnipeg because, without a healthy rural Manitoba, Winnipeg will not be a healthy city.

We have to, Madam Deputy Speaker, target, and so often we just way, well, we got to do things, but I think, as a government, in agriculture and in the business development side, we have to target those areas that we think we can enhance and create more jobs. We have to get away from the shotgun approach. We have to analyze where the opportunities are, and then we have to set about a method and a procedure, programs, to see that that comes to fruition. If we do target it, and I think the will is now there, as we have with the economic council, chaired by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province, and that indicates to me and to all of us in Manitoba that the economy is the foremost thing on the Premier's mind, that I think that we may be on the threshold of now doing the things that we should.

Madam Deputy Speaker, one thing that was not in the throne speech that I was a little disappointed in was a mention of a water strategy for southern Manitoba. We have been talking about water for southern Manitoba for some time. I think it has come to the point now we are the crossroads of where we have to make a decision. Are we going to put in place the mechanisms that we can ensure that all of southern Manitoba has sufficient water, or are we just going to let it go willy-nilly with band-aids—I do not know, just let things happen as they may?

Madam Deputy Speaker, I do a fair bit of travelling and I had a very short vacation this fall and had the opportunity to travel through a good part of Canada and some of the United States. Where you see water, you see economic activity. You see businesses, you see farms, you see things happening all through. Where there is no water, you see very little activity. You might see cattle grazing, or you see the antelope, or you see some very destitute land that is really producing nothing very much. Water is the lifeblood of any country.

We are so fortunate to have a fairly good supply of water that passes through this province. I say passes through because we are losing too much of it. We should be retaining more water for our use and for helping areas such as the Pembina Valley.

We have seen a proposal put forward to the government of Manitoba, and it has been advertised, to divert water out the Assiniboine River to the Pembina Valley.

I do not think that anybody would question the need for that water. They need that water desperately, but there is a concern of people who are on the Assiniboine River watershed at this point over the adequacy of the system as it now is to provide that water and to guarantee adequate amounts for those people currently on the Assiniboine River system.

The member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) has introduced a resolution, Resolution 47, dealing with this very subject. As the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) says, it is a good resolution, and I read it and, yes, it is a good resolution. I hope the resolution was put forward for the right reasons. If it is, I welcome them with open arms to work with us to resolve the problem that we have with water. If it is for the right reasons, I think we can go hand in hand and all be proud of what we do. If it is just to be antidevelopment or antiprocess, then it is for all of the wrong reasons. I have extended already to the member that I would be quite pleased to sit down and talk to them about the water strategy and what we on the Assiniboine Valley view as some of the concerns.

We have, in southern Manitoba in the Pembina Valley, and that takes in Carman, I guess south of highway No. 2 to the Red River to the Manitoba escarpment to the United States border, a piece of land that is very choice, capable of producing an awful lot for this province.

If we were to put in a proper water strategy, which has to include entrapments—dams as we hate to call them because that seems to be a dirty word—we could provide not only 20 cfs for industrial and residential use, we could also provide irrigation water.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

I think if we did that, Mr. Speaker, 25 years from now this government and this Legislature, if we could have your support, would go down in the terms of what now people praised Duff Roblin for doing in Duff's Ditch, for having saved Winnipeg and the problems that the Red River used to give Winnipeg. This Legislature could be called a visionary Legislature. I think the timing is now. The timing is right. I really sincerely say to the opposition, join with

us. Give us your ideas, but help us put in place a strategy that can give water for all Manitobans. With it, you will see prosperity in Winnipeg like you have not seen.

When you look at McCain's in Portage la Prairie, we have the jobs for the local people. We grow the potatoes in Portage, but just about everything else comes from some other area of Manitoba or Canada whether it be the cartons, the fork lifts. This all funnels through, it channels through Winnipeg, and that creates jobs for Winnipeg. It creates work for railway employees. It creates work for the rail industry. If we had a much greater thriving diversified agricultural southern Manitoba, we would see a lot more activity than we have today. We could say, and it would not show up in one or two years, it would take 25 years, but we could sit back after—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has expired. Order, please. Leave has been granted to allow the honourable member for Portage la Prairie to wrap up his remarks.

Mr. Connery: Thank you, and I thank the members for that opportunity.

I just wanted to sum up with a few comments on Portage la Prairie, Mr. Speaker. Portage, you know, when it was announced that the air base would be closed and we had Campbell Soup closing, there was a lot of despair in the city of Portage la Prairie and the district around it. I would like to say that things are looking much better for Portage la Prairie, thank you.

We have Canada Air now having got the contract for privatized training. I think they are going to do a good job. They are going to bring in other industries. The government has acknowledged that we will move Stevenson training to Portage la Prairie, and also we have an aerospace training initiative which a good portion will go to Portage la Prairie. We have the Southport group working very hard to bring additional industry into Portage la Prairie. We have the Central Plains Region working hard to bring industry to it, and we do have some successes.

The one I am so proud of is Can-Oats. No, the province did not put any money into Can-Oats, but Central Plains was the group that saved it from going to Saskatchewan or Alberta. I have to give credit to the regional development corporation for the efforts that they made simply through being a facilitator. This is what the regional development corporations can be. They kept Can-Oats in Portage

la Prairie which allows all farmers to sell oats to them. It has created the jobs, some 50 jobs in Portage, an expenditure of somewhere close to \$20 million.

* (1510)

We also had, and I thank the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) for opening with me just recently the D. L. Campbell Lodge. Everybody remembers Douglas Campbell, the former Premier of this province and a very good one, and the lodge was named. It is a seniors extended-care home run by the Portage General Hospital, some 50 beds I think, Mr. Minister, that we have there.

An Honourable Member: Carstairs did not want that one either.

Mr. Connery: Well, maybe that is possible, but I thank the minister for that and the government because it is a good job creator and it is very good for seniors in Portage.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Legislature for those few extra minutes. I do wish everybody well. Maybe I was a little critical at one point. That criticism still remains, but as a group, I think, if we put our minds to it, we can make this province come around.

Mr. Reid: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to add my comments to those of the other members in the House on the throne speech.

An Honourable Member: We will hang on every word.

Mr. Reid: I know you will hang on every word because I have some suggestions as well, as the government has called for from time to time. I hope you will heed some of those suggestions that we put forward as well as my other colleagues who have done the same over the days that we have been in this session.

I would like to start, though, Mr. Speaker, by welcoming you back. I look forward to your guidance and your positive suggestions as you guide us through our legislative session. The other Chamber support who are here, I welcome them back, and I would like to congratulate the new pages on their appointment to their positions.

I would like to start, Mr. Speaker, in discussing a bit about my community of Transcona. As the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) concluded his remarks talking about his constituency, I, too, would like to comment about what has been happening in my constituency. I

would like to start talking about Transcona in the sense that it is a middle-income community comprised of working families. The families themselves have several basic industries that provide the major job opportunities in my community, and that being CN Rail, Griffin Steel, Palliser Furniture and numerous other businesses such as New Flyer and others. They have provided for us our jobs, our levels of income that will allow us to live in the lifestyles to which we have become accustomed over the years.

We have seen numerous job cuts in those areas, Mr. Speaker, in the last year, and unfortunately, our community of Transcona has fallen on some hard times. At best, the community of Transcona is hard pressed, and 1992 looks like we are going to have an uncertain future. The food banks have become a major concern for us in our community in the sense that there are a large number of families that are having to utilize the services that are provided by the food bank. I would like to start off, before I discuss the details of that food bank and its operations and the people who volunteer their services, to quote from a press article that was recently in one of the newspapers. I quote: I do not think people line up for food in too many lines in our community. We try to make sure that everybody is at least well fed.

That, Mr. Speaker, is a quote by the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) of this province. Little did he know that there are food bank line-ups in the different communities of our province, and one of those food bank lines is in the community of Transcona. That food bank is operated by dedicated volunteers who, week in and week out, provide the support services for the people who desperately need these services, the men and women who selflessly donate their time and their efforts in the service of others.

There are 365 total registered families that are making use of the food banks in my community. That is a tremendous increase over what we have seen, as I had previously talked about this issue in the last session. In the last session, we talked about 91 families on an average week coming out to make use of the food bank services. Now that number has grown to 110 families on the average week. Every week, we are seeing seven to 10 new families coming to take part in the food bank services. The food is having to be rationed because there are so many people, so many families that are coming to this operation.

Most of these families and individuals that come to this food bank are young people. That is a sad statement for us to have to make because it is these young people in the most productive times of their lives who are unemployed and have no other means of support and have to make use of these services.

This food bank is operated out of one of the local churches in the community, and the organizers of it are now facing a dilemma, a dilemma that I am sure is facing many of the other food banks in the various communities through our province. That dilemma is what to do if all of the people that make use of these food banks happen to come out on the same day, because there would not be the resources there, the foodstuffs there, to meet their needs.

I think that it is important that we all, particularly at this time of year where we are approaching the Christmas season, do what we can in our own ways to lend support to these families, to provide some assistance to them, to remember the food banks at this time of year, to make donations to the Winnipeg Harvest, Winnipeg Cheer Board and the other agencies throughout the province that will receive these foodstuffs for these families in our communities.

Before that, I think we have to take greater efforts to create job opportunities for the people in our province because these people do not want to have to utilize the services of the food banks. They are there because of conditions beyond their control, just like we are talking yesterday, and again today, about those that are on welfare. The people who are on welfare, to a large degree, do not want to be on welfare. They were forced there because of economic circumstances beyond their control. The same applies to the food bank use. I think we have to recognize that, and we have to take some serious steps to address this problem.

Transcona has been impacted in a negative way by layoffs over the course of this year. Just last week we had an announcement where some 200 people would be laid off from New Flyer Industries. New Flyer, of course, is one of the major employers in the community of Transcona and has, at this time of year, chosen to lay off their employees. It is very unfortunate because it occurs at the Christmastime when the people need this income to provide the goods for their families and to pay the bills that they have.

This summer, we witnessed the layoff, a massive layoff, of 1,500 people, in the CN shops in my community of Transcona. That is a serious concern for me, having been a former employee of that plant, employee on leave, I might add. There are also another 200 people, during the course of 1991, over 200 who have lost their jobs on a permanent basis in the community of Transcona. It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that there are more to come in January of 1992. Monday, when I asked questions of the Minister of Transport dealing with the railway and the job prospects, I was serious in bringing to his attention that in 1992 there will be more layoffs in the railway; there is no doubt of that.

The recent agreement that the province signed to keep the Winnipeg Jets in our province has had its pros and cons, people on both sides of the argument. I recognize that the Jets play an important role in our province in giving recreational opportunities, or opportunities for people who want to take part in watching the Jets play. They also create job opportunities for people in our city and our province.

At the same time it takes away opportunities for the governments of Winnipeg and Manitoba to lend support to the various community club organizations in the city of Winnipeg and in the province of Manitoba. I will bring to the attention of the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) for his information, I have in my own community two community club organizations now that are in desperate financial straits. One is the East End Community Club which has just recently had its building condemned by the City of Winnipeg, and it puts them in the unfortunate position of having to find alternate means of providing recreational opportunities for the people in the east end of my community of Transcona. The estimates that they have to construct a new building are in the range of \$2 million. That, Mr. Speaker, is beyond their financial capability of handling.

* (1520)

Yet I see at the same time the province undertaking opportunities where they will guarantee funding to the Winnipeg Jets, and I have to question whether or not it is a wise decision to do that looking at the opportunities that are going to be taken away from the young people in my community, because there are no opportunities for these young people, of course, and they will have to seek their activities elsewhere, outside of the community.

Another community club in the east end of Transcona, the Oxford Heights Community Club, has had to scale back its operations for lack of funding which removes recreational opportunities for our young people on the north side of my community of Transcona. They too are without funding to support their total activities that they need.

Yesterday, the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh) questioned the motives of the members of this side of the House when we were discussing the issue of the Rotary Pines project. The member for Assiniboia tried to leave the impression in the minds of some members that we were opposed to seniors housing. Nothing could be further from the truth, because it is we, on this side of the House, who want to ensure that decent, adequate and affordable housing is there for all members of our society, including our seniors. What we want to see is that fair play takes place in the awarding of the funding that goes to support the construction of these projects and that they are in the right location so that they do not impede upon other business opportunities.

It seems strange, some of the members opposite might feel, for me to think about the business opportunities, but the business opportunities would or could have been lost had that building been constructed in its present location because it would have impacted upon the airport operations that would have reduced the opportunities for our Winnipeg International Airport to operate on a 24-hour basis. Had that building structure been relocated to another site more suitable that would not have been impinging upon the airport operations, it probably would have been more acceptable to members on this side of the House.

There are several projects in my community that would like to receive funding to provide the necessary supports for the seniors in the community. The three of them located in my community wanted to receive that funding and were hoping to receive that funding this year. Two of them have had to reduce their expectations. In fact, one outright cancelled their plans to construct a facility and are looking at throwing in their support with one of the other groups in the community. That is the Kinsmen group which has had to withdraw its program to construct seniors housing in my community.

