



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

42 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 12, 1993

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

Speaker's Statement

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Routine Proceedings, I have a statement for the House. I must inform the House that Harold Johan Neufeld, the honourable member for Rossmere, has resigned his seat in the House effective May 12, 1993.

I am therefore tabling his resignation and my letter to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, advising of the vacancy thus created in the membership of the House.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Kim Bauch, Shari Kebel, Jacki Meisner and others requesting the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) consider restoring the Children's Dental Program to the level it was prior to the '93-94 budget.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Walter Bonkowski, Tannis Wells, Patti Kirkwood and others requesting the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) consider restoring the Children's Dental Program to the level it was prior to the '93-94 budget.

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Brad White, Greg Cameron, Rod Tutkaluke and others requesting the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) consider restoring the Children's Dental Program to the level it was prior to the '93-94 budget.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Esther A. Inglis, Susan J. Dobson, Dreena Dobson and others requesting the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) consider restoring the Children's Dental Program to the level it was prior to the 1993-94 budget.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Gloria Vanbeselaere, Ollie Bilton, Julie Walker and others requesting the

Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) consider restoring the Children's Dental Program to the level it was prior to the 1993-94 budget.

* * *

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Marilyn McKellar, Stan Struthers, Vicky Yakemishin and others requesting the Manitoba Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) to consider conducting a plebiscite of Manitoba farmers as soon as possible on the issue of removing barley from the jurisdiction of the Wheat Board.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Ms. Cerilli). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with rules (by leave). Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the provincial government is currently reviewing the Assiniboine River diversion project which will include millions of dollars of taxpayers' money; and

WHEREAS the project satisfies the legal criteria set out in the rules under the federal environmental assessment review process requiring a federal review; and

WHEREAS there is evidence to indicate that this proposal will adversely affect the Assiniboine River and its biota; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission has not been given adequate breadth to consider all of the basin-wide effects of this proposal; and

WHEREAS there are no plans to hold public hearings in Winnipeg, Brandon, Selkirk or other communities downstream from the project; and

WHEREAS farmers in many communities such as Portage la Prairie have requested the minister to delay hearings until this fall.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Manitoba Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) to ask for a cumulative basin-wide federal environmental review of the Assiniboine River diversion proposal this fall.

* (1335)

* * *

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mrs. Carstairs). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned residents of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the Misericordia General Hospital has served Winnipeg for over 95 years; and

WHEREAS the Misericordia General Hospital has a long record of dedication and service to its local community and the broader Winnipeg community; and

WHEREAS the Misericordia General Hospital is identified by the residents in the surrounding area as "their hospital"; and

WHEREAS the Misericordia Hospital plays an integral part in maintaining and promoting the health of the community; and

WHEREAS the Misericordia Hospital provides diverse services including emergency, ambulatory care, diagnostic and inpatient services, acute and chronic care which are vital to the community; and

WHEREAS the Misericordia Hospital is currently engaged in developing innovative and progressive community-based outreach programs; and

WHEREAS the Misericordia Hospital is ideally located to be within the "hub" of the health care delivery network for Winnipeg.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly urge the government of

Manitoba to consider keeping the Misericordia Hospital open as an acute care facility.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Ms. Friesen). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the provincial government is currently reviewing the Assiniboine River diversion project which will include millions of dollars of taxpayers' money; and

WHEREAS the project satisfies the legal criteria set out in the rules under the federal environmental assessment review process requiring a federal review; and

WHEREAS there is evidence to indicate that this proposal will adversely affect the Assiniboine River and its biota; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission has not been given adequate breadth to consider all of the basin-wide effects of this proposal; and

WHEREAS there are no plans to hold public hearings in Winnipeg, Brandon, Selkirk or other communities downstream from the project; and

WHEREAS farmers in many communities such as Portage la Prairie have requested the minister to delay hearings until this fall.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Manitoba Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) to ask for a cumulative basin-wide federal environmental review of the Assiniboine River diversion proposal this fall.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mr. Plohman). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS Manitoba has the highest rate of child poverty in the country; and

WHEREAS over 55,000 children depend upon the Children's Dental Program; and

WHEREAS several studies have pointed out the cost savings of preventative and treatment health care programs such as the Children's Dental Program; and

WHEREAS the Children's Dental Program has been in effect for 17 years and has been recognized as extremely cost-effective and critical for many families in isolated communities; and

WHEREAS the provincial government did not consult the users of the program or the providers before announcing plans to eliminate 44 of the 49 dentists, nurses and assistants providing this service; and

WHEREAS preventative health care is an essential component of health care reform.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) consider restoring the Children's Dental Program to the level it was prior to the 1993-94 budget.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Ms. Wowchuk). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the Canadian Wheat Board has played a vital role in the orderly marketing of Canadian wheat, barley and other grain products since its inception in 1935; and

WHEREAS the federal Minister of Agriculture is considering removing barley from the jurisdiction of the Wheat Board; and

WHEREAS this is another step towards dismantling the board; and

WHEREAS, as in the case with the removal of oats from the Wheat Board in 1989, there has been no consultation with the board of directors of the Wheat Board, with the 11-member advisory committee to the board or the producers themselves; and

WHEREAS the federal minister has said that there will be no plebiscite of farmers before the announcement is made.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Manitoba Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) to consider conducting a plebiscite of Manitoba farmers on this issue as soon as possible.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Annual Report of the Manitoba Mineral Resources Ltd. for 1992, and Moose Lake Loggers Ltd. Annual Report for '91-92.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Annual Report for the year 1991-92 of the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation. Members will be interested to note that this report is printed with canola-based printing ink on stock that consists of 25 percent post-consumer and 25 percent pre-consumer waste.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 32—The Social Allowances Amendment Act

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Bill 32, The Social Allowances Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aide sociale) be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

* (1340)

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon from the Yellow Quill School, thirty Grade 5 students under the direction of Ms. Peggy Tidsbury. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister).

Also this afternoon, we have from the River Elm School, fifty Grades 5 and 6 students under the direction of Mr. Al Friesen. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Concordia (Mr. Doer).

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

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Just prior to Oral Questions, is there leave of the House to revert to Introduction of Bills to allow the honourable member for St. James to introduce his bill? [agreed]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

(continued)

Bill 216—An Act to amend An Act to Protect the Health of Non-Smokers

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray), that Bill 216, An Act to amend An Act to Protect the Health of Non-Smokers; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Edwards: Very briefly, Mr. Speaker, this act amends the Act to Protect the Health of Non-Smokers by strengthening it and by assisting in the enforceability of this legislation. This particular provision has been recommended to all members by the Canadian Cancer Society, so I anticipate and am hopeful that it will be passed in a nonpartisan way and with all due speed, so that the Canadian Cancer Society and so that all Manitobans can be protected from the adverse effects of smoke. Thank you.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 217—The Manitoba Environmental Rights Act

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray), that Bill 217, The Manitoba Environmental Rights Act; Loi sur les droits en matière d'environnement au Manitoba, be introduced and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, this bill puts forward a bill of rights on environmental issues for all Manitobans and sets minimum standards of cleanliness of air, water, land and all environmental aspects of our lives, and recognizes them for the first time in this province as rights of the individual.

Mr. Speaker, I recommend it to all members, as the setting of that minimum standard, which is an important right of all Manitobans. It will assist, I argue, the government in its work within the environmental field by setting those standards so that everyone knows and the process can be made more efficient and more beneficial for the individuals in this province. We should not fear putting rights into the hands of individuals in this province.