The legion group, Transcona Legion 7, has still had its project on the go, and it is my understanding that they are still in a position where they may receive consideration for funding this year.

I ask the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) to seriously consider this because of the long waiting lists that are presently existing in the community of Transcona for seniors housing. Every facility there has these lists, and it is my understanding that there are several hundred people who have applied for apartment units in this complex which will hopefully be constructed during the course of 1992. Without that, these people will have to relocate out of the community and will have to move away from their families and friends which will create hardship for them.

That is not uncommon, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the fact that many Manitobans are having to move out of our province, and if we look at one of the recent quotes, it kind of gives us an indication of what has been happening in our province.

I quote from *The Globe and Mail*: Today one in every 12 residents lives on welfare in Winnipeg. The city's social services budget dipped into the red on September 30. Unemployment is at a harrowing 11 percent, the highest of any major Canadian city west of Newfoundland. Building construction is at a standstill, investment capital is fleeing the province faster than it is coming in, and there are signs that the surrounding farm economy is mortally wounded. Meanwhile, more skilled professionals are leaving the city than are arriving in search of opportunities—obviously opportunities that exist elsewhere, Mr. Speaker. -(interjection)- It is not over yet.

An Honourable Member: We thought it was done.

Mr. Reid: No, by far, it is not over, Mr. Speaker. There are many issues that I wish to raise to the attention of the government to cause them to pay heed to the needs of Manitobans who need them to have the government take seriously their concerns.

I would like to change direction now, Mr. Speaker, and talk about transportation, which is one of my areas of critic's responsibilities. I will move on to my other critic's responsibility, Workers Compensation, and try and answer some of the questions that the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) had posed earlier when he commented on the comments that I had made previously.

Missing and conspicuous by its absence, Mr. Speaker, was any discussion of transportation in the throne speech. That is unfortunate because there are several major issues facing us in the province with respect to transportation. These transportation areas provide literally thousands of jobs for Manitobans, and without any input from this government or any force being applied to the federal government, we stand to lose a good portion of these jobs in this province. Manitoba has historically been the transportation centre for Canada, and we are quickly losing that title, if it has not already been lost.

In the airline industry, Mr. Speaker, presently ongoing are the discussions of open skies, and there are meetings that have been held out through the course of the fall and summer, and there are more meetings that are taking place during the month of December. One of the major issues that is being discussed is the issue of cabotage. Cabotage will allow the—what we will call—the free trade in the airline industry. That will take away job opportunities in the sense that it will allow foreign carriers, mostly American-based carriers, to come into our country to transport our passengers between cities of our country.

Those jobs have historically been high-paying jobs. Their numbers are rapidly dwindling, and unless we take serious actions to bring pressures to bear upon the federal government, we stand to lose the remainder of the jobs in the airline industry, as they are presently in the city of Winnipeg and the province of Manitoba at this time.

This fall, we had Air Canada reduce its Winnipeg to Chicago service—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Reid: Quite the contrary, Mr. Speaker. We want to see those jobs remain in the city of Winnipeg. Air Canada chose to eliminate the services on the regular business days of the week that prevented the business people who wanted to commute between the two countries to bring those opportunities to Manitoba from conducting their normal course of business. Now what we see is Air Canada is only operating those flights on the weekends for the tourists, and hopefully, some of them will come to Winnipeg. Air Canada chose to eliminate those flights to Chicago when they had a 60 percent fill factor.

* (1530)

The operations out of Toronto to Chicago had a similar fill factor, yet Winnipeg's flights were cancelled, eliminating the opportunities for us to conduct our businesses to bring other opportunities to the province of Manitoba and, hopefully, more employment, but Air Canada chose to move away from that.

Mr. Speaker, I do not even think that we will be anything more than a feeder service, if we can even maintain that, once this federal government concludes its open skies discussion because I seriously think that they will, in the very near future, sign an agreement with the United States. That will mean the end of the employment opportunities for many Manitobans in the airline industry in this province, and we will have very many difficulties in moving about to the other centres of North America.

We have taken the opportunity to write to the federal minister to express our concerns, and we hope that the Minister of Transport for the government has taken similar opportunities to express concerns.

One of the other areas of transportation, Mr. Speaker, that has run into some difficult times is the trucking industry. We raised several issues with the Minister of Transport in the last session that brought to his attention some of the unsafe practices that were taking place in the trucking industry as they attempted to cut their costs, but there are many other issues that still have not been answered. There are questions dealing with the owner-operators that have not been answered by this government, and yet this government has promised that they would deal with these concerns of the trucking industry. They have not taken place to this point. Although I have not had the opportunity to see the bill that the minister has just introduced this afternoon, I hope that his bill dealing with The Highway Traffic Act will amend some of the inequities that presently exist.

(Madam Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

The minister said in his statements to the media in September of this year that Manitoba is looking at easing registration requirements for trucks in an effort to help the beleaguered trucking industry and that the province may introduce greater flexibility so owner-operators, who are presently in serious situations in this province, who work on contract to major trucking firms, can move from one carrier to another without having to reregister their vehicles.

There are many other issues in the trucking industry that have put pressure on these people and has created some very difficult times for them and their families. I hope that the minister will bring forward legislation to deal with those inequities as they exist.

We have seen many jobs disappear in this province in the trucking industry, and it has created serious problems because it has created more unemployment. We have lost jobs in CN Route, Madam Deputy Speaker. We have lost jobs in Peters Transport, Esau Bros, and recently, we saw the bankruptcy of Imperial Roadways, where I believe we lost 85 jobs. If the government does not take some serious steps to address the concerns of the transportation industry, we stand to lose more trucking jobs in this province and probably more industries.

One of the problems I believe that we face is further impacts of the free trade and deregulation as it impacts upon the trucking industry in this province. I believe that, if we do not make opportunities for the businesses here to create employment and wealth for this province, a lot of those businesses will transfer elsewhere and most likely transfer to the United States.

In going through the Speech from the Throne, there are several areas that came to my attention and there are a couple of positive things in the Speech from the Throne. It is not all bad news, although a lot of the information that is in the document is a rehash of previous announcements. There are not many new initiatives that I can see that are taking place.

One of the areas that caught my attention was the new economic development strategy to capture opportunities in the telecommunications and information technology industry. Looking at the recent articles that were in one of the local newspapers, where they talked about the monopoly on the land-based information systems, I have to wonder the direction that the government is taking, and why they would look at placing into the hands of a private company information pertaining to the lives of many, in fact all Manitobans, because a lot of Manitobans have property that is registered and that information will be supplied to this private company.

We look forward to the government bringing forward this initiative to this House, so we can scrutinize the information that is there to ensure that

Manitobans' interests are protected. Looking at what has happened in other jurisdictions in this country, I believe Ontario is one of them that recently initiated this information technology. There were some concerns there. Yet in the province of Alberta, the bastion of free enterprise, we see that the provincial government of Alberta has refused to undertake such a program, and yet we see in this province of Manitoba our own government making moves in this direction.

The government has made several other announcements in the sense of the Churchill rocket range, something that had been talked about in the last session. I sincerely hope that this program will go forward and that Churchill will once again resume its position.

I support this initiative to revitalize the community of Churchill, because this community is in desperate need of some new initiatives that will allow them to remain a vital entity in our province. I will get further into my discussions on that as I talk about Churchill in my comments a little later on.

One of the other issues that could impact upon Churchill is the tourism industry. I have in my opportunities to travel to Churchill this year, and I have had two opportunities to go to Churchill, and to talk with the people. As recently as this summer I was there talking to the people. I believe that tourism for the community of Churchill should actively be pursued.

We listened to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), and I refer to the education as it was referred to in the Speech from the Throne, talk about a new five-year plan, and I think back to what has taken place in my community as it impacts upon the school division and the educational opportunities for the people in my community. We had the minister talk about, I believe it was, a 3 percent increase in funding for the school divisions. I wish to correct for the record that the minister had not given the 3 percent increase in funding to my community's schools but in fact had given two-tenths of 1 percent increase to my community schools, far less than the needs that they had. In fact, I believe they are once again considering no funding increases from the province, and of course, that means that there will have to be frozen wages or there will have to be program cutbacks, service cutbacks in the school division.

One of the priorities the government has indicated in the throne speech is the need for shelters for women and children at risk. I hope that the government will give serious thought to these shelters because I believe there is a strong need to have these types of facilities available for our women and children in the communities who are at risk and have been in abusive situations. I am sure that later in the session I will have the opportunity to discuss that as part of one of the resolutions that have been put forward by members on this side of the House.

* (1540)

The government also talks about total quality management in the health care system. I have had some experience with the total quality management process with my previous employer, and I must admit that I was less than impressed by the effects it was having upon the employees in the industry in which I was previously employed. I hope the government and those who are employed in the health care field will look seriously at the impacts that total quality management can have on their operations.

One area that I think will be positive for the province of Manitoba, and I am hopeful at this time, although we have to wait to see what the legislation will hold and contain, is legislation designed to hold polluters financially and legally accountable for their actions. This is one of the stumbling blocks that I believe have prevented the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) from taking action to deal with polluters that have locations in the community of Transcona. I refer specifically to the Domtar site, and there is one other industry that the minister has failed to take any action on to reduce the pollution that is emanating from that plant. I have pressed the minister for this time and time again, and I have seen little, if any, action taken by this minister.

Previously this fall, the minister, through his taxicab board, was intent on issuing 60 new taxicab licenses that I believe would have seriously weakened the opportunities for those who are employed in this area to have a decent standard of living. We communicated with the minister, and we received answers back that would not take any responsibility for the actions of the Taxicab Board, and then at the same time would not address the problems that those who were employed in the industry had.

Where the government had initially, in its report from the Taxicab Board, indicated that there was going to be at first a \$38,000 fee that was going to be charged to these new licences as they were issued, then the government went back on its word, changed that \$38,000 to a \$100 fee that is charged to all the taxicab owners, so that \$38,000 fee was reduced to \$100. Those monies which were going to be collected were going to be put into a benefit plan for those who are currently employed in the industry to give them the opportunities to improve their qualities of life. The government chose to selectively pick out those things that they wanted from that report and did not initiate the whole report and the recommendations that were contained in it.

In the report, of course, there was also a survey that was supposed to have been done, although I have not seen the results of that survey, that said there was going to be a 20 percent increase in ridership which would have given extra opportunities for those who are employed in the taxicab industry and those who wanted to pay more for these luxury vehicles to be on the road. Of course, this was challenged in the courts and was subsequently thrown out, and now the Taxicab Board has to go back and revisit the process that they had initiated. Had the minister listened in the first place, when we wrote to him expressing our concerns about this, we would not have had the process where it went through the courts.

One recommendation that I will make to the minister in dealing with the taxicab industry, and that is one that has been brought to my attention by those who are employed in the industry, and that is the lack of spaces which are available throughout the city to provide opportunities for these people who are employed to have their vehicles at waiting stands so they do not have to be continually cruising through the parts of our city burning fossil fuels, creating more environmental damage at the same time, and adding to the wear and tear on our road structures. I hope that the minister will draw that to the attention of the City of Winnipeg officials who could deal with this matter.

I hope that the minister, when the Taxicab Board resumes its hearings on this issue at the end of January 1992, will look at all of the recommendations and implement all of the recommendations and not just be selective.

The member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) had talked about the Workers Compensation Board,

and he chose an article that had been printed—I believe it was in the Winnipeg Free Press—where it talked about the 6 percent reduction that had been given to the employers in the premiums that they pay. The comments that I had made when I heard about that were that this would force the injured workers onto the welfare rolls of this province. -(interjection)- Well, if the members will hear me out on this, I will explain because, while I have only recently become the Workers Compensation critic for the New Democratic Party, I have had since my election in 1990 the opportunity to deal with many compensation claims. In fact, over 50 percent of my constituency workload before I became the compensation critic was Workers Compensation related—over 50 percent.

I think in listening to the other members in this House that by far the majority have had similar concerns, that the compensation claims cases, the case workload that they have had to deal with are similar to that which I have experienced in my constituency.

I do not think that is proper, because there are many other as important issues that have to be dealt with. We have to take time away from those issues to deal with the Workers Compensation claims that are equally as important, because in many cases these people have had their income eliminated. They have no means of financial support other than this, and they are still under the care of their doctor and in many cases physically disabled, which would prevent them from returning to any active duties.

Yet we see the Compensation Board cutting these people off without any consultation. They send a letter out in the mail saying, your benefits are terminated as of, and it usually gives approximately a week to two weeks notice. That leaves these people scrambling, because they have to find some means of support for their family. In a lot of cases it can have a negative effect of forcing these people off compensation against their doctor's wishes back into the work force when it is not in their own best interests as far as their health is concerned.

Now that I have become the Workers Compensation critic, of course my workload in this area has increased, and I am now receiving cases from River Heights and Rossmere and St. James to go along with those that I have in my own community of Transcona.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): I have solved three in Transcona and they were NDP claims from 1988.

Mr. Reid: Well, I congratulate the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) that he has dealt with these issues. I hope that he has resolved them in the best interests of those disabled people, because that is what our function is here, to help the members of our constituencies.

Even the media is getting into the act on what has been happening with the Workers Compensation Board, and I read one of the headlines: WCB quick with the runaround, but slow with the help.

It has been my experience, and a lot of the claims that I have coming to my constituency are back injuries, and these people are receiving letters from the Compensation Board telling them that their benefits are terminated and that the doctor in the Workers Compensation Board—and a lot of times it is Dr. Bigelow at the Workers Compensation Board who has made recommendations that benefits be terminated to these individuals.

Yet these individuals will come to my office and they will explain to me what has taken place with their claims and their history and their employment and how they came to be injured. I ask them about their medical histories as it relates to the care that they have been receiving after they were injured. A lot of times they have been through their doctor's office and received an opinion from their doctor and received the care that they needed and have been referred to orthopedic specialists, and still the Workers Compensation Board, after the orthopedic specialists, the renowned people who we have in the city, people like Dr. Hildahl, Dr. McQueen and others, rules against these individuals. Our battles continue with the Workers Compensation Board, trying to bring justice to it so that these people can receive the fair treatment that they need and deserve. I hope that will take place by improvements to The Workers Compensation Act, but looking at what has happened in the bill in the last session, it has had a negative impact. The bill itself forced the people who are on workers comp to go back to work early because their benefits have been reduced from its former value down to 90 percent of net.

* (1550)

The Port of Churchill, of course, has been a major issue and it is presently in the position where it is going to have a decision made about it by the federal government. Churchill only shipped 233,000 metric

tonnes this past year, a 40 percent decrease year over year from last year. This port is in a difficult situation that if we lose grain exports to the Port of Churchill, it will mean the end of the rail line to that community, because it is grain exports now that pay for the rail line infrastructure that is in place there.

If we lose those grain exports, we lose VIA rail service to the communities along the bayline. If we lose the VIA rail and the freight traffic on that line, how is this government going to have its rocket range plans implemented, because that rail line there will not be in a position where it can be sustained financially by the launching of the rockets that this government plans to do, or to take place in the province?

An Honourable Member: You do not have to be a rocket scientist to figure that out.

Mr. Reid: Any lay person can figure that one out, you do not have to be a genius to know and understand that. I think it is important for this government to put plans in place to ensure that the rail line to Churchill remains and that grain exports be increased. They are capable of handling two million metric tonnes and I hope this government will understand and pressure the federal government to undertake that. Otherwise their plans for the rocket range will be terminated.

An Honourable Member: How about the bayline communities? How are they going to eat?

Mr. Reid: All of the bayline communities themselves will also be impacted, and of course they will have no means or no access to the outside world.

With that, Madam Deputy Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to add my remarks and look forward to other opportunities.

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Madam Deputy Speaker, I certainly welcome the opportunity to make a few remarks to the Speech from the Throne. I certainly take great pleasure in welcoming you back to your seat again where you can guide us with your gentleness and your kindness and still with your firmness to see that the business in this House is conducted the way it should be conducted.

I also welcome the Speaker back and look forward to the firmness and the dignity in which he ensures that the business of this House will be conducted.

I want to say to the Clerk's staff that we welcome their efforts and hope that the session they are going to help guide us through will be a successful one.

I also want to indicate to the young pages who are here today that the experience you are going to encounter in these Chambers over the next six to nine months will be something that I would expect you will never forget.

Some of the things that you will hear here are on the lighter side and should be taken with a grain of salt; others are going to be very serious and are going to be somewhat memorable in the history of this province, for I believe that we are going to put forward an agenda that is going to set the economic stage for this province over many years.

When we look back at history, well, one must realize how fortunate we are as Manitobans to live in this great country of ours. When we look at what has happened over the last year in Europe, the Berlin Wall coming down, the unification of Germany and the historical events that are unfolding every day in Europe, and also the virtual disintegration of the U.S.S.R. as we have known it throughout my lifetime and the rebuilding of a privatized enterprise economy in that part of east Europe that nobody had the right to travel in from outside without restriction, and those freedoms which are being given now to the people of the Ukraine and the people of the Republic of Russia and all the other countries that are gaining their independence, one has to wonder what the future for the millions of peoples in that part of the world, as well as the rest of the world, will hold over the next year or two.

The speed at which changes are occurring across the world is an indication as to how quickly we must make changes in our country and in our province to keep up with the tremendous economic impacts that those kinds of changes are having on the whole trading world.

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) of our province and the Finance minister (Mr. Manness) were part of a delegation that visited the U.S.S.R. and mainly the Republic of Russia and were a part of an historic signing agreement between the Republic of Russia and Manitoba to exchange technology and economic development and many other areas.

I believe that we are going to have a tremendous opportunity as a province being located geographically where we are to take advantage of

those tremendous changes that are occurring in that part of the world.

World trade and the global markets are an opportunity that we will and should participate in. I look forward to ensuring, with the changes that we are making internally, that we will be positioned well enough that we are going to be able to take advantage of some of those great opportunities that are presenting themselves, not only in Russia and east Europe and many other parts of the country, but as well as the Pacific Rim countries.

We have the ability and the capacity to provide many of the products that those countries so desperately need. One must take into account the tremendous opportunities that we, as Canadians, have in our privatized economy. We must wonder what some of our socialist friends in this country are thinking and what some of our provincial people, as well as our provincial parties, are still proposing, to socialize virtually in its entirety provinces such as Ontario and B.C. and now Saskatchewan when all of the other countries in the world are in fact turning toward the private entrepreneurial type of an approach to changing their economic paths.

It is interesting when one looks at the report card that has been extended to the NDP government in Ontario, for instance. I suppose they are now the longest standing socialist government in this country, and when you look at the micro-economic policies that they have initiated—the Fraser forum indicates that it punishes success, rewards failure and eliminates choices.

Their budget, which again proposes to borrow their way out of difficulty and borrow their way into prosperity, of course, is going to not create a hardship for the people of Ontario today. No, they are going to pass it on to their future generations, to their grandchildren instead of making the real choices. Instead of creating an economic climate for their government and the people that govern Ontario today, they are going to propose to borrow \$9.7 billion and pass those costs on to future generations. But that is not all, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The deficit that is being projected now is not \$9.7 billion, but it is in fact approaching \$14 billion. Can you imagine the huge interest costs that the province of Ontario is going to incur, and can we imagine what that will do to our economy, the rest of the country, over the next few decades?

I wonder whether we in fact are facing another downturn in the economy because of silly economic decisions and irresponsible decisions that have been made by the NDP government in Ontario.

* (1600)

It is interesting also to note that the province of Saskatchewan is facing another huge deficit, and it is going to be interesting to observe what Mr. Romanow is in fact going to do over the next year to try and stem some of the spending in that province. Are they going to do what the Leader of our official opposition has been promoting when he said, I like the fact that he is raising—and he was talking about the Ontario government—the spending of the province in the long-term solution to get people working again?

If you want to debate with the province of Ontario, my friends, I will debate it and we will debate it with pride any time. Roy Romanow is going to face a similar kind of fate that the Premier, Mr. Rae, in Ontario and his government are going to be facing and that is simply to try and curb the spending to put their own province in a competitive position, as we are trying. I give our Premier of our province and our Executive Council a tremendous amount of credit.

A lot of credit goes to our Finance minister (Mr. Manness) for holding a firm line on spending to 3 percent or less over the last three years to ensure that the people and the business community in our province are going to be able to remain competitive and will be competitive and that we will provide an economic climate that will be competitive to ensure that job creation can in fact occur over the long term, not short term, quick-cure policies like the Ontario government are in fact promoting at this time.

It is our intention to—and, of course, the throne speech clearly enunciates—provide an economic recovery and growth. The establishment of an economic climate over the next while is certainly something that is high on the agenda of our province. Our goal is to get the Manitoba economy growing again and that has clearly been spelled out time and time again. One of the keys to recovery will be our access in the global marketplace.

Whether we like it or not, whether it is labour, whether it is industry, whether it is manufacturing or whether it is the retail sector, in today's global climate we are going to have to be competitive. Some of the changes in the policies, in the international policy-setting forum, will clearly

indicate that we are going to have to be very, very competitive. In order to do that, we are going to have to keep our spending under control. Economically, the world is becoming much more competitive. Advances in communications and technology allow the near instant access to the most remote corners of the world. As a nation and as a province, we will have to be prepared to act on many of these opportunities.

Government alone, be it federal or provincial, cannot expect to bring about economic recovery. We have a plan and we will put in place a plan that involves several key factors creating a positive climate for economic growth, attracting investment and igniting the creative fires within Manitoba. Let me tell you that the business community, the manufacturing sector and individuals are looking forward to helping to form that partnership that will get us down that road of success.

As a first step we must look in-house. It was clearly time to draw the line on government spending. Important changes have to be made in the way services are delivered. We are avoiding major tax increases; we are cutting taxes where possible; we have helped families by lowering personal income taxes; we are increasing the credits, the child credits, for dependents in this province; the education tax has been lowered on farm land in this province. There is no more provincial education tax on farm land.

We continue to pay for past practice of attempting to solve our economic problems by throwing money at them, as the NDP did in their Jobs Fund. We are now paying the piper. Virtually every dollar that this province raises in income tax now goes toward paying the interest that the 15 years of NDP government forced on us. When we talk about getting our children to pay the bill, that is what happens—\$500 million a year now goes toward paying the interest. Can you imagine what we could do in this province with \$500 million annually if we had it to spend, instead of paying the banker in New York, the teachers in California, the Japanese. And the member opposite stands there and espouses the idea, and supports the notion that we can borrow our way out of difficulty.

We continue to pay for the past. I can assure you this government will avoid plunging Manitobans further into debt, a debt carrying a tremendous interest burden.

It is now time to take the next step. We need a new structure, a new way of thinking about our government and how government can foster growth, and that process has been developed. This change in thinking is critical. As I mentioned before, the world is much more competitive and we must attempt to secure Manitoba's place in the global economy.

In reviewing overall progress, the traditional departmental approach, we have seen room for making changes and changes will be made. We want flexibility and we want to involve key sectors such as Education and Training, Natural Resources, Environment, Health, Finance, Industry, Trade and Tourism.

The new approach to economic development involves three key areas: the formation of an economic development board of cabinet; the creation of an economic development secretariat; and the restructuring of the Manitoba Research Council into the Economic Innovation and Technology Council.

The economic development board will be chaired by the Premier (Mr. Filmon). I think that is a clear indication to all of Manitoba that it is of the utmost and highest priority that we start looking at development and economic development in this country. The board will coordinate economic activities across government, create and maintain a positive climate for business and business investment, promote economic linkages between industrial sectors across Manitoba and promote Manitoba's advantages worldwide.

* (1610)

I think the trip the Premier made to the U.S.S.R. and the agreement that he signed with the Republic of Russia is a clear indication of our desire to trade globally. Our Agriculture minister has just recently returned from a mission to Japan, again a clear indication that our agricultural community is expanding to a much greater degree into the world market. It is our desire to ensure that all countries of the global trading nation know where Manitoba is and what Manitoba sells and produces.

The economic development board will be supported by the economic development secretariat. The third and final component of our package for prosperity and economic recovery will be mostly directed and will involve Manitoba and Manitoba people.

The council will also act as a forum for the exchange of ideas between business, industry, labour, government and the research community. The process of research and consultation will assist the council in recommending ways to stimulate innovation growth, sponsoring personal changes between industry and government, recommending ways for encouraging private sector investment and research and development and encouraging the exchange of technology between government agencies, Crown agencies and industry.

We have put forward an agenda in this throne speech that will put this province on an economic recovery and a developmental mode for the next decade. The introduction of the Rural Development Grow Bond Programs, so rural Manitoba can invest in themselves, is an investment tool that Manitobans will use for decades to come and will give them the opportunity and the assurance that we have faith in their ability to develop industries in rural Manitoba, to build those rural communities and to provide jobs without going to the world market to borrow the capital that is needed to build those jobs.

We have introduced the Rural Economic Development Initiative to provide support for better infrastructure in rural Manitoba. We have put in place a program which involved the federal government, the municipal governments and the Province of Manitoba that will put \$90 million into providing support to ensure that sewer and water is going to be available to those communities that have an economical and industrial base and that will allow them to expand that industrial base and to allow their communities to grow. We will assist Manitoba communities with major expansion of their infrastructure.

We will ensure that industries that want to settle in Manitoba are directed to those communities that can best provide the climate for growth in those areas. We will provide and create a program to recruit business from outside of this province. I believe that whether they are in Ontario or whether they are in the southern United States or whether they are in foreign countries, there are industries looking to establish in a climate that is more conducive to long-term viability than where they currently are. There are new industries. There are people with ideas who are looking for the establishment of industries in this province. We will see to it that the climate is such that they will be able to do so.