Motion agreed to.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Health Care Facilities CT Scanners—Operational Funding

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon).

Mr. Speaker, late last week some MLAs attended a fundraising dinner for the Concordia Foundation. I believe the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) represented the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and the Premier at that dinner. The former member for Rossmere was at that dinner, and other MLAs from the northeast quadrant of the city of Winnipeg were at that dinner as well.

Mr. Speaker, at that dinner there was considerable concern raised by the chair of the Concordia Foundation, Dr. Murray, about the lack of planning and the lack of partnership between the community hospital and the volunteers who raised \$750,000 for a CAT scan, and the fact that this CAT

scan now that has been purchased by volunteer fundraising in the northeast quadrant of the city is not in operation.

I would like to ask the Premier: What kind of government process allowed for this kind of situation to develop, where the volunteers and the people in the community feel totally aggrieved by the lack of government follow-through in terms of the program for CAT scans in the northeast quadrant of the city of Winnipeg?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend might recall similar circumstances previous to this one where fundraising efforts were engaged in, with all the good faith that is attached to them, raising money for purposes which subsequently did not receive the approval of government in terms of their installation and their funding. That was the circumstance, for instance, in terms of CT scanning equipment in a hospital in the south end of Winnipeg, 1986, '87.

Mr. Speaker, subsequent to that, we attempted very seriously to bring the best expertise in Manitoba around the issue of the appropriate numbers of CAT scans and where those CAT scans could best be utilized to serve the needs of a population of one million people. I believe it was approximately a year ago that that report was shared with all members of the Legislature. It was a very short report with two key recommendations, one of them being that the province not fund any additional CT scanners for the present time.

Sir, we have accepted that recommendation and have followed on it.

*(1345)

Mr. Doer: My question, again, is to the First Minister.

The people in the community are aware of the report the government has tabled. They have disagreed with the data. They have disagreed with the overall thrust of having patients transferred from a hospital that has that equipment, being moved to other hospitals, being on waiting lists, long line-ups, Mr. Speaker, and, in fact, occupying beds.

The government said it was going to, quote, freeze the operational costs at that time.

Would the Premier (Mr. Filmon) please advise us: When will they advise on the status of not only this CAT scan at the Concordia Hospital, which causes so much concern and has been causing so much concern in northeast Winnipeg, but the status of all the other CAT scans that have been developed and purchased in community hospitals across Manitoba?

There is a state of lack of partnership between the government and the volunteers right across this province, and, Mr. Speaker, we would like to know what the status of this is. We have volunteers who have done work, and they feel very frustrated by the government.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend, as an opposition Leader, now appears to be changing the position that was taken by him as a cabinet minister and by the then Minister of Health under Mr. Pawley's government, wherein they refused a community-based CAT scanner, told them directly, do not operate, install, et cetera.

That was a circumstance, Sir, that we inherited in May of 1988 when we came into office. My honourable friend today wants to now absolve himself from a decision made by him, as a cabinet minister, and the cabinet that he served in.

Mr. Speaker, the issue is a very important one, because in a period of 12 years in the province of Manitoba, the imaging costs of X-ray, ultrasound, CT scanning and MRI imaging went from \$16 million to \$68 million in a 12-year period of time, because there are lack of protocols on access of our most sophisticated imaging equipment.

That is the next engaged goal of a panel of experts, to guide the province in terms of providing protocols for access to very sophisticated imaging services. When that is recommended to government and approved, I am sure we can move with appropriate decisions, Sir.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I asked the question to the government, when we could expect the results of their study and when we could expect some decisions by the government on a state of suspended animation in many of the community hospitals causing a great deal of frustration to volunteers.

I would ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon), when can we expect the definitive decisions from the government in terms of the status of imaging equipment in our hospitals, the operating costs, the savings of operating costs from moving patients back and forth? When can we expect this whole situation to be resolved, Mr. Speaker, so the volunteers and the people in the community know where they stand?

* (1350)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, that process is, again, being engaged in by experts in the field of imaging in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, let me share my frustration with this issue as well, because I want to tell my honourable friend that prior to the purchase orders being placed for those CT scanners in those respective hospitals, there was a meeting held with myself wherein I asked them not to purchase those scanners until we received our imaging report and the recommendations from our expert panel.

Unfortunately, the advice given was not acceded to. I can do no more than provide the best advice to those good-intentioned fundraising organizations as to what would be an appropriate goal of private fundraising to enhance health care. In that case, the advice, unfortunately, was not acceded to.

Children's Dental Health Program Funding Reinstatement

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, at a meeting in Minnedosa yesterday, over 200 people unanimously passed a motion asking the government to review its decision to cancel the Children's Dental Program, based on the fact that the government had not considered much information. In fact, the minister had a paucity—had a real lack of information. Based on that fact, they asked the government to reconsider its decision to cancel the program and consider other alternatives in the department to save money without doing it on the backs of rural Manitoba.

Will the minister reconsider that decision today, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend and I were at the same meeting, but I almost wonder whether it was

the same meeting. He is slightly in error, factually, in terms of the size of the meeting and certainly factually in error in terms of the information presented by myself at that meeting.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I indicated at the meeting that the decision that we incorporated into this year's budget in terms of funding of the treatment program for the Children's Dental Health Program was not a reversible decision, that we had to continue with that decision, and as I have said in this House, no one on this side of the House particularly enjoyed making that decision.

Let me tell you that the meeting was productive because a number of individuals made suggestions that I think are worthy of pursuit and may well enable school divisions to act responsibly on behalf of their respective citizens, as their parents are requesting in some areas.

Funding Reduction Justification

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, yesterday at the meeting we learned that cost to parents and children who utilize the dental program will be \$22 million over three years.

I would like to ask the minister to explain to the people of rural Manitoba why his government is offloading such a cost onto their shoulders.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I heard that comment made at the meeting last night as well, and this morning, as quickly as I could, I put the inquiry through to my program specialists to find out whether they were in receipt of that study because, indeed, we would be interested in seeing it. It was not presented to either my office or departmental staff.

I am therefore unable to comment as to the accuracy of those presented figures, Sir. I do not know whether my honourable friend is helping or hindering, when I do not think he has even seen the study, and if he has, maybe he could indicate more details.

Volunteer Services

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary to the minister: Will the minister consider reviewing one of the expressed alternatives yesterday, that is using volunteers to operate the program, and will he consider maybe

having someone like his big million-dollar American consultants perhaps volunteer some of their time and save us some money, and we could put that money back—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, it is at least refreshingly consistent that my honourable friend only has one idea, and he has already spent the one-time funding to Connie Curran for the consulting contract that the two teaching hospitals wanted us to engage in. I think this is about the 41st time my honourable friend and his colleagues have spent it. Of course, they never quite come to grips with the issue of what they would do to replace the opportunity of savings annually of 10 times that amount which would allow the system to operate very effectively.

Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my honourable friend my solution to the whole issue around funding of, for instance, the Children's Dental Health Program. If I had the ability, I would never have built the \$30-million bridge to nowhere north of Selkirk, and the interest alone would pay for the program every year. Well, we inherited those decisions from Howard Pawley and that incompetent gang—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* (1355)

Children's Dental Health Program Future Status

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, it was very clear that there was a consensus at the meeting last night in Minnedosa, and the consensus was that the Minister of Health did not do his homework, did in fact not consult with any interest groups or any individuals. It was even implied that he might not have even consulted with some of his own ministers.