There was some discussion here just a little while ago about the Churchill rocket range. I note that the NDP opposition are somewhat skeptical when we talk about the viability of establishing a rocket range in that area or whether transportation will be available. Let me assure you, Madam Deputy Speaker, that if this province is serious, and if the people in the North are serious about development in their areas, if we want to work together, it will happen. There are industries that are interested in the old rocket range that is currently there, in developing that rocket range. It will not take much of an incentive to attract them over there, but with an attitude like the NDP has had over the last 15 years in this province, they profess doom and gloom and everybody who is looking to Manitoba for development has heard that doom and gloom from them.

It is the attitude of this Conservative government that has changed the minds of many of those people looking to establish in Manitoba and are now seriously considering coming here instead of staying very often in the socialist-governed provinces of Ontario and other areas.

My colleague the honourable member for Portage indicated a need for tourism development in this province. We have a tremendous opportunity. We have a tremendous resource that is virtually untouched in this province and the people of Manitoba look forward to the province becoming seriously involved in tourism and tourism promotion.

We have an area in southern Manitoba that during the summer months has more beauty than many other parts of this nation and is virtually untouched by the tourism industry. We have, I suppose, an opportunity to sell this province and the beauty that this province provides in the winter, which is virtually untouched. I remember when my wife, Dora, and I travelled to Australia a few years ago to attend an economic development conference. Norway presented a slide presentation—by the way, developed by a young Canadian. This young Canadian under the NDP government had not been able to find a job in Manitoba, and had left Manitoba and moved to Norway and developed this beautiful slide presentation on how to sell Norway. What did they sell? What did they show us? They showed us the ice and snow of Norway and they invited everybody in Australia to come and visit Norway and experience the ice and snow.

We laugh. We chuckle very often, especially our member from northern Manitoba. He says, why would people want to come to Manitoba? It is ice and cold and snowy. Why would people want to come? Many of our people go to warmer climates to get a sun tan. Why should we not invite 80 percent of the Earth's population to Manitoba, 80 percent of the world's population who have never seen ice and snow? Why should we not invite them to Manitoba to come experience Manitoba's climate and the beauty of winter, ice fishing and many other experiences that you simply cannot have anywhere else?

Madam Deputy Speaker, the opposition, in an article in the newspaper, said our Speech from the Throne simply had no substance. Let me say to the members opposite that this government will work with Manitoba's agricultural community to develop solutions for the grave problems facing many of the farmers today, and help them meet the challenges of the future.

We look at what the previous NDP administration has done in Manitoba for agriculture in Manitoba, to promote diversification. We see the virtual desolation in the Department of Agriculture. There was a time some 15, 20 years ago when there was a real effort made by the Department of Agriculture to promote the growing of specialty crops in many of our parts of the province, and especially in the southern part of the province. Yet, during the last 10 years virtually nothing has happened. We have a tremendous potential for the development of industry. The sugar beet industry is a prime example. When we produce less than 5 percent of the sugar that is consumed in this great country of ours, when we produce less than 5 percent of what we consume, yet we only have one sugar processing plant in this province and we have one in Alberta. That is the extent of our total sugar processing ability in this country, yet we could very well produce enough sugar in Canada to supply 60 percent, 70 percent, maybe even 80 percent of those requirements if we only had the will to put in place the policies that are needed to ensure the expansion of that industry.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

* (1620)

Vegetable production is another area. We have a few producers along the Assiniboine River in the Portage area that have done very well and have

proved to the rest of Manitobans that we can in fact raise vegetables probably more economically than many of our neighbours to the south can. Yet what has our government done in the last 10, 15 years to promote that production, to expand that production, to promote marketing of that production of our vegetable industry, to search out new markets? -(interjection)- Well, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) says: Boldly go where no man has gone before. It is certainly with that head-in-the-sand attitude that the former NDP government has had over the last 20 years that has stagnated the virtual development of that industry over the next few decades.

We believe that putting in place programs, co-operative programs that will guarantee loans to cattle producers to keep on feeding cattle in this province will in fact be a huge expansionary diversification project in itself. The NDP government in this province virtually decimated the slaughter industry and the packing industry in this province. They virtually exported it to Alberta and yes, even some to the States, yet we heard them last year and the year before espousing their opposition to the Free Trade Agreement day in and day out.

The last few weeks in this Chamber there has been a virtual deathly quiet atmosphere over there as far as free trade is concerned. We wonder why. Is it because of the Rae government in Ontario has now hired a strange bedfellow? Some of the ideals in an article—I guess it was in Maclean's—it talks about strange bedfellows. Some of the ideals of the Ontario New Democrats are clearly under review, it says here, with the abandonment of public auto insurance in September. I suppose they were going to—maybe they still are—but they abandoned it for now. Premier Bob Rae gave up a cherished party goal. Now Ontario's socialist government is breaking another left-wing taboo by taking advice from a prominent advocate of free trade. In September, Industry, Trade and Technology Minister Edward Philip hired—who? Listen to this—Robert Johnstone as a special adviser to the government on trade policy. When Mr. Johnstone served as Canada's consul general in New York between 1984 and 1988, Johnstone was a high-profile promoter of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. Now Mr. Johnstone is advising Mr. Rae. Mr. Rae's office of course approved the appointment. Strange times make strange bedfellows.

Yet I wonder whether that is the reason why our opposition members are so quiet as of late on the Free Trade Agreement. Is it also possible the job transfers to the United States that they have been espousing over the last couple of years have not been attributed to free trade but actually to the economic climate that has been created over the last 20 years by the NDP and Liberal administration in this country? Could that be the reason? Yet, we have to wonder.

I want to, Mr. Speaker, spend a few minutes of time talking about some of the developments in my riding. I want to extend an extreme appreciation to the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) for continuing the twinning and speeding up the twinning of Highway 75. I understand it is his will that we should in fact see the completion of Highway 75 around about the year 1995. All southern Manitobans are looking forward to that.

I also want to extend my appreciation to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson) for seeing fit to build a new tourism centre at Emerson on the U.S. border. Highway 75 is, of course, one of our busiest traffic routes and has been for tourism as it is a vital artery for the tourism industry into western Canada.

I also want to indicate to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) my extreme pleasure in his having found the wherewithal to build a hospital at Vita. It is an area that has been in the economic doldrums over the past years. The community of Vita and the surrounding area has, for the last 12-13 years, lobbied the NDP government and lobbied the NDP government hard for a new hospital. You just had to walk through the old hospital once to realize why. The plaster was falling off the walls and the pipes were dripping and the floor was cracking. It is because of our change in government and the Minister of Health's will that Vita will now have a brand spanking new hospital.

I also want to thank the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Downey) for putting the provincial bond office and the Rural Development Bond office in Altona, also the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) for putting the Housing office in Altona. We are seeing the expansion of Centra Gas into Gretna which I believe will provide Gretna with the energy that will cause that community to grow. I am also very pleased that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) announced that there would be a new hospital constructed in Altona, and that is a

community of almost 4,000 people now who need good health facilities in order for that community to expand. Yes, I want to thank the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) for building a new school in Letellier. Similarly the previous Minister of Education had simply not seen fit, under the NDP administration, to build a new school there, yet we can.

We have some tremendous opportunities to cause diversification to happen in this province. During the '60s and '70s there was a real effort made by the province, through the Department of Agriculture, to put some specialized efforts and specialized production into southern Manitoba.

* (1630)

The Mennonite community that brought the sunflower from Russia proved we could in fact produce an oil, a vegetable oil, that was superior to any vegetable oil in the world. Sugar beets were introduced into the southern part of the province. With that followed potatoes, corn, peas, lentils, canola, soybeans, buckwheat, fava beans, white beans, pinto beans, black beans and red beans; but that is not all. The Department of Agriculture worked very closely with people like Ben Krueger and others to help them prove that you could in fact grow strawberries very economically, and the U-pick strawberry industry took off from there. Raspberries are now commercially grown in that part of the province, as they are in many other parts of the province.

Another new development is taking place, and that is the commercial growth of Saskatoons and other fruit—apples and watermelons. A lot of you people in this Chamber probably do not know that there are about 20 acres of watermelon grown right in my community, and many of the watermelons that you buy at Safeway in this city are produced in the Altona area in the fall of the year. They are not the huge 20- or 30-pound watermelons that you see. They are probably five- to eight-pound, to 10-pound watermelons that you see. Cantaloupes are commercially grown; horseradishes are commercially grown, and spices such as coriander and dill.

The interesting thing about this is that it presents the opportunity for some brand-new industries, industries that simply would not happen otherwise, and it is the initiative of the local people, in co-operation with the Department of Agriculture,

Industry and Trade, that will cause those kinds of things to happen, but it takes the people to do it. It takes government to support those people in their initiatives to make those kinds of things happen. The Rural Development Bonds, with the guarantee that the government is going to provide, will provide that investment capital that is needed to build the capital structures that will provide those industries.

I want to just very briefly mention the support and the appreciation that I have experienced from the Pembina Valley Regional Water Task Force, for water is after all one of the key elements to ensure that kind of development will in fact take place. Water is one of the commodities that we are very, very short of in southern Manitoba.

The member for Portage mentioned that water task force and its development. I support what that task force is recommending. It is simply our responsibility as a government and all of us in this Chamber, to indicate clearly to those communities that we will provide those basic elements that are needed to cause that growth to happen. I congratulate the work that the Pembina Valley Regional Water Task Force has done and congratulate the initiatives that they have taken to provide direction to us and give us the support that we need to cause that sort of development to happen.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your indulgence, and I appreciate the attentiveness that the Chamber has given me.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, it is once again a privilege indeed to be here to speak on this throne speech. Let me start off by welcoming the pages, and I am sure they will find this to be, at the very least, an educational experience.

Mr. Speaker, for you, unlike the dean of this Chamber, I do not really have anything that I can compare you as to previous Speakers. I must say that the manner in which you have handled the Chamber in the last three and a half years has been very admirable, and my hat is off to you. I know that in the future even though we will continue to disagree on some points, that the respect will be there at all times for you.

Mr. Speaker, this is the third throne speech that we are debating now in 16, 17 months. It should be noted, the reason why we are is because there was a great deal of co-operation from all three political parties in this Chamber in order to get the

government back on proper cycle. Now, I believe that the government had an excellent opportunity in the last number of months to put forward a throne speech that would be worthy of this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, in reading through the throne speech and, of course, listening to what our L-G had to say about the speech, there are three paragraphs that I would concur with entirely and that is, of course, on page 2 where the government has made mention of our Grey Cup Festival, the World Junior Baseball Championship, the World Curling Championships. Those are indeed very positive things that the government has chosen to mention and very worthy of being mentioned, because I believe that all individuals who live in Manitoba have a right to be proud of the province that we live in. I do not think that Winnipeg or the province is second to any other jurisdiction, whether it is in Canada or in the world. Through those functions we demonstrated very well that point on how Manitoba hospitality is second to none, Mr. Speaker.

That is really where it ends in terms of the throne speech. In going through the Order Paper, I notice that we are up to 70 resolutions, which has to be the highest ever in a Legislature. Out of the 70 resolutions we have 28 from the Conservative Party or from the backbenchers. Mr. Speaker, what that tells me is, not only is the government not listening to the opposition parties, it is not listening to their own backbenchers. I am not alone. The member from Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) even made inferences of that nature. To have 28 resolutions I would argue there is more of a policy platform, or more hope in the resolutions that have been put forward from the backbenchers than there is from the document that was presented from the government and the ministers.

I believe that the ministers should think about that very seriously because had they listened to the backbenchers, I believe that we would have had a better throne speech. In the future, Mr. Speaker, I hope we will not see as many resolutions from the backbenchers because some of those ideas that the backbenchers have will be incorporated into the throne speech itself.

There are a number of issues that I wanted to deal with. The first issue is an issue that has been not only the first priority, I would argue, of my constituents but the priority for all Manitobans. That is, of course, our health care system. I do not sincerely believe that there is an individual, at least

I hope there is not an individual, that would like to see the universal access to our health care system denied to any Manitoban. I think it is a responsibility of all of us within this Chamber to do what we can to ensure that universal access is there, not for next year or two years, but for all generations of Manitobans, in fact, Canadians.

The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) time after time has told us about monies that have been put into the Department of Health in terms of increases year after year. Money alone is not what is going to solve all of the health care problems that are out there. We hear still from different ministers commenting in regard to a comment that was made by my Leader out in Minnedosa regarding nursing care home beds. Had a government minister been there, as I was, and heard the full context of the speech, they would have had a better understanding in terms of what the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) was saying.

If we go into many of our health care institutions, our hospitals, you will find that there are a number of seniors who are in our health care, in our hospitals, who would love the opportunity to be able to go into personal care homes, but because of the shortage of personal care home beds, because the government is more concerned about short-term rather than long-term capital projects, what has happened as a direct result is these seniors are being kept in these health care beds.

* (1640)

Well, it costs Manitoba taxpayers a lot more money to keep them in the hospitals than it does to keep them in a personal care home bed. It seems to me that is a common-sense approach and is something that the Liberal Party and the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) has been espousing for the last six, seven years. It is about time that the current minister, in fact, the current government, take the responsibilities of health care more seriously in terms of spending money smarter.

Mr. Speaker, I also wanted to talk about another priority within my own constituency and that is, of course, education. I know that the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) have, in fact, received correspondence from my constituents, associations, regarding some of the conditions of education facilities in the area that I represent. We are talking about overcrowding of

our schools from elementary to high schools. We are talking about the poor standards of classrooms.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I did want to quote from a letter that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) was sent to ensure that the whole government is aware of what my constituents are saying to the government, and it reads: Thirteen years ago—addressed to the Premier—Tyndall Park School was unable to house all of its students and as a result, five portable classrooms were attached to the school. These portables had been previously used in the Elmwood area. Carpenters installing them at that point made clear comment that their condition was less than satisfactory.

Since then, these portables have continued to deteriorate to such a degree that we must now share with you our gravest concerns and request your help in replacing them with high quality relocatables.

It goes on, and I will just make it very brief. Two quotes: The temperature during the winter months is so cold that at times teachers and students must wear their winter boots to keep their feet warm. The ventilation system is so poor that on a snowy day, snow blows through the vents.

Mr. Speaker, some might on the government benches choose to make fun of it. I choose to treat the matter very seriously, and this is something I believe that the government should be treating very seriously.

I have brought up the whole issue of the problems in education through a grievance a couple of years back and expressed the concern to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) that he needs to look at what is actually happening in the northwest end of the city, that you cannot solely rely on the information that you are receiving from the school boards.

In Winnipeg School Division No. 1, Mr. Speaker, there are part-time school trustees. We have the largest school division, some 33,000 students. The resources are not there to ensure that the government of the day is kept informed in terms of the conditions of the facilities out in that area.

Part of the concern, what they are asking for at the Tyndall Park School is that they would like to have high-quality portables. Well, I would argue that might not necessarily be the way to go, according to some of the other residents. Some of the other residents say, well, what is really needed is that we have a community centre within the school, that the

community centre should be operated independently of the school, and the space that is there should be converted into classroom spaces. So there are two problems that could be resolved if there was a positive approach from the provincial administration. It is not to usurp power from the school boards, rather it is to work in co-operation, so that taxpayers' dollars are being spent appropriately, so that the community will benefit as a whole.

We have introduced resolutions in the past regarding the whole need for reform of our educational system. It is long overdue.

We talked about the importance of reducing the number of City Council down from 29 to 15, and we in the Liberal Party supported that. We are the ones who gave them the idea in the first place, but that was an important issue to every resident in the city of Winnipeg.

Another important, and I would argue personally just as important issue, is the whole question of our school divisions. Do we need to have 11 school divisions in the city of Winnipeg? I would argue, no, Mr. Speaker, that we have to look at serious reform. If you take a look at Winnipeg No. 1, and the size of it, and compare it to Norwood Flats; if you take a look at the courses and the property tax that we pay as residents in Winnipeg No. 1, there are many inequities within our school system, and the whole issue of reforming our educational system has to be addressed.

It is a positive suggestion which has come from the Liberal Party for the last number of years, and it is about time that the government take it seriously.

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

I do not believe that the will from the current Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) is there to see that type of reform. I hope that we do see that particular minister, and—which I will be addressing a bit later when I touch upon my more recent appointment as Ethics critic—that minister's heart is in the real needs of our educational system, and for that reason alone I believe that the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) should be replaced by a minister who would take the issue more seriously.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I did want to comment on my new responsibilities and first thank my Leader for trusting me in having the responsibilities that she has chosen to assign to me. I am accepting it as a challenge, to say the very least, and only hope to

live up to some of the expectations that have been put on me.

To start off with, I wanted to talk about ethics. We have introduced, or I have sponsored on behalf of the Liberal Party, two resolutions, two resolutions that have to be treated seriously. The first one that I want to make reference to is one that I believe has really not gained the respect from this Chamber that it deserves. That not only comes from the government, that also comes from the New Democratic Party.

I was inside the Chamber when we had a resolution similar to this resolution introduced, and the government's and the NDP's response to it was, well, the Liberals did it when they were in government in Ottawa: no one was as bad as Trudeau. That was the response. They opposed it because they felt that there was nothing wrong with it. Not only is there nothing wrong for them to do it or nothing wrong for the NDP to do it, nothing wrong for the Conservatives to do it, but the Liberal Party nationally has done it.

Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, we can only do what our jurisdiction allows us to do. If it has been done in the past—and the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) talks about it, and he was critical because I heard his comments regarding it—if it is wrong, it is wrong. You cannot justify it because of what has happened in the past. -(interjection)- No, I am not naive, the member for Flin Flon is naive. He does not understand what is right and wrong. If he checks with his constituents he will find that he is wrong on the issue.

What is it that we are asking for in the resolution? Let me tell you what it is that we want—that all government appointments be ratified by an all-party committee of the Manitoba Legislature. Mr. Acting Speaker, all we are asking for is that every appointment be ratified. We are not saying that every appointment that is going to be brought forward is going to be put to the cross and we are going to be nailing it.

* (1650)

What we are suggesting to the government is at least acknowledge the fact that we need to have a committee system where all parties are represented. We are not saying that the government cannot have a majority on the committee. We are leaving it completely open for debate and that is when this resolution, hopefully, will come up. That

is what I am hoping the government will talk about, not talk about the past, but talk about the merits of having a system of this nature.

When it is introduced I will demonstrate in very clear fashion that it can be done. Now it is just the responsibility of the government. Whether the NDP want it or not, at this stage in the game I do not care because the Conservatives are in government. If the government wants it we will see it brought into being. Mr. Acting Speaker, I hope the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) will change his opinion just in case—well, I do not want to scare anyone—the NDP were to form government, so in fact we would see, still, an all-party committee.

The other resolution deals with the contracts, and really what we are asking there, Mr. Acting Speaker, are two things: a monthly listing of all capital construction and maintenance contracts valued at \$10,000 or more that were issued by the government of Manitoba; and, to add to that, a published monthly listing of all tenders and proposals issued by all government departments.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe those are two resolutions that are worthy of good quality debate when they do come up for discussion inside this Chamber. I look forward to the comments of all three political parties on the issue. I would suggest in closing on those two resolutions that we put the history of political parties and patronage, if you will, behind us, and we start thinking in terms of positive things and how we can change the system so that it will make it better.

Another issue that I do want to talk about—and it is because it has been an issue that has come up in the last two weeks—it is what has been going on with the Civil Service. Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe, contrary to what the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) has said, contrary to the remarks that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province has said, that the public has a right to know if a minister of the Crown has violated the hiring agreement of the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe that the Premier of this province has a responsibility to ensure that the ministers are held accountable, and because the Premier is not taking his responsibilities seriously, it is up to the opposition parties to demand that the report submitted from the Civil Service Commission be made public so that we can find out what the facts are.

All we can do, Mr. Acting Speaker, is bring forward allegations and comments that we have heard, because we do not necessarily have access to the facts. I will tell you I have had more than one phone call; I have had several phone calls of serious allegations regarding the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach).

The Minister of Education has admitted himself that, yes, in some way he did intervene. Well, what is the Premier waiting for? There is a role; that role is not being played properly from the First Minister. I believe that, if the First Minister does not want to act on it, the Minister of Education himself should give serious consideration to what it is that has been alleged and just make a statement in the House whether it is true or whether it is not. But, because he has chosen to say nothing at this point, what is he doing? He is giving validity to the allegations.

As long as he gives validity to the allegations, the opposition is obligated to persist on the matter to ensure that in fact the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), if he has violated the hiring agreement, is disciplined.

The Civil Service Commission—and I know the Premier at the beginning said and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) said, well, the Civil Service Commission is taking care of the discipline aspect—not true. The people who are paying for it is the Department of Education. It is the Department of Education that lost the hiring agreement.

If the minister was shuffled tomorrow, he can go and hire again. It follows the minister; nothing prevents the minister from being able to hire in different departments. I can appreciate why the government does not want to necessarily come clean on this, but I would encourage the Premier to take the allegations very seriously and to take some course of disciplinary action if the minister is not going to come forward and say that he did not intervene.

I think it is very important that that be done. The one case in which it has been alleged, and the minister himself has somewhat acknowledged the fact, was with the Minister of Health's (Mr. Orchard) spouse in the appointment that she received in the Civil Service.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we believe that Mrs. Orchard would have received the appointment in the first place. She had the qualifications; there is no reason why she was not going to get it. What, in fact, the

Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) has done is a disservice because, had the Minister of Education stayed out of it, I would have had nothing to comment on, the media would have had nothing to comment on, because it would have been legitimate.

He did a disservice by doing what he did, and now I would personally ask that the Minister of Education just be straightforward, tell us what happened so that we do not have to pursue further allegations that have been made.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to talk about multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is something that I could probably talk about for the next 40 minutes itself, so I am going to try and keep my comments very brief on it.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

I want to talk about what this government is doing to the multicultural community. When this government was first elected back in 1988, the first thing they did was, they took away the funding responsibility of MIC. The second thing this government did is, they established a multicultural secretariat and put in place a PC candidate from the previous election, from the last election, and then the first thing that candidate does is fill one of the policy analysis spots with one of his campaign workers.

These are Civil Service jobs that are being filled politically. What are the priorities of the Multicultural Secretariat? That is a very serious question and, by having the policy analysis in the secretariat's office, by having the funding responsibility now with a politically appointed board known as MGAC, what has happened is that they have taken the responsibility or most of the mandate away from MIC because they opposed MIC when it was established. They do not trust MIC, and the reason they do not trust MIC is because they felt that the NDP created MIC in order to manipulate the multicultural community.

There might be some validity to that argument, Mr. Speaker. I would argue, yes, there is some validity to the argument. But what do they do in return? They hire, pay full-time wages and manipulate the multicultural community themselves. There is no change; they have just made it more political. What did the Minister of Culture and Heritage have to say when I brought it up yesterday in the House during Question Period? She had the tenacity to say that I

have something against the Filipino community. That is dead wrong. That is very close to a racist comment, one of the most racist comments that I have heard inside this Chamber. I have absolutely nothing against the Filipino community.

* (1700)

What I have a problem with is the method in which this government is manipulating the ethnic community. That is where I have, and the, hopefully, minister-to-be of Culture and Heritage, the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) will start to change some of that policy. As I have said to him in the past, I hope I have not done him any more damage by making that statement.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of room to improve, and it is another position in which there has to be some sort of a change. Hopefully, we are going to see it. The minister has talked about combatting racism. This is maybe a pet peeve of mine, but I have mentioned on numerous occasions, why does she not act on the report submitted from MIC? She gave it accolades when it was introduced. One of the easiest recommendations that she could possibly act on is having the cross-cultural day educational experience for all the MLAs. What is she waiting for? It is completely beyond me.

Is it because maybe I have brought it up that she does not want to have it now? -(interjection)- The Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) says, could be. I hope he is wrong. Those are things we have suggested that the government should do.

Mr. Speaker, how much more time? I do not want to run out of time and not cover my issues.

Mr. Speaker: Eleven and a half minutes.

Mr. Lamoureux: Okay. I am going to have to try and speed up a bit here, Mr. Speaker. I am going to move on to Labour. This is going to be really tough to keep this one short, but we have witnessed a government that has been completely insensitive to labour in this province.

We have seen Bill 70. Bill 70, in a very uncaring fashion, froze the wage of every public civil servant. It did not matter if they earned \$16,000 a year or \$85,000 a year. They did not attempt, there was no sincere attempt from this government to negotiate in good faith with Manitoba's largest union. -(interjection)- Now the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) says we have an agreement. Sure there is an agreement now. I am talking about the previous year. I would find it very tough to be able to sit at a

table after experiencing what happened last year. What about those who were making \$16,000, \$18,000, \$20,000 a year? -(interjection)- The Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) is quite right—I did not have to. But I am sure if the government keeps up in the direction it is going that I will possibly some day have an opportunity to do just that.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen the attitude of the New Democratic Party on labour issues when we had the final offer selection and then do the most irresponsible thing for the workers of this province while at the same time catering to a few, elect, selected union leaders—but forgot the actual worker and the actual union member, which is completely inexcusable. That is why I would argue what Manitoba needs is a government that is going to be able to work with both sides. There is only one political party that can do that and that is because there is only one political party that can understand it. That is the Liberal Party.