The question that I have for the minister is: Because there was some constructive criticism that was given to the minister, will he consider acting on some of those constructive ideas, and when can we anticipate some sort of a report back to this Chamber as to what plans are going to be there for the future of this particular program?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, yes, there were some positive

suggestions come out of that meeting and, as my honourable friend well knows—and incidentally, I am wondering who decides the critic responsibilities because it has changed for Health. This leadership aspiration, was the Health critic last night—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Orchard: At any rate, Sir, there were some positive suggestions that emanated from the meeting last night. Clearly, I indicated to those attending the meeting that I would be willing to pursue those ideas, those concepts expeditiously.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the other consensus was that this program in itself has a proven track record and is worthy of keeping.

Funding

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): My question to the Minister of Health is: Would he agree that this particular program is necessary in rural Manitoba and that we need to come up with some form of funding to ensure that it is not going to disappear, so that in future governments there might be the political—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put his question.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, one of the things that my honourable friend I know will share in the preamble of his next question is that consistently throughout that meeting the expressed opinion of, I think almost all, if not all attending, was that the main help of this program is in the prevention, education, fluoride rinse side, in other words, prevention rather than treatment. That is why we made the difficult decision of the elimination of the treatment side of the program while maintaining the prevention, education, fluoride rinse side of the program.

I do not think anyone disagreed with that concept as underpinning the very large benefit of the program. There was concern, of course, as to how it would be undertaken, and I can understand that.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, there was also, to the Minister of Health, a consensus that you cannot have that prevention with only four staff people administering the program—

Mr. Speaker: Question, please.

Staffing

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): My question to the minister: Would he not agree that four individuals cannot administer what he is asking these individuals to do in providing that quality preventive course?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend also listened to the explanation I gave that health curriculum can incorporate dental health education and dental hygiene. Fluoride rinse can and is and can quite consistently be delivered in the school system without the professional staff as it has been in the past. So I have confidence that this fall we will be able to implement that prevention and education program.

No-Fault Auto Insurance Income Replacement—Seniors

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I took as notice two questions from the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock). They were with respect to the no-fault insurance scheme that is proposed for Manitoba.

The first question was that: In Quebec, seniors receive no income replacement after age 67, is that the intention of the Manitoba model?

The answer, Mr. Speaker, is that under the proposed Manitoba plan, seniors who are disabled as a result of an automobile accident will continue to receive income replacement benefits up to and beyond age 65. At age 65, the benefits will be reduced by 25 percent. A further 25 percent reduction will occur on each of the next three years until the benefit ceases at age 68.

This recognizes the fact that most Manitobans have retired by age 65 and at that point begin to receive pension benefits. By continuing the income replacement past age 65 and allowing accident victims to collect pension benefits at the same time, the no-fault plan will in fact result in some seniors receiving more money than if they had continued to work and then retired at age 65.

Anyone who is still employed past age 65 and becomes disabled in an accident will receive income replacement benefits for a period of four years. Full benefits are paid for the first year. The indemnity is

reduced by 25 percent at the end of year one and a further 25 percent at the end of the next three years. Although the income replacement benefit for seniors is reduced after normal retirement age, they will continue to qualify for full medical, rehabilitation and personal care benefits. There is no lifetime limit on these payments.

The second question is: Will pension benefits be deducted from payments under the no-fault program?

The response is no, there will be no deduction of pension benefits from any of the benefits payable under the no-fault program.

* (1400)

Domo Station—Henderson Highway Log Book Inspections

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the Premier a question with regard to the Domo gas leak at 955 Henderson Highway. I asked him why nothing was done when the logs at the station would show that there were at least 20 days of losses of gas.

The Premier said, and I quote: "I can confirm that there has been regular examination of those log books as recently as even within the last 10 days. The department did not detect any leakage by virtue of the measurements in the log book, . . ."

Now, Mr. Speaker, the department spokesman quoted in the Winnipeg Sun said today that there was a major gas loss according to the same logs. Who are we to believe, the Premier who sides with the vice-president of Domo or—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's question is out of order. I would ask the honourable member to rephrase his question, please.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Speaker, would the First Minister clarify who is correct in this matter, himself or the department?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, I would rather have taken the question as notice on behalf of the minister but did indicate that, according to briefing materials that I did have, the losses that were indicated did not exceed the limits that are in the regulations.

Mr. Speaker, the storage and handling of gasoline regulation requires the operator to notify the department when there are four consecutive days of losses above .75 percent or more. Such a reading would indicate something other than expansion and contraction.

As the logs show, there were not four consecutive days with losses at the Domo site in excess of that amount. So I apologize if there was an inconsistency in what was said, but the response is that it did not exceed the allowable under the regulation.

Gasoline Stations Log Book Inspections

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, Domo has been given a variance under the act. I would like to ask the minister, how many other stations have been given similar variances in reporting? I would like to know where the log book is being kept right now and who has it.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice.

Mr. Maloway: My final supplementary is to the same minister, Mr. Speaker.

There are many gas stations that have not been inspected for the past two years. Given the fact that there are obvious reporting discrepancies in these log books, would the Premier attempt to do something to solve future potentially explosive situations and take action?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, without accepting any of the preamble as to the allegations suggested by the member opposite, he, yesterday, indicated that this was one of the gas stations that was on a list of sites at which the tanks were to be replaced. I might indicate to him that in fact the tanks and the piping at this station were replaced, and it was in that process that it appears—and I cannot say until they complete their investigation—as though these are new tanks and new piping in which the leaks have occurred. So it is not just the existence of old tanks that may lead to this kind of situation.

Employment Creation Strategy Government Commitment

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance.

Between the early part of 1988, when this government took office, and the end of last year, 1992, the province of Manitoba lost nearly 41,000 people on a net basis in interprovincial migration. That is larger than the city of Brandon, Mr. Speaker. People are moving to British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario where there are more job opportunities, obviously. Unfortunately, the loss of people includes many talented and well-trained young individuals who cannot find work in this province.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Finance is: When will this government begin to pay attention to job creation in a meaningful way? When will it make job creation the No. 1 priority and stop the outflow of people?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted that the member brings up this question, because as a student and indeed an individual who likes to deal in statistics I would want him to know what I am about to read.

Interprovincial migration, Mr. Speaker, that is net out-migration, started to increase in 1985. At that time it was 1,755 and peaked in 1989 when 10,004 net out-migrated. This was due to the \$800 million in tax increases imposed by the NDP from '82 to '87.

Mr. Speaker, the government's tax policies obviously have turned this around, and now this number has been declining significantly, although still is at somewhere around 6,000 out-migration, but certainly the decline is right, and it is a result of tax policies that for once have been brought back into balance in terms of the last 10 years.

Mr. Leonard Evans: This government beats the former NDP government because your rate of outward migration is far higher than anything experienced under the Pawley years, Mr. Speaker—way higher.

Interprovincial Migration Provincial Comparisons

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, my question is: Why is our rate of net population loss so high? In 1992, only Newfoundland and Saskatchewan lost people at a faster rate. Why do we rank eighth out of 10 in interprovincial migration?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the member for Brandon East did not study the trend in this area.

He praises himself at times for being such a good student in this area of statistics, but he forgot that recent information shows that Manitoba net interprovincial migration losses have declined steadily in recent years from 10,000 in 1989 to 6,500 in '92, an improvement of 35 percent. So the whole foundation of his question is wrong.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, in the early '80s we had no loss. We had an increase in population—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is not a time for debate. The honourable member for Brandon East, with his question, please.

* (1410)

Mr. Leonard Evans: Why is Manitoba doing so poorly in job creation? After five years in office and six budgets, we have 10,000 fewer jobs right now in April of 1993 than we had in the year that this government took office.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, why is the member not so frank as to tell people, when he is asking his question, that eight out of 10 provinces in Canada experienced net out-migration? The two that did not, of course, were British Columbia and Ontario. Everybody who understands the dynamics of population flows in Canada knows those facts, but the member of course refuses to put them on the record.

Mr. Speaker, this government does not at all apologize for all of the policies it has brought into place in support of investment and, indeed, leading to job creation. If the member wants to ask, if he wants me to go through the litany of jobs that have occurred as a result of the taxation measures, the expenditure reduction and the focus on the deficit over the course of six budgets, I would be happy to do so.

Health Care System Transportation Issues

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. I know he will be happy to hear.

The Motor Transport Board is currently considering an application to use stretcher vehicles with untrained attendants instead of ambulances with trained attendants to transfer patients throughout rural Manitoba.

This issue was studied last by the Motor Transport Board in an application about the city of Winnipeg, when a similar application was made, and that board found that they were an economic regulatory tribunal, and I quote: That as to the question of patient medical safety, that has been raised, and the board is not qualified to assess the risk to patients that may be involved, and it would be irresponsible for us to proceed to license these vehicles.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister: What action is the Department of Health planning to take to protect patients' safety and have this matter reviewed by an appropriate board of qualified medical practitioners, given that the Motor Transport Board, by its own admission, is not—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put his question.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, my understanding of ambulance licensing procedures is, they must pass the standards and the regulatory compliance requirements that are part of The Ambulance Services Act in Manitoba. Should they be able to meet the standards of equipment requirements and trained personnel, a licence is granted. If they cannot meet that standard, a licence is not granted.

Mr. Edwards: The minister has obviously not studied this issue.

The last Motor Transport Board report specifically said, because it is a stretcher service it is outside of The Ambulance Services Act, yet it is transporting patients between facilities in rural Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

My question for the Minister of Health: Why is the government not taking an active role to learn about

this issue and protect patients going between facilities who otherwise were taken by ambulance and now are going to be taken in stretcher vehicles with untrained attendants?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, each facility, in terms of accessing patient transportation services, for any variety of reasons, in the provision of care and service, make decisions in terms of the appropriate method of transportation. For instance, some individuals can be taken by car for lab tests, et cetera, and often are. There are a number of services that are supported by fraternal organizations and others to provide those very services in transportation.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of ambulance services, I think my previous answer probably provides the information my honourable friend desires.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, it did not. I would like to ask the minister, will he or will he not take a stand on this issue for patient care in this province, in particular, given that in January of this year the report of Dr. Moe Lerner on ambulance services specifically says, control should be established to eliminate the use of nonambulance interfacility transport services? Is he—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put his question.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend refers to Dr. Lerner and his report, which will be received hopefully within the next four to six weeks. I will be very interested in reviewing the recommendations of the final report when it is received.

In due course, as has been the pattern of myself and this ministry, we will announce any recommendations which are implemented flowing from that report, which I hope to receive in the next four to six weeks.

Education System Extracurricular Activities

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, children in our public school system depend on extracurricular programs to enrich the educational experiences. These experiences are an essential part of what many parents would call basic education. They involve such things as providing supervision for school sports, band and music

programs, yearbooks, special assemblies and events, science fairs, and the list is endless.

In light of the importance of these activities to the quality of education and the fact that these are now being jeopardized, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Education whether she will now admit that through her actions she is directly responsible for the loss of these extracurricular activities in the public school system.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, again, the decisions made by this government were made in the light of a fiscal reality that we believe Manitobans do understand.

I also recognize that teachers are professionals, and as they work out their agreements with their school divisions, I am sure they will be professional in doing that.

Funding

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact this minister said the quality of education would not be affected by her cuts, which is contrary to what is actually happening, will the minister now take actions to restore confidence by withdrawing Bills 16 and 22 and restoring funding to the public education system in this province?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Again, I have to remind the member of a fact that most Manitobans seem to know very well, and that is the fiscal situation, the fiscal reality of this province, also across Canada, and to say to him then that decisions were taken in order—Bill 16—to protect the taxpayer.

I remind him that I believe that teachers are professionals and will be very considering in terms of any of their actions, and also that I believe they will work with their school trustees in making decisions.

Mr. Plohman: This minister is living in an ivory tower.

Education System Funding

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): I want to ask the Premier: In light of the fact that this minister has failed to develop a partnership in education and failed to maintain the confidence of the education

community, will this Premier now direct that these bills be withdrawn and funding restored for the public education system in this province?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the member for Dauphin of course foments discontent at every opportunity and urges professionals to take actions that are not in the best interests of education or the children. Of course, he is the example of leadership that is available for these kinds of decisions.

Mr. Speaker, I say to you that the public deserves better than the kind of representation that they get from the member for Dauphin. They deserve better than the kind of—

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, our rules are very clear in two regards—and I would ask members to consult Beauséjour—first of all, that answers should relate to matters that are raised and also that members should not make personal charges or attribute unworthy motives.

The member for Dauphin is speaking on behalf of a lot of Manitobans, and it is about time the Premier understood that and started answering their questions.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is not a personal charge.

* * *

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), like the member for Dauphin, is speaking on behalf of his union friends and not on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that there are many fine, qualified and committed teachers out in the schools of Manitoba who are dedicated to the children whom they teach and will indeed not be caught up in the kind of rhetoric of the member for Dauphin or the member for Thompson.

* (1420)

Aboriginal Friendship Centres Funding Withdrawal Impact

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, in March, without any consultation, the

Minister of Family Services cut funding to the friendship centres and instead gave tax breaks to the corporations.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to forward to the minister several hundred more petitions I have received opposing the friendship centre cuts.

Has the minister now done a study on what the cuts have meant to friendship centres in places such as Lynn Lake?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Indeed, I have had the opportunity to meet with the umbrella organization that represents the friendship centres and acknowledged that the different friendships centres were reliant on provincial funding at different rates. The average amount of funding that they depended on was about 12 percent of their budget from the Province of Manitoba, and we have challenged them to continue to provide whatever services they deem appropriate with the funding that they have available to them.

Funding Review

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, unlike the minister, I did consult with the users and in Point Douglas alone, over 90 percent say this government made a terrible mistake because the friendship centres are not an advocacy group.

Will the minister now review this issue?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I have indicated that we did meet with the umbrella organization for the friendship centres and have had discussions with them to look at the programming that they choose to proceed with. With some 88 percent of the funding that is in place from other sources, I am sure that they will provide a valuable service for their communities.

Assiniboine River Diversion Environmental Review

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, the former MLA for Portage la Prairie is going to court over the Assiniboine diversion claiming the water sale from the town must go before the Public Utilities Board. We know that the current MLA has succumbed to pressure from that community and is also speaking in opposition against the project.