Mr. Speaker, there is a bill that I will be introducing regarding the vacations with pay bill which is something that is long overdue. I hope the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) will take the opportunity to speak on this bill and possibly even allow it to pass into committee stage. It sure would be a positive gesture, because as the real opposition, as I like to say, we have brought forward many good suggestions and it is time that the government start acting on some of the more positive recommendations or suggestions that we have brought forward and that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) himself has acknowledged. -(interjection)- The member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) says, more, and we will bring on many, many more.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make one comment on lotteries. The only commentary that I really want to make about lotteries is about what the government has brought into rural Manitoba. We all want Manitoba economically to be very viable—in southern Manitoba, northern Manitoba, throughout the province. The only thing that I would say is, when you bring in a system as you have done, there leaves at least in my mind a question in terms of, well, what about the whole issue of gambling? That is something you have not addressed as a government. What you have done, whether it is the casino, or whether it is the machines in rural Manitoba, is that you have said this is where the money is going to go, but you have never really addressed the issue of gambling.

Mr. Downey: What about it? Where do you stand on gambling? For or against?

Mr. Lamoureux: If the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) will give me more time to speak I will elaborate—if you will allow leave.

Mr. Downey: For or against?

Mr. Lamoureux: If the minister allows leave, Mr. Speaker—otherwise I will continue on.

I want to talk about Workers Compensation. To the government's credit, when I was first elected in 1988, there were a horrendous number of phone calls that I was receiving regarding Workers Compensation. That was the biggest issue from my constituency. There has been some improvement in the Workers Compensation, but we still do have some concerns regarding it.

I could not leave out housing, because housing is something that I really want to touch on. Mr. Speaker, I want to make an offer to the current Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) and any future Minister of Housing, and that is to adopt what I believe is a fantastic policy, and that is to convert nonprofit housing into housing co-ops. It can be done, and I would be more than happy to do what I can to contribute. I would like to even see some sort of a test pilot in my own riding in Gilbert Park where we have a large nonprofit housing complex. So I encourage the government to take that issue very seriously. -(interjection)- Well, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) says, why my riding? Any riding. I am not fussy. It could be any riding, but I would be privileged if the government would allow it to, on a trial basis, on a pilot project as the former Minister of Housing would say—I would be more than happy to do whatever I can to accommodate it.

In regard to the issue of, when we first arrived into the session, domestic abuse, Mr. Speaker, everyone of us wants to do whatever we can to curb domestic abuse. We had a MUPI on it, and it was agreed by all three political parties to allow the MUPI to come to debate, and I am glad that it came to debate. You know, what I would have liked to have seen is consent. Instead of having the MUPI, to have a committee that same day that would have provided an opportunity for the opposition members, or let us leave "opposition" out of it, let us say, any member of this Chamber that had something to contribute to the debate or questions to ask of ministers. Or ministers that wanted to make statements would have had a better forum to do that.

This is one of the things that I think we should be pursuing in the whole discussion of rule changes. It is something that this government has treated very seriously, and I appreciate the work that the current Government House Leader (Mr. Manness) is putting into trying to change the rules of this Chamber so that it will be able to operate better. He will get full co-operation from the Liberal Party.

Mr. Speaker, I did want to conclude on the economy, in the sense that right now things have not maybe looked as bright as many of us would have really wanted to see Manitoba, and I sincerely mean that. I would like to think that Manitoba has the capabilities that we can become one of Canada's leading provinces on all economic indicators, and I think it is a responsibility for all of us to work in co-operation in some part on trying to turn around Manitoba's economy. We see the food banks, the welfare rolls increasing, there are things that are national, worldwide that we are not able to prevent, but there are also things in which we can act upon, whether it is job creation, whether it is agreeing on some of the opposition suggestions, things that we can do jointly in order to try and turn the economy around, because I believe it is our responsibility to give hope to all Manitobans and not only to be pessimistic, but also to provide some source of hope.

* (1710)

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I would have liked to comment on more at length would have been rural Manitoba. Rural Manitoba means a lot to myself and in fact to the Liberal Party. There is the farmers' rally, we were there for the farmers, we will be there for the farmers to hear the concerns. Where we can act, we will act. -(interjection)- It is better than the current Leader who says one thing while she is in Manitoba and says something else when she is in the House of Commons. So the Leader of the New Democratic Party here has really no place in saying what we have said.

Mr. Speaker, on a closing note, I did want to comment in terms of what has happened in the Ukraine. I think it is so encouraging to see what is happening abroad. I think that is probably the best way to conclude my speech. Thank you very much.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): Monsieur le président, je vous remercie de m'avoir offert l'occasion de m'exprimer au sujet du discours du trône.

Avant de commencer, Monsieur le président, je voudrais en profiter pour souhaiter à tous la bienvenue à la présente session de l'Assemblée législative. Nous aurons pendant cette session, j'en suis sûr, l'occasion de traiter de maintes questions et de nombreux projets de loi. -(interjection)- On peut essayer quand même.

(Translation)

Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my views on the Speech from the Throne.

Before beginning, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to welcome everyone to the current session of the Legislature. I am sure that we will have the opportunity in the course of this session to deal with numerous matters and many bills. -(interjection)- We can try, anyway.

(English)

I wish to take this opportunity to mention two outstanding young people from my constituency of St. Norbert. The first, a young man who stands, or I should say sits before us, in the House today as one of our new pages for this session, Mr. James Brennan. James is a student from St. Maurice High School and a resident of St. Norbert constituency. I wish to extend to James and all the pages my sincere congratulations on being chosen for this program. I am sure that the experience will be a memorable and exciting one. Best of luck to all of you, and if you last through it all, we will be surprised.

The second youth I wish to congratulate is a young man from Fort Richmond Collegiate, Mr. Adam Cheng. Next year, Adam will have the opportunity to participate in the encounters with Canada program. The program's goal is to foster Canadian unity by bringing together students from all provinces to discuss topics ranging from Science and Technology to what it is to be a Canadian.

At a time when Canadian unity is most in question, Mr. Speaker, it becomes very important for our youth to discuss and ponder the questions which face Canada today. Maybe these young people can, through these opportunities and discussions, realize the importance of understanding other cultures and ideas. These types of discussions will hopefully bring about a sense of unity amongst young people of this country, whether they be from British Columbia, Prince Edward Island or Quebec. They are all Canadians, Mr. Speaker.

Adam is an exemplary student of Fort Richmond Collegiate earning the top average mark of the Grade 11 class this year. According to his teacher, Adam displays a high level of insight, sensitivity and critical thinking and intellectual curiosity. Adam is but one example of the enormous potential the youth of Canada hold. I wish Adam all the best in this program, and I am sure that you will gain enormously from these experiences.

Monsieur le président, la dualité linguistique du Canada lui permet d'établir des liens variés avec les deux grandes communautés mondiales que sont le Commonwealth et la Francophonie.

Quant au Manitoba, sa dualité linguistique peut aussi lui être utile sur la scène nationale, même si elle n'est pas de l'ampleur de celle du Canada.

Le Manitoba doit donc voir et son multiculturalisme, et sa dualité linguistique, comme des atouts d'une grande valeur. Il est possible, grâce à l'existence d'une importante communauté ukrainienne au Manitoba, de tirer profit des liens économiques créés entre cette province et certaines parties de l'Europe de l'Est, et grâce à l'existence ici des communautés allemande et autres, d'en faire autant avec le Marché commun de l'Europe. Ainsi devrait-il être possible de tirer profit de la vitalité de la communauté franco-manitobaine pour créer des liens entre le Manitoba, le reste du Canada et les différents pays de la Francophonie.

Le "bilinguisme" et le multiculturalisme du Manitoba sont des atouts importants qu'il faut exploiter. Dans nos efforts pour attirer les investisseurs hors-province, on doit accentuer davantage la diversité des ressources humaines comparée aux autres facteurs sur lesquels on se base-endroit central, énergie économique, etc.

Une des raisons pour lesquelles la Royal Trust aurait situé ses bureaux centraux à Winnipeg, c'est l'accès à un réseau de travailleurs bilingues, ce qui lui permet de desservir le Canada tout entier.

Les écoles franco-manitobaines et les programmes d'immersion nous fournissent les ressources humaines bilingues. On peut donc considérer comme investissement le fait de maintenir et d'améliorer notre réseau de ressources humaines bilingues.

Si le Manitoba veut être bien situé au sein du monde des affaires nationales et internationales, il est logique, au point de vue économique, qu'il

protège sa dualité linguistique et qu'il en fasse, de plus, la promotion.

(Translation)

Canada's linguistic duality permits the establishment of varied links with two large world communities, the Commonwealth and the Francophone nations.

As for Manitoba, although its linguistic duality may not be on the same scale as that of Canada, it too can be useful to us on the national scene. So Manitoba must view both its multiculturalism and its linguistic duality as highly valuable assets. Thanks to the existence of a significant Ukrainian community in Manitoba, it is possible to take advantage of the economic ties created between this province and certain parts of eastern Europe, and, because of the existence here of the German and other communities, to do so with the European Common Market. Similarly, it should be possible to take advantage of the Franco-Manitoban community's vitality to create ties between Manitoba, the rest of Canada and the various Francophone countries.

Manitoba's "bilingualism" and multiculturalism are major assets which must be exploited. In our efforts to attract out-of-province investors, we must further accentuate the diversity of our human resources in comparison to the other influential factors, such as our central location and the low cost of energy.

One of the reasons for which Royal Trust would have located its head office in Winnipeg is the access to a network of bilingual workers which permits this company to serve all of Canada.

Franco-Manitoban schools and immersion programs provide us with bilingual human resources. So we can consider the maintaining and improving of our network of bilingual human resources as an investment.

If Manitoba wishes to be well-placed at the heart of national and international business, it is logical, from the economic point of view, that this province protect its linguistic duality and, furthermore, that it promote this duality.

(English)

Mr. Speaker, Canadians are facing what is probably one of their most serious challenges to date. The entire country has become involved in an identity crisis of the largest proportion questioning the need for Quebec's involvement in

Confederation, and the need for a new economic strategy for the nation.

There are many important issues that will be examined in the current round of constitutional negotiations that will affect the future of our nation as a country and, Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to bring to your attention that the rules of this House were written by ladies and gentlemen for ladies and gentlemen, and I am afraid if we ever have a bell ring in this House for a vote that the opposite side of this House is running out to recess with their attitude they have got today.

I was pleased to see the results of the all-party task force, Mr. Speaker, in Manitoba and their consensus report that was presented to the government. As a government, we now have a duty of representing the province of Manitoba and its people in the determination of the country's future. It is we as Manitobans working together, working together with the people that can help to make this country whole. I am a tenth generation Canadian and I am proud of it. Mr. Speaker, I want my children to grow up in a Canada, a united Canada, and as long as we can throw away our partisan politics for just a little while I am sure that we will unify this country as one whole country.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity of meeting with some of the premiers and presidents of other countries and, let me tell you, that Premier McKenna and Monsieur Bourassa, and Monsieur Bob Rae, they all believe in a unified country, and I think if the rest of us can pull together as a team we will see one unified country, and that will be Canada. Vive un Canada uni, Monsieur le président.

(Translation)

Long live a united Canada, Mr. Speaker.

(English)

Mr. Speaker, my constituency of St. Norbert has always shown in the past a willingness to work together to benefit the community.

I wish to mention two recent examples of my community's commitment to innovation and volunteerism. The first, Mr. Speaker, is the initiative currently under way for the St. Norbert Children's Centre. Two day care centres in St. Norbert are in the process of relocating. They plan to build a new facility which will be adjacent to the St. Norbert Community Club. Funded in part by the government, this new initiative will be the culmination of community-based efforts in St.

Norbert. This new centre, Mr. Speaker, the St. Norbert Children's Centre, will hold three separate care sections: one for infants, one for preschoolers, and one for school-age children.

This project has seen immense community involvement and is one example of innovative ideas set in motion by the community and the people of the community.

* (1720)

Mr. Speaker, when my government talks about people working together, this is what we mean.

Mr. Speaker, the second example is an organization within my community which works together to help those less fortunate. The St. Norbert Foundation continues to assist the people of St. Norbert and the province by developing and running worthwhile projects within my community.

In my last Throne Speech reply I mentioned that the St. Norbert Foundation's project to help young people with drug addictions. This project was the construction of Kirkos House, a treatment centre for adolescent females who have chemical dependency. I had the pleasure of attending the opening of this facility on April 19 of this year, along with the honourable Minister of Health, Don Orchard, and my honourable colleague from Fort Garry, Rosemary Vodrey.

This 12-bed treatment centre will provide counselling services to adolescent females who have for many reasons become dependent on chemical substances. This project has been funded in part by government under the Community Places Program and the Department of Health. This is an example of my government's commitment to dealing with the problem of substance abuse amongst our youth.

Mr. Speaker, our government realizes that it will be through working together as Manitobans that the economy will flourish and grow. I have seen this community spirit and commitment to Manitoba during the various tours our government caucus made this year throughout the province. We met with many Manitobans who share the same desire for prosperity as our government does. These many Manitobans are prepared to work together to bring about economic renewal in the province. Economic growth will result from each Manitoban's courage, determination and hard work. Our government is in partnership with all the people of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, not solely a partnership between

government and labour as the previous NDP government has been.