My question for the Premier: Will the Premier admit that the sale of water from Portage la Prairie is a major change to the Assiniboine diversion project and have this project begin anew, the environmental assessment process?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting the tack that is taken by the member for Radisson. The member for Radisson on the one hand, like the rest of her party, says that this proposal should not be reviewed by the Clean Environment Commission because there is not enough information on it. Then, on the other hand, she says that she has already concluded that it is bad and it should not be developed.

Before anything has even happened, Mr. Speaker, she has already made up her mind that the project should not proceed. At the same time, she rests on her defence that she does not have any information on it. I think that is a wonderful example of how New Democrats make decisions. The people of Manitoba do not want that.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Nonpolitical Statements

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might have leave to make a nonpolitical statement. [agreed]

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to invite all members of the House to join with me and, indeed, I think all Manitobans, in celebrating Manitoba's 123rd birthday today. Although the proclamation of the Manitoba Act was made on July 15, 1870, we celebrate our birthday on May 12, the day in 1870 when Royal Assent was given to the Manitoba Act.

On our centennial in 1970, this Legislature recognized the importance of this date in our history and designated May 12 as Manitoba Day in perpetuity. Every May 12, we formally recognize that with the passage of the Manitoba Act, Canada recognized the vast potential the western prairies could offer a young country. It was the moment Manitoba became a partner in the building of one of the largest and greatest nations in the world.

Manitoba Day is a time to reflect on who we are, where we have come from and what we have

achieved. We are many cultures and heritages with a wide variety of languages and customs, but we are all proud to be Manitobans.

Manitoba Day is also a time to examine our present and anticipate the future. Across this great province, Manitobans will be recognizing this significant day in many different ways.

A Citizenship Court took place in Room 200 of this Legislative Building earlier today that welcomed 49 new Canadians to life in Manitoba as Canadians.

This evening, the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson) will host the Prix Awards. These awards recognize the leadership of individuals and groups who have enriched the lives of all Manitobans by their contributions in the areas of culture, heritage, recreation and multiculturalism.

In communities across this great and beautiful province, Manitobans are celebrating the day in their own unique and special ways. Manitoba Day is the day we officially recognize and celebrate our neighbours, our friends, our community members, Manitobans everywhere, for it is the individual strength, talent and determination of each Manitoba citizen working hard and contributing every day that has made our province such a special place in which to live, to work and raise our families.

On Manitoba Day, we celebrate the fact that the incredible talent and ability of Manitobans has been felt in virtually every facet of life within our Manitoba communities and around the world. In creating our own successes, we bring world attention to the talent, ability and potential of Manitobans everywhere. We follow in the time-honoured footsteps of our parents and our grandparents and their forebears who worked hard, believed in their own abilities and had an unwaivering will to succeed.

In the process of creating our own success, together we created a greater opportunity for all Manitobans. Most importantly, along the way, Manitobans have never forgotten to give something back to the society that has been so good to all of us.

As Manitobans, we are still dedicated to our communities, our neighbours and our friends. In

this rapidly changing world, this community spirit is something to be truly proud of. It sets us apart from so many places. This Manitoba spirit is the cornerstone upon which we have built a successful, thriving and caring society upon which we will continue to work side by side to build a strong Manitoba, a Manitoba rich in new potential and achievement. This is the very essence of our celebration this Manitoba Day.

I know that the ability and the strength of Manitobans will lead the way in Manitoba, in Canada and in the world. I am proud to be a Manitoban.

Today, I ask all members of the House to join with Manitobans across our beloved province in recognizing Manitoba and her citizens. Happy Manitoba Day.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Wolseley have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, I rise to reply to the Premier and his recognition of Manitoba Day.

I want to commend the government for continuing the tradition that was begun by the New Democratic Party, when in office, of celebrating Manitoba Day and also of the Manitoba Prix Awards. I welcome the presentation of those prizes this evening and congratulate the recipients of those prizes.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take notice of a new way of celebrating Manitoba history, and that is the students' fair that is going on at the Convention Centre. I particularly want to commend Mr. Doug Taylor, a teacher at Kelvin High School, who has been one of the moving forces behind the creation of that new festival.

Mr. Speaker, May 12, of course, is an invented tradition. It is a tradition which gives us 123 years of history which, of course, for the aboriginal members of this Legislature, we all know that there is at least 12,000, if not many more years of Manitoba history. So when we celebrate Manitoba Day on May 12, we should be very clear that what we are in fact celebrating is a European construction of our provincial history.

History, too, is not just a celebration, which so many people tend to see it as, but it is an intellectual reflection upon our past. It is the way in which one generation relates to the other and takes meaning from the actions of the past. It is so often of course the story of the victors. Those who win get to write the history. Whereas the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has, in all good intentions I think, reflected upon the activities of individuals in Manitoba history and their celebration and place in our past, I want to draw attention of the Legislature to three organizations who have made very distinct collective contributions to our history.

* (1430)

One of these is the Manitoba Historical Society, the most long-lived heritage organization in the province, originally composed of people who saw themselves as the leading citizens of the province. They were, of course, descendants of one particular group within the province, the Anglo-British heritage who tried to define Manitoba history as a heroic progress of the Hudson's Bay Company of Lord Selkirk and the sturdy Scots pioneer.

Another organization which I would draw the members' attention to is on the other side of the coin in a way, the other side of the river, the Société historique de Saint-Boniface, organized in 1902 by Bishop Langevin. Like the Manitoba Historical Society, the Britannic perspective on Manitoba history, the St. Boniface Historical Society also sought to use history, sought to use the past of Manitoba to create for itself a place in a growing English world.

St. Boniface was a small community, increasingly overwhelmed in the 20th Century by the English-speaking people of Winnipeg and the West. They saw themselves very much as the cornerstone of a much larger French empire in the West, not just the small village on the banks of the Red River. They sought to commemorate not Lord Selkirk, not the Scots pioneer, but of course La Vérendrye who gave them that sense of the wider French world of Manitoba and western Canada. And we know, of course, the monuments in the 1930s, in the 1970s and in other years, too, the monuments to La

Vérendrye which have in fact focused the attention and the celebration of the French community in Manitoba, a very different sense of the past of Manitoba than that presented by the Manitoba Historical Society.

There is a third theme in Manitoba history and that is, of course, the one that the minister and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) have referred to today, and that is the role of the noncharter groups, as they are sometimes called, the multicultural perspective. There are so many ways that I could draw the attention of the House to the activities of the multicultural heritage societies in Manitoba, but I want to select from this the Rhineland Agricultural Society, because it was one of the earliest and it is one of the most unusual. I want particularly to draw the attention of the members and to celebrate in fact the spirit of J.J. Siemens of Altona, who was the founder of the Rhineland Agricultural Society, I think a Mennonite, very widely read, and of a very liberal spirit, who contributed a great deal to his community, but particularly sought to use the past to create a greater sense of the Mennonite presence in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, what we have done from these themes, from the Anglo theme, from the French theme, and from the many multicultural strands of Manitoba history is to gradually create a sense of a multicultural ideology for Manitoba. We take it for granted now, but it has really only been there since the 1970s. It is an important change, and it is one which the older generation of Manitobans perhaps now is ready to accept in a way which they would not have accepted in the 1930s or even in the 1950s. It is one, I think, which gives us hope.

If we look again at that often-quoted phrase of Sir George Etienne Cartier as he piloted the Manitoba Act through the Dominion Parliament, I think perhaps he would have welcomed the new sense of multiculturalism in Manitoba and have seen it as setting us on the way for a destiny perhaps as yet unfulfilled when he said that he hoped the new province of Manitoba would always speak to the northwest, the language of reason, truth and justice. I think the new sense of multiculturalism in Manitoba sets us on that path.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Leader of the second opposition party have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I rise today along with the Premier and the member for Wolseley, to celebrate with all Manitobans a celebration, a true celebration, of Manitoba's heritage in the celebration of Manitoba Day. In this, Manitoba's 123rd birthday, we have much to be grateful for as Manitobans, because we do live in harmony with one another. This particular Chamber does not always reflect that, but when quite frankly we look at what is going on in the rest of the world, the kinds of debates that we engage in here are those done in a sense of participation in a heritage that we value and which we wish to contribute to.

The member for Wolseley made a reference today to the Heritage Fair which is being displayed at the Convention Centre. The principal sponsor for that Heritage Fair is the Charles Bronfman Foundation which was a foundation which in itself has a heritage here in the province of Manitoba, although it is presently focused in the city of Montreal.

They have been responsible for a number of projects, one of which is the heritage minute project which in turn focused on two significant events in the province of Manitoba. One, of course, was the contribution of Nellie McClung, and the other, Valour Road, a street in this particular city which had its name changed as a result of three individuals, all of whom won Victoria Crosses and all of whom, as a result of living on this street, had the particular street changed.

I hope that members here will in fact go to the Heritage Fair today, because what we are seeing really for the first time in the province of Manitoba is a reflection of social studies and English projects similar to what has been done in math and science in math and science fairs for a great many years. I think this encouragement among our young people to foster their knowledge of Manitoba's heritage is a valuable thing.

On a personal note, I must say that the representative for the Bronfman Foundation at the Convention Centre is my daughter Cathi who works

for them on this particular project. So that is where my particular interest lies in this particular Heritage Fair.

We must remember that in terms of the activity which takes place in our province, that we have not conquered all that we would like to conquer. We must strive together as legislators to ensure that there is in fact the kind of justice that Etienne Cartier talked about, the kind of forward thinking that he talked about, so that each and every one of us from our aboriginal peoples to those who take their citizenship oaths today, will feel that they have a joy in the participation and equality of opportunity in the province of Manitoba.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you call second readings, Bills 30 and 31 in that order, and then following that, adjourned debate, Bills 16 and 22.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 30—The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Culture (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Bill 30, The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi concernant les personnes vulnérables ayant une déficience mentale et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Gillieshammer: Mr. Speaker, today I have the pleasure of speaking in support of Bill 30, The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability and Consequential Amendments Act. In very basic terms, this bill is about respecting and protecting the rights of the mentally handicapped and their families.

Our government recognizes that vulnerable Manitobans living with a mental disability have the same rights as all citizens to participate in making decisions affecting their lives. We believe that individuals with mental disabilities should have the

opportunity to make their own decisions and direct their own lives with support if necessary. We recognize that many vulnerable Manitobans have the capacity to make these decisions on their own or with the support of families and friends. We recognize that other vulnerable Manitobans may require some assistance at times in making decisions in specific areas of their lives.

* (1440)

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

Some individuals may require help with personal care or property matters. Some may require assistance at particular times or in particular circumstances, and in some cases the support these individuals receive from families and friends in decision making may need to be legally sanctioned. In these cases we have recognized a need for a responsive model for substitute decision making. We recognize there are varying needs at varying times that require flexibility in government's response.

In the past the legislative framework governing decision making for vulnerable Manitobans has not recognized this range of capacity and circumstance. In fact, under Part II of The Mental Health Act, if a mentally retarded person, to use the language of that act, appeared to require some assistance in making decisions to meet his or her basic needs, all of the individual's decision-making rights were removed through an order of supervision.

Bill 30 takes a very different approach. It recognizes our government's preference that individuals should be allowed to make their decisions on their own or with support from families and friends. Through Bill 30, our government proposes that when and where an individual living with a mental disability needs assistance, a process be in place that provides for the participation of the individual and respects other tenets of due process. This bill then recognizes and protects the rights of Manitobans living with a disability to be self-determining where possible and to receive assistance where necessary in a manner which respects their dignity, independence and privacy.

As I referenced earlier, this is a very different approach from the current legislation and reflects the evolution of attitudes towards and services provided in support of adults living with a disability. Prior to 1970, services to Manitobans with disabilities were delivered almost exclusively by institutions. In the following two decades, greater emphasis was placed on providing service in the communities and encouraging these vulnerable Manitobans to participate more fully in their communities. In the early 1970s, the Manitoba government became directly involved in providing community-based services to individuals with disabilities. Throughout the 1980s, jurisdictions across North America undertook initiatives to move many of these individuals from institutions to community-based homes and centres.

However, providing services in the community did not necessarily lead to these vulnerable Manitobans participating to the greatest extent possible in community life. Even with this move to community-based services, many Manitobans living with mental disabilities still led largely separate lives and have often been denied the opportunity to make personal decisions.

The challenge then was not just providing services in the community but providing the mechanisms to enable these Manitobans to live as independently as possible and participate as members of their communities. For many Manitobans, the current Mental Health Act Part II was a barrier to the goal of living as independently as possible. This in part was due to its scope and intent to establish procedures for providing supervision and institutional services to adults living with a mental disability.

Our government recognized the changing times, changing attitudes and the increasing awareness and application of individual rights. In response, we undertook a series of initiatives to support Manitobans with disabilities to live as independently as possible.

Our strategy began with two important consultation initiatives. In June 1990, the Working Group on Community Living was established to

explore innovative ways of enabling Manitobans with disabilities to live more independently, and in the spring of 1991, a community-based review committee was formed to conduct province-wide consultations to address concerns about provincial legislation affecting adults living with mental disabilities. The focus of this review was to examine the present Part II of The Mental Health Act and to develop new legislation emphasizing the rights of persons living with a mental disability.

As part of this, a discussion paper was developed with more than 30 organizations invited to respond. As well, the committee held a series of public meetings across the province and undertook a satellite cable TV presentation that was broadcast throughout the province.

During this process, the committee listened to Manitobans living with a mental disability, to their families and friends, to those who provided service and to others who advocated on their behalf. Bill 30 reflects the recommendations of this consultative process.

The community-based principles and values guiding the development of this legislation and our government's broader approach to improving the quality of life for Manitobans living with disabilities has roots in a number of factors. There has been increased knowledge within the field of mental disabilities.

Families and friends of Manitobans with disabilities have been advocating to ensure that the rights of mentally-disabled persons are recognized and protected, and the implementation of legislation such as the Human Rights Code and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms has raised the general profile of individual rights.

Our government has listened to Manitobans living with mental disabilities and those speaking on their behalf. In response, we have taken steps to provide these vulnerable Manitobans with the means to enhance their ability to live as independently as possible and to participate in their communities. Our government believes the key to this goes beyond recognizing the rights and abilities of Manitobans living with a mental disability. Our

government also recognizes and sanctions the role of families and friends in providing a community-based network of support.

As we all know, personal relationships provide needed support in each of our lives. Similarly, people with mental disabilities benefit from and rely on their personal support networks in their daily lives. Their network is varied. It can consist of family members, friends and service providers.