Our government is taking a leading role in developing economic renewal by bringing together people who have the knowledge and expertise to co-ordinate government's efforts in economic growth. Our government has identified Manitoba's competitive ability in the areas of aerospace, environment, health and information technology. Through the Economic Development Board of Canada, Mr. Speaker, greater co-ordination between government departments will result in economic growth in these areas and in any other areas where Manitobans feel they can compete for markets. Already our government has begun to make advances in these areas.

Mr. Speaker, our government assisted the Winnipeg-based company Advanced Composite Structures in their deal with a French company to repair and manufacture metallic and nonmetallic composite components. This project is expected to generate 25 skilled jobs within five years as well as many spinoff benefits through related industries. It is in areas such as these high-tech industries that Manitobans have and will continue to prove that they can compete with other companies and nations.

Mr. Speaker, to support this specific high-tech industry, we are expanding community college programs at Red River to add an area of aerospace technology. In a joint government and aerospace industry agreement, a training initiative will be developed and put into place to support the needs of this skilled work force. Industry projections show the addition of 3,000 new jobs in this field in the next 10 years.

This initiative will allow the industry to meet its future needs from within the province and also to enhance the privatized flight training initiative which will be undertaken at Southport Aerospace Centre in Portage la Prairie. The contribution of this industry is critical, not only in terms of manufacturing, exports and employment, but also in terms of providing high technology window for Manitoba companies, Mr. Speaker. This is just one example of how our government is going to work together with the industry and labour to help pull Manitoba out of the recession and to provide the province with a base to build on in the coming years.

Mr. Speaker, the recession has affected all provincial economies over the last two years.

Manitoba's economy has been affected. However, Manitoba under the leadership of our government has fared better than most. Across Canada employment in the manufacturing sector from November '90 to '91 declined by 4.8 percent, while in Manitoba employment in the manufacturing sector increased by 1.7 percent. This was the best performance of any province in Canada.

In the area of capital investment, within the manufacturing sector compared to the national outlook, which is expected to decline by 2.5 percent, Manitoba is expected to see a 7.7 percent increase from last year, Mr. Speaker. This is the fourth best growth rate amongst all provinces. If we look at the general economic growth, Manitoba is expected to see considerable improvements in 1992.

The Conference Board expects Manitoba's economy to rebound strongly, growing by 4 percent. This is the fourth highest expected growth rate amongst the provinces. The forecasted national growth is expected to be 3.8 percent. Manitoba's growth rate will exceed that of Canada, Mr. Speaker. Our government will continue in its efforts to manage the province in a sound financial manner. As put forward in the throne speech, our government will spend carefully and manage wisely, not as the past NDP government did—spend endlessly and manage irresponsibly. We can no longer spend beyond our means and believe that it will be paid for by future generations.

Too much of the taxpayers' hard earned dollars already go to servicing our debts. Our government, Mr. Speaker, has shown its commitment to seeing Manitobans through this recession by maintaining its promises for the fourth consecutive year to not raise personal income taxes.

Mr. Speaker, this is a commitment that the honourable member from Burrows (Mr. Martindale) disagrees with. He would rather see taxes go up, taking more money out of the pockets of those who need it. He stated it yesterday in his address. Our government is committed to ensuring that Manitobans have the vital health, education, and family services they rely on through sound financial management.

As a part of working to strengthen the provincial economy, the Manitoba government was the first to sign a long-fought agreement on reducing inter-provincial trade barriers. This agreement will eliminate such preferential practices as restricting

tendering in provincially based companies. This agreement will also help to improve Canada's and Manitoba's international competitiveness by enlarging markets for suppliers.

This agreement follows on the heels of the western provincial agreements, to reduce provincial trade barriers which our government, I am proud to say, led the way in negotiating. It is actions such as these combined with international agreements, such as the Manitoba-Russia Agreement on Economic, Environmental and Cultural Co-operation, and a similar deal with the state of Kansas, that will help to fuel the ability of Manitoba to compete internationally.

The government of Manitoba continues to lead the field in areas of protection and enhancement of the environment. Whether it is in the introduction of bills to force companies to be responsible for cleanups of spills or seepage, or the involvement of the public through the hearing on the quality and use of our rivers in Manitoba, one of Manitoba's most outstanding environmental accomplishments is the lead role that our province plays in the development and implementation of sustainable development.

Mr. Speaker, with a Sustainable Development Co-ordination Unit and the round table infrastructure involving people from industry, government and environmental groups, Manitobans can be assured that all views are being taken into account in the development and implementation of these policies. One of the key areas in which the involvement of sustainable development concept is essential is the resource development and promotional industry.

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

In the last session, our government introduced and passed The Mines and Minerals Act, the first act to incorporate the principles of sustainable development. In this session, a new oil and gas act will be introduced to encourage, promote and facilitate the exploration and development of the province's petroleum industry. These acts together will help to ensure that the environment receives the protection necessary to preserve it for future generations.

* (1730)

Mr. Acting Speaker, it is also necessary that the energy policies of our province reflect the concept of sustainable development. I am pleased to see that the Department of Energy and Mines and Hydro have begun to implement conservation policies and

programs such as Power Smart. The protection of our environment is one of the key priorities for Manitobans today.

It is the belief of our government that in order to do its utmost we must involve the public through direct and indirect methods. As a government we have done just that. We have involved the people through programs like the Environmental Youth Corps or Environmental Innovations grants as well as through public representations and hearings. That is one thing the NDP government never did, environmental hearings.

Another concern that is close to the hearts of Manitobans is that of domestic abuse and abuse of children. As a government we have taken steps to protect these people from the dangers that face them today. This session we will be introducing and establishing an office of the Children's Advocate. This advocate will ensure that children in the care of the Child and Family Services system are protected and well cared for, Mr. Acting Speaker. The office will be responsible for making sure that the rights and interests of the children are respected when decisions affecting them are made.

The Department of Family Services is also going to be proceeding with changes such as the implementation of an automated information system and high-risk indicators for the prioritization of cases to improve the management of Child and Family Services cases. I am happy to see the priorities our government is putting on the protection and safety of the province's children as they are one of our most precious resources. We have to make Manitoba a place where children feel safe and protected.

Mr. Acting Speaker, another serious issue that has been getting more and more attention by the government is that of domestic violence. This represents a very serious problem, one that needs to be addressed in as quick a manner as possible. In my reply to the throne speech in the previous session I mentioned that I was pleased to see the Pedlar report commissioned. I am pleased that the report has been released and is being acted upon by our government.

Our government has now set up an 11-member committee to analyze and review the domestic violence report and advise our government on the implementation of recommendations. The first recommendation that was implemented was the declaration of Manitoba as a domestic violence free

zone where domestic violence is viewed as a criminal offence and is treated as such.

Mr. Acting Speaker, our government has not taken this report lightly. Our government has taken its first steps in combatting domestic violence. This fact is clearly seen when examining the statistics about bail releases in the month after the release of the report and the government's support of this harsher treatment of suspected abusers.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I have full confidence in the people of Manitoba. They have constantly demonstrated that by working together they can overcome any barrier or obstacle. By forming a partnership between government and Manitobans, we can, and will, make Manitoba strong.

Our government will continue to encourage and promote economic prosperity. Together with Manitobans we will bring about the economic recovery that has already started in Manitoba.

By building on the fiscal foundation we have all worked so hard to establish, we will create the environment to foster and promote business and job creation for all Manitobans.

Together, all Manitobans, we will build a stronger Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I have a lot to cover today, Mr. Acting Speaker. There have been a number of significant anniversaries for a number of members of this House in the last period of time, and for those of us who were elected in 1981, November 17 marked the 10th anniversary of our election to this House, the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) and in the true academic tradition, the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos) who was elected and took a sabbatical and has now returned to this House—

An Honourable Member: And the member for Morris (Mr. Manness).

Mr. Ashton: Indeed, the member for Morris, I was not going to leave out Conservative members from that side of the House who were elected in 1981, Mr. Acting Speaker.

I have had the interesting opportunity now this past year to also celebrate the first year that I have had the opportunity to represent the new Thompson constituency which includes not only Thompson that I have represented for 10 years, but seven other communities. And I want to say that it has given me

a real opportunity to reflect on some of the changes that have taken place in this Legislature, some of the changes that have taken place in the North. -(interjection)- Well, I do not know if I would go that far, but some of the changes that are taking place at a time when history itself seems to be accelerating, when things that we have taken for granted for many years no longer hold any validity at all, and one can start at whatever level one wants to determine that.

When I was first elected in 1981, it was as part of the New Democratic Party government that was elected in 1981. I was elected by 72 votes; in fact, I remember Conservative members opposite used to remind me that on a regular basis. We were the only NDP government within months because the NDP government in Saskatchewan was subsequently defeated, and we were really, in my ways, in a very interesting position, the only democratic socialist government in North America at the time.

If anyone in 1981 had said that I would be standing here in 1991, well, first of all, I must admit that having won by 72 votes, I do not think that I would have been necessarily expecting to be standing here in 1991. But, Mr. Acting Speaker, when I look across the country—and we have recovered to official opposition status here—but when I see three other provinces now with New Democratic Party governments, and the Yukon Territory, and Ontario, of all provinces, with a New Democratic Party government, Mr. Acting Speaker, indeed, history is accelerating. In some respects, it is certainly improving the political terrain. So I had seen those changes.

Mr. Acting Speaker, when I look back in 1981 when I was first elected, if anyone would have suggested in 1981 that the New Democratic Party would also have the potential of forming a federal government, a federal government, I never would have believed it. That is a reality today. Indeed, that is where we are going to win it next time. Who knows in the provinces of Nova Scotia, where the NDP has been neck-and-neck with the Liberals—Nova Scotia. Even in Alberta, where the NDP has formed official opposition, 10 years ago that would have been unheard of and has a real opportunity to form government in that province. So, certainly, on the provincial level and a national level we are seeing dramatic changes.

Who, of course, could not reflect upon the changes that are taking place in the world? There

are dramatic changes in Europe, Mr. Acting Speaker. I have had the opportunity to observe some of those changes directly. I, as a number of members of the Legislature, was in Europe this past year. I must say if there is one thing that unites us all in hope, it is some of the changes that are taking place, the movement toward democracy. Whether I see it in the case of many east European countries—Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, now incorporated to Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania—where we see the new independence of Ukraine and the tremendous, exciting changes taking place, that is one area we can all look to hope and to the future.

Although I must add a note of caution, because we would be naive in the extreme, Mr. Acting Speaker, to assume that changes that are taking place will all be positive. There is an alarming growth in this world of some of the more negative sides of ultra-nationalism, old historic hatreds that are rising once again. I look in sadness at what is happening in Slovenia, Croatia, in Yugoslavia, republics I know well from my own visits. In fact, I met my wife in Ljubljana in Slovenia. My wife is originally from Greece. I know that area of the world.

* (1740)

I look with sadness at what is happening. We should not assume, Mr. Acting Speaker, that is an isolated situation. There is a lesson to be learned from what is happening both positive and negative in Europe and in eastern Europe in particular. There is hope, indeed, but there are also great problems that can develop from that situation. I think we should also be cognizant of that here in Canada as well, because we cannot smugly assume that we are so separate or different from many of those in Europe who are now going through that turmoil, because we indeed have our own turmoil.

I must say, I agree with the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) when I associate myself with the hope that in Canada, where we are a new country, where we have a history of close to 125 years as a country—relatively young by world standards—that we can learn from history and learn from current history, avoid the same sorts of problems and work for a united Canada, Mr. Acting Speaker, for a united Canada that will work against some of those tendencies that are taking place elsewhere. Indeed there are so many changes that what amazes me in a way is the fact that on a more local level that in

some ways the more things change, the more they stay the same. I have travelled—

Mr. Downey: That is what we like.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Ashton: The Minister of Northern Affairs says that is the way he likes it. That is the traditional approach of Conservatives. As Minister of Northern Affairs, he is certainly doing that, Mr. Speaker. I remember the Sterling Lyon government in 1981. That is indeed one of the reasons why I was elected to this Chamber. It was not very hard to run in the North against a Conservative government that had cut back in terms of job creation and training, had cut back in terms of initiatives across the board, whether it be in health or in education. Indeed we see, the more things change the more they stay the same, because the same tired policies that were rejected in that time are being trotted out again in northern Manitoba.

I look at the minister because, indeed, I have said that where he deserves credit I will give him credit and where he deserves criticism I will give him criticism as well. I will indeed give him credit in a minute for one small change that he may have had some influence on, perhaps prompted by New Democrats; indeed, I am sure of that. If you remember, they have cut job creation. They have not reinstated that in the North. They have cut training. They have not reinstated many of the training programs that were cut.