Our government recognizes the valuable role this network provides in assisting mentally disabled adults, and we certainly support that network, first and foremost, as the preferred means of supporting individuals living with a mental disability. In more formally recognizing this role, we are embracing a true community-based approach that we believe has the greatest potential of ensuring the self-determination, independence and dignity of adult Manitobans living with a mental disability.

As I stated earlier, our government's approach to improving life for Manitobans living with mental disabilities has been guided by extensive consultations with the community. Through this process, we have developed a framework of guiding principles which appear in this new legislation. These values are important, not just in developing Bill 30 but also in providing a framework for our overall approach to services to Manitobans living with a disability.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I urge the members opposite to endorse these principles and the overall intent of the bill to support and protect the rights of persons living with a mental disability. We have listened to the community to ensure that the legislation meets the needs of persons living with a mental disability. Our government has demonstrated its commitment to improving the life of these Manitobans in recognizing that individuals living with a mental disability should have the opportunity to make their own decisions and direct their own lives.

We are taking another step to the larger goal to assist these Manitobans to live as independently as possible in their communities. By helping them reach their full potential, we are also enriching the

lives of all Manitobans. I am confident that after careful review of this proposed legislation, all members will provide their support for Bill 30, The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability and Consequential Amendments Act.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 31—The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act

* (1450)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Culture (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Bill 31, The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-maladie, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Orchard: Manitoba Health is currently in the process of reforming the existing health care delivery system in this province. To be effective and to reach our stated goal of affordable quality health care for all Manitobans, these reforms must cover every aspect including the various acts and legislation under which we operate our health care system.

I have on several occasions gone on public record in stating we will make changes to health care legislation whenever and however they are required. For these reasons, we have brought forth proposals for legislation which will enhance our ability to meet our health care mandate and provide the legislative authority to facilitate change.

The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act deals expressly with two provisions of the current act: that of the designating authority of the minister and matters that can be dealt with by regulation approved by the Lieutenant-Governor. This amendment act will clarify the regulatory powers of Manitoba Health and provide the legal authority to

designate institutions or organizations for funding purposes.

With the recent appeal court decision, there are severe limitations on my ability as Minister of Health to determine the delivery points or locations of insured services essential to the health care of Manitobans. Under the proposed changes in this act, the act will broaden the definition of a hospital to mean an institution or organization that is not a hospital but that provides facilities or services in Manitoba for, or ancillary to, the treatment or diagnosis of disease, illness or injury and that is designated in the regulations as an institution or organization to which this section applies.

Another amended clause has a distinct inclusion of organizations that will allow the Minister of Health to designate other approved facilities for funding purposes. This will then provide the authority to make the budgetary provisions of the act apply to the approved facility. The amendment is required to ensure that the wording in this section is broad enough to allow us to include facilities providing services ancillary to diagnosis and treatment.

It is an important part of our drive to provide Manitobans with quality health care, to expand our ability to move beyond traditional institutions in nonhospital settings where desirable or potentially more effective.

The new facility proposed for the Canadian Red Cross is an example of the type of facility we are intending to cover with this amendment. The proposed change in this act also extends to the section concerning regulations by Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. Previously, the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council was permitted to make regulations designating the benefits and services a person is or is not entitled to. The proposed act before the House requires, as a condition of this entitlement to benefits, that services be provided in a specified hospital or facility or any class of hospital or facilities by a specified class of medical practitioners or other health care professionals or under any other circumstances or subject to any other conditions or limitations that the regulations may specify.

Under the regulations of The Health Services Insurance Act in its present form, we are concerned about very specific limitations placed upon our ability to meet the health care needs of Manitoba.

Currently there are a great variety of medical and other health services that are not insured unless they are delivered in a specified facility or provided by a specified practitioner. Dental surgery, for instance, psychological and dietetics services, audiology, physiotherapy and occupational or speech therapy are not insured unless received in an approved hospital.

Mammography and CT scans must be provided in a designated facility. Complex lung-function tests and provocation studies are not covered unless provided by an appropriately trained physician. The proposed changes laid out in The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act provide the express authority to set conditions or limitations on insured services as well as on excluded services.

These changes are necessary and necessary now and provide the legal authority for present administrative practices and will reconfirm the long-used authority of government to manage appropriate health care service provision.

The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act will permit us a greater degree of flexibility in providing the level of health care Manitobans have a right to expect. It will provide the government of Manitoba with the authority to control where and by whom care services are to be insured. We believe this legislation is absolutely essential to enable Manitoba Health to adhere to our realistic and crucial need to provide efficacious insured services that have identifiable benefit in improving the health status of one million Manitobans.

I commend this legislative bill, this amendment bill, to all members of the House and would ask their consideration and debate for speedy passage of same.

Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

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

Motion agreed to.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 16—The Public Schools Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second readings, Bill 16 (The Public Schools Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les écoles publiques), on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Education and Training (Mrs. Vodrey), standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I looked forward to being able to speak on this bill today. Before doing so, I would be remiss if I did not indicate that it is going to be rather unfortunate that the former member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) will not be able to hear my comments today. I could not help but note the significance of his departure today.

I do think that regardless of some of the political backdrop that may or may not be discussed, I think it would be remiss if we did not comment on that, Madam Deputy Speaker, in fact wish the member well. It has certainly been interesting the last five years in this House or was interesting with the member for Rossmere here. He certainly kept this institution honest, probably internally within his caucus as well, or at least tried to.

It is interesting, because it was very much a follow-up to his career in the accounting field. He certainly raised many fiscal issues over the five years he was in here. I must say, Madam Deputy Speaker, I do not know if I always agreed with member. I do not know if I often agreed. I do not know if I ever agreed. Well, I guess maybe on a few issues but, besides that, he was a very outspoken individual, certainly added a lot of interest to the debates in this House and his comments will be missed.

I wanted to make those comments today in the preliminary part of my speech, because too often we tend to not mark the milestones that occur in this House until perhaps a later point in time. I expect that people might comment on that particular member's contribution and there may be in fact various other people who will be commented on in

the next few months who will be leaving us in terms of provincial politics.

Certainly, I wanted to begin today and, as I said, mark this significant occasion. It is going to be an interesting next few months, shall we say, as we see what is happening with the government opposite.

I want to say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that speaking of Bill 16 and the situation the government finds itself in, I do find a tie-in with what is happening. I really think this government is beginning to fray at the edges, to come apart even at the seams on a number of the key issues that are before Manitobans. I am quite amazed actually. I have had the luxury, and certainly it is a luxury in this House, to observe governments come and go in terms of different political persuasions and the life cycle of governments, shall we say. Every government does go through a life cycle. Sometimes there is something of a second wind, a resurrection even, politically for some, but governments go through a life cycle.

* (1500)

What I find increasingly, Madam Deputy Speaker, is that this government's agenda is basically proving to be a weak one, proving to be one that is not in keeping with the times, and in fact what they are actually putting in place in terms of policies and programs is not consistent with what even they were talking about as recently as the 1990 election.

That is becoming particularly clear in terms of education. Madam Deputy Speaker, this government in the last election and in the 1988 election was very clear. They talked about maintaining education standards. We have seen that repeated in throne speeches and in budget debates, talking about education being a priority.

Oh, I asked the simple question today. Has this government made education a priority? Has it improved standards? Has it been innovative?

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): You have got to be kidding.

Mr. Ashton: Indeed the Liberal Leader says, you have got to be kidding. Indeed they have done nothing of that sort. They have appointed a number of commissions, a number of studies. They have

consulted—and I use that in a quotation marks sense—on issues on the one hand, but on the key issues of the day, when it comes to funding, when it comes to working with school boards, working with teachers, staff and parents, we see quite a different approach from this government. Nothing could be clearer than Bill 16.

Bill 16 is clear evidence of the fact that this government has failed on each and every promise it has made in terms of education quality and standards and innovation.

An Honourable Member: And taxes.

Mr. Ashton: Indeed it is a question of taxes as well, because one of the other key planks in the last election was the government basically said they were going to preserve services and they were not going to raise taxes.

Well, has this government not raised taxes? I mean, has anyone been into a coffee shop recently? Has anyone bought a coffee, a donut, a Big Mac or gone downstairs? I mean, Madam Deputy Speaker—[interjection] the vending machines. It is interesting because, you know, they still have not acknowledged that they raised taxes. Where you were not paying anything before in provincial sales tax, you are now paying 7 percent. I mean when you paid no provincial sales tax on meals under \$6 because that was considered to be a tax in that case that would be unfair because it would affect low-income people, in particular, people of modest incomes.

There is no new tax over at Dubrovnik's. If you go and you pay \$20, \$25 per person, you are not paying any new taxes. You already pay the 7 percent. But if you go to the diner, and you order a meal that costs \$3.99 or \$4.99, the Salisbury House, it costs you more money. Is that not a tax increase? What is it? I know we have redefined the rhetoric around here.

This government likes to use the term "contribution" now. Madam Deputy Speaker, is that a contribution? Is it voluntary? Well, of course not. It is a tax, and a tax is a tax is a tax. A tax increase is a tax increase is a tax increase. I want to put that in perspective because, when the Tories in the last election said they would preserve services and not

raise taxes, what they have done is they have reduced services and they have raised taxes. It is as simple as that.

You know, it is even more of a direct tie-in with Bill 16. Bill 16 deals with the whole question of education funding and deals in terms of property taxes, school taxes. The government has the nerve to say that through Bill 16 somehow they are preventing property taxes from increasing.

Madam Deputy Speaker, what are they doing? What they do is they put a cap on the ability of school boards to raise revenue locally. It is a concern to many school boards. I spoke to my school board on Saturday. I had a meeting with them, and they are very concerned because it has taken away their right to be able to decide revenue in co-operation and conjunction with the people that democratically elect them, the residents of the local school district.

Is this government actually saving people money on their property taxes? Is it saving them money? Well, this government is also the government that is eliminating \$75 of the property tax credit. In the case of people who are paying limited taxes to begin with, they are now being forced to pay \$250 minimum—[interjection]

Well, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) talks about contribution again. I am wondering what is going to happen next. Is the government going to issue charitable status to this government, issue tax receipts for charitable contributions?

It is not a contribution. This is not a charity. If you do not pay it, you are going to have all sorts of people breathing down your neck saying, wait a sec, you have to pay that tax. You are not entitled to the full tax credit that you had previously. A tax is a tax is a tax, and a tax increase is a tax increase is a tax increase. It is as simple as that.

So what is happening is, on the key issue of property taxes, after unloading onto the municipal levels of government and seeing local property tax rates increase, and after, now saying, oh well, we are not going to let school districts raise your taxes by more than 2 percent, they are now cutting in terms of the property tax credit.

So it means if you own a home or if you are a renter and you pay property taxes, and that includes most people in this province, the net result at the end of the year is you are going to have less money. If you are unlucky enough to be in that group that is going to be subjected to this poll tax, as we have described it, you are going to pay quite a bit more, hundreds of dollars more. This is the sense of equity here.

You know, we can debate this on various different issues. The bottom line is this bill, whatever it does in terms of school districts, is fundamentally, in terms of the other issues, antidemocratic. I find it ironic because one issue that came up when I met with my local school board was the dichotomy that we see here between the public and the private school systems.

This government has dramatically increased the funding to private schools, and private schools have an ability to raise revenue. How do they do it? They do it through tuitions. They do it through tuitions.

They have dramatically increased over the last number of years the amount of funding that is going to many private schools. While not all of the private schools are clearly elite schools, there are a number of very significant schools that are nothing more and nothing less, charging as much as \$7,000 a year for tuition.

I am not one that criticizes people that send their children to private schools. Such is their right. But I do criticize the government that while on the one hand is cutting back on the public education system and hamstringing democratically elected school boards, it is allowing private schools, with the additional funding they are receiving, to be able to raise their revenues through increased tuitions.

We are already seeing the results. I have seen in my own constituency where private schools, thanks in no small measure to the provincial government's increased revenue—do you know what they are doing, Madam Deputy Speaker? They are advertising for students.

They have enough money to advertise for students at a time when some of the most basic needs are not being met in our educational system.

We have a government that, through the support to private schools, is indirectly supporting private schools being able to advertise to increase their revenue base by taking more students out of the public school system, thereby cutting back on the kind of input that we have in the public school system from those students.

(Mr. Bob Rose, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

It is a vicious circle, and I ask, is that fair, is that equitable? That was one very major concern. No one is telling St. John's-Ravenscourt that it cannot charge anything more than X amount for tuition, Mr. Acting Speaker. The elite schools will be able to do whatever they wish. They will be able to charge whatever the market will bear and, recognizing that many parents are willing to pay significant amounts of money for their children's education, there will be people who will pay the \$7,000 tuition fees. Not all are necessarily people who are millionaires, there are many people of modest means.

The ironic part of it is those people who care about their children can go to private schools and pay more than they would have to if their children went to the public school system, but this government in this bill is saying that, locally, the parents and, more generally, the electors in the school districts cannot do the same.

* (1510)

In Thompson, for example, we are seeing the impact of budget cuts in my own school district of Mystery Lake. I want to give you a clear indication of what has happened. In Thompson last year, the school district, because of the pressure that they could see coming in terms of cuts in educational funding, eliminated a number of positions, a number of programs in the school district. This year they had to reinstate a number and did it, by the way, Mr. Acting Speaker, in conjunction and co-operation with teachers, because they were concerned about the impact it was having on the quality of education.

Mr. Acting Speaker, let us take that the next step forward. They also held the line on school taxes last year, and so when they were faced this year with this cap, the elimination of funding as well, the combined impact of the 2.7 percent and the 2

percent cap, they are in a position now where they are being indirectly penalized for having been responsible last year in not raising taxes to the degree to which they could avoid it.

Let me take you ahead to the next year. Assuming this government continues to show its lack of concern for education and brings in further freezes in funding or reduction in funding, you are going to have a school board with less funding. At the same time, you have inflation in terms of teachers' salaries, in terms of staff salaries, in terms of costs, so costs are going to go up, funding will either continue to be at the low levels or will go down. Add in the fact that they cannot increase revenue by more than 2 percent from that portion of revenue that is coming from the local ratepayers. What do you end up with? You end up with the situation where whole programs offered by the school district will end up being potentially cut.

Mr. Acting Speaker, let us put that into perspective. What kind of programs could be affected? I graduated from the Thompson school system in 1972, and I want to indicate that one of the best things that has happened in our community since that time is some of the additional programs that have been added and supported by local residents. When I graduated from high school, from R.D. Parker Collegiate, there was no band program. There currently is. We have one of the best band programs, certainly in the province, but