By the way, we have the dubious distinction of having the highest unemployment rate in Canada in northern Manitoba, of any region. They have cut that. They cut natural resource funding savagely in the North. I know the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) is fully aware of this, because my predecessor as member for Thompson, a then Conservative cabinet minister, in his new role as spokesperson for the wildlife association I know raised these directly with the minister when he pointed out the many cuts that have taken place in northern Manitoba.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives were not happy with that. They went even further in the case of three communities earlier this year, through the Department of Highways and Transportation announced cuts to winter roads into Ilford, Thicket Portage and Pikwitonei. At the time I know the various ministers, including the Minister of Northern Affairs, attempted to suggest that somehow this had

been a new initiative. That came as an interesting comment to people in those communities. In fact, I visited all three of these communities this past fall and each and every one I spoke to expressed surprise. In some cases winter roads had been in place, in the case of Ilford for 20 years, and the winter roads in Thicket Portage and Pikwitonei go back to the mid-1980s on a regular basis.

I remember at the time raising it in this House and other members did in terms of other affected communities, because the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) and the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) both had communities affected by these cuts. I will note that the funding has been reinstated in the Department of Northern Affairs where we had suggested it. I have said always and I will say now that when credit is due I will give it. I will give credit to the government for reversing what would have been a tragic cut to northern Manitoba and to the Department of Northern Affairs, the minister, for reinstating the funding that should never have been cut in the first place, Mr. Speaker. It is still a positive fact that it is being reinstated after pressure from the communities and I know from members on this side. That is unfortunately the only area.

I want to prod the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), if I might. While he is at it there are many other funding cuts and negative policy initiatives being brought in by this government, if he can perhaps have some influence with his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) with the \$50 user fee that was instituted by this government for northern patient transportation—\$50, Mr. Speaker. I have had constituents who have faced as much as five times the \$50 fee, five trips. A cancer patient who has had to travel to Winnipeg for treatment and follow-up medical appointments who has had to pay this five times in the last several months, and this is for follow-up medical care.

I feel it is a sad state of affairs in the province when a cancer patient has to pay \$250, when a cancer patient has to pay anything out of his own pocket, in what is supposed to be a universal system that is based on universal care that is totally against user fees, and I hope that the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) will talk to his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and explain the very serious situation that is taking place.

I hope, in looking at the North, and I just once again visited the communities in the constituency, that the government will look at some of the tragic

cuts that took place in Natural Resources I mentioned a few minutes ago, cuts that affect not only programming and security in our parks, but affect such things as cuts to conservation officers, probably one of the leading players in terms of the environment. I really believe that the conservation officers should perhaps be called environment officers, in their own sense, because that indeed they are, but this government has cut conservation officers across the province, five positions. It is creating serious problems.

I want to talk about cuts that have taken place to lifeguard services, and I know there was a tragic drowning this past summer. I am not suggesting that it necessarily could have been prevented by having lifeguards, I am not trying to blame anyone, whether it be in the department or the government. What I am saying is that Northerners are concerned, and this is the concern they have expressed to me, that because of the removal of that type of protection, for example in Paint Lake, northern Manitoba, that there may indeed be cases where there will be drownings that would have been unnecessary, that could have been prevented, and I am very concerned about them, Mr. Speaker.

I am also concerned about the loss of programming that has taken place, for example, in terms of water safety in many communities and the fact that in a number of communities this past summer the children in those communities were very, very disappointed when they were unable to take part in the water safety programs that have been a regular feature the last number of years, and that is very unfortunate.

I have referenced the cuts in job creation programs, Mr. Speaker. The Northern Youth Corps did more than just create jobs for northern youth, it also created very many useful programs in northern communities and, once again, the fact that northern communities, whether it be Thicket Portage, or Pikwitonei, or Nelson House, or Split Lake in my own area, or the many other northern communities, are pointing to the fact of just how much of an impact this type of cut is having on those communities.

Mr. Speaker, I want to stress for the government that whatever their policies may be intended to be in terms of northern Manitoba one cannot help but believe that in reality they are following through on the words of the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) when he said that Northerners did not know how to vote right. I know when I go around

northern Manitoba the first thing that people ask me is: Are we being punished because we did not vote Conservative? Are we being punished? Well, I must say that I have a tough time, given the evidence of not disagreeing with them when they say that, but you know, the great thing about Conservatives when they are in government is they bring people together because it is not just northern Manitoba, it is not just northern Manitobans anymore.

I do not know if I have time for the list of people that this government has decided it is going to take on, the regions of this province of ours. Well, we know individual groups: the nurses were an obvious target; working people generally, we know that, I will get into that in a minute; the core area of Winnipeg has been an obvious area—

An Honourable Member: Food bank recipients.

Mr. Ashton: Food bank recipients, indeed, in particular; even rural communities. There are many people in rural communities, particularly if they do not happen to be represented by a member of a certain political persuasion, who somehow find they do not get the same types of jobs that have been brought in under decentralization. I will get into that a bit later, particularly the Minister of Education and Training's (Mr. Derkach) role in providing jobs to certain people in certain communities. The list is growing.

* (1750)

Was this an accident, Mr. Speaker? I do not think so, because in 1981 it was very much the same phenomenon. I remember the coalition of people who elected the New Democratic Party at that time. It was very much the same coalition. It was Northerners, people from the core area in the north end of Winnipeg in particular, people from rural areas who had been ignored by the Conservative government. We saw working people, aboriginal people, multicultural people. It was the same coalition.

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Mr. Ashton: In fact the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) agrees. Yes, he says. He in fact should remember that.

Is it just coincidence then? Is it coincidence that this Conservative government, with its majority which it had in the previous time it was in office, is now recreating the same type of coalition. I would submit that it is not only not a coincidence, this indeed is the plan of this government. It is deliberate,

and it is based on cold calculation. I would submit it is one of the most desperate elements in the desperation of their plan in these tough economic times.

The first thing that Conservative governments do is they look for scapegoats. Let us look at what is happening in Manitoba now. You walk to the outside of this building. It is tough.

An Honourable Member: Tragic north reality.

Mr. Ashton: To the Minister of Agriculture, I know the reality first hand. Our family knows first hand the impact of the recession. We have many friends and many people we know throughout this province who are affected. We have record levels of unemployment. We have small business people who are on the brink of bankruptcy, if they have not already done so. We have farmers who are on the brink of bankruptcy. That is how tough it is.

What does the provincial Conservative government do? Do they sit down in their cabinet meetings or their caucus meetings and say, we have a problem here, our policies are not working? They do not say that. What do they do? Do they bring out a plan for action? In the case of the throne speech, which can be a perfect opportunity, do they bring that up? No, Mr. Speaker. In fact in the first few days of this session we are seeing the real master plan of the Conservative Party.

I was going to spend some time on the throne speech. I went through it trying to make notes of new initiatives.

An Honourable Member: Pretty hard.

Mr. Ashton: It is indeed pretty hard. What struck me the most about just how out of touch with reality they have become is a section. It is on page 3 of December 5 Hansard where the throne speech is recorded. I had to read this, because I think it shows just how out of touch they have become.

"For over three years my government"—this is the Conservative government—"has worked hard to build a solid foundation for economic development and growth."

An Honourable Member: Where?

Mr. Ashton: My colleague says, where. I will get to that in a minute.

"My ministers' efforts to control government spending and create a positive climate for investment have been very important in preparing

Manitoba to take full advantage of the national economic recovery.”

Mr. Speaker, first of all, what national economic recovery? Talk to anybody on the streets of Winnipeg, talk to anybody in rural Manitoba or northern Manitoba. What recovery? They want to take advantage of it?

This part about working for a solid foundation, Mr. Speaker; it is a good thing they are not house builders. They have been perhaps in the cellar in the last three years working on the foundation, but the rest of the house has caved in. Our economic structure is caving in. It is collapsing. Look at the city of Winnipeg, the level of vacancies that are here in terms of residential vacancies, commercial vacancies, number of bankruptcies, number of for sale signs, number of foreclosure signs. We are in some tough times.

It is amazing. The Conservative government that just spent three weeks travelling around Europe signing agreements with the Ukraine and with Russia. Are they really seriously going to try and tell people in Russia and the Ukraine how to run their economy with their record here in Manitoba? I would suggest to the government that they stop the drafting of the economic recovery plan for eastern Europe and start working on an economic recovery plan for Manitoba.

So much for the throne speech. I really did read through this throne speech.

An Honourable Member: That is all on the throne speech?

Mr. Ashton: That is all on the throne speech.

Where does the Conservative government go from there? We have seen, in the initial speeches, the approach of the Conservative government. Was it to come out in this debate and start saying what a great document the throne speech was? Was it to come out and say there was a blueprint for Manitoba here? No, Mr. Speaker. The mover of the debate on the throne speech, I think, set the tone when after a few brief comments about the throne speech started talking about the NDP government in Ontario, then the unions.

I think he got the message a little bit mixed up because he said, we recognize that the leadership over there is coming from the union membership, the union membership is what is driving the party. Normally, the line Conservatives use is the union bosses, but I think for the member it was a Freudian

slip, Mr. Speaker, because—and this may be a real revelation to members opposite: there are a number of us on this side who have been quite proud to have been members of unions, to be affiliated with unions, to work with unions for the betterment of working people in Manitoba. We make no bones about that. We make no bones about our association with the labour movement. It may come as a surprise to the member opposite.

This is not a debate on the throne speech. I suppose that the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) could be forgiven if he was somewhat overenthusiastic on that. Then the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger), the normally mild-mannered Minister of Highways and Transportation, got up on a question for the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) on CN Rail job relocation, and I could not believe it when I heard it. I went back and I read it through to see if there was something that maybe had triggered this off. The question, and I will not read it in its entirety, but it was about CN transfers of jobs to Edmonton and what the minister and the Premier were doing about it.

What did the minister do? Did he get up and say, well, we are doing this, we are doing that, we have an action plan? No, Mr. Speaker. The minister got up, thanked the member for asking the question, and then he went on to say the NDP opposition party is basically funded by the unions and is given directions by the unions. There is no mention of unions in there and the Leader of the Opposition gets his directions from the unions as well.

The member for Transcona (Mr. Reid), I believe, has been a union steward for the last 10 years, or something like that, and he can tell you -(interjection)- Well, Mr. Speaker, I know the member for Transcona has not been a union steward for the last 10 years. That is an inaccurate comment, but I am sure if he had been, he would have been quite proud of that.

I am wondering what we are going to hear next from members of the opposition. Are they going to be asking the question: Are you now or have you ever been a member of a union?—because if that is really, really what is on their mind and bothering them, yes, I have been a member of a union.

I, in fact, have walked two picket lines. I was on strike when I got elected to this Legislature. Local 6166 was on strike at the time. Yes, I have walked picket lines. I can list the ones I have walked

recently, Mr. Speaker—the nurses picket line, yes the PSAC picket line. In fact, after I give this speech I am going to go and walk some picket lines to talk to some workers who have been involved.

I wonder how many Conservatives, apart from the member for Portage—and some of us suspect that is why he got booted out of cabinet—have ever taken the time to go out and talk to people who are willing to put their living on the line to work for issues of concern for them, the ultimate sacrifice in terms of labour relations. They are willing to pay the price, to pay the price to stand up for what they believe in, Mr. Speaker. I would say there are only a handful of members across the way that would do that.
-(interjection)-

Well, it was not only the minister as well, the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) after he so eloquently gave the swan song of the Rotary Pines development, Mr. Speaker.

An Honourable Member: He was kind of upset.

Mr. Ashton: He indeed was kind of upset. I suppose, after having got his fingers caught in the cookie jar, so to speak, on the issue, that he must have been frustrated not being able to eat the cookie, Mr. Speaker. They must have been frustrated about the fact that there were some people in this province, most notably the opposition, in particular our Housing critic, who were able to get up day in and day out and fight for integrity in terms of the way in which the Housing department operates, something the minister indeed will have a lot to learn about.

The bottom line is the same old approach again, Mr. Speaker. The Conservatives are looking in this case for scapegoats and the first scapegoat they have come up with is the unions. Some of them call it the union bosses. Some of them—and the member slipped, I think. I think he is going to have some difficulty in his caucus when he came out with a Freudian slip. I think he is probably the only one over there who recognizes that union leadership is elected by—who? The membership. They represent the membership. That is the first thing they have done is they have looked for scapegoats.

There is something else as well, Mr. Speaker, and this goes back to ancient Roman times. I will get into that when I have the chance to complete my remarks next time, because the ancient Roman emperors gave the masses bread and circuses. I will point out when we come back next time that the Conservatives, because of the two thousand years of history, have perhaps missed the point somewhat. They are giving us circuses. The bread, they are giving as well, too, to a few select few. The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) seems to be an expert on dividing up the loaf. I will talk next time I speak about the true facts of the Conservative government.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am interrupting the honourable member according to the rules. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member will have 15 minutes remaining.

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

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Wednesday, December 11, 1991

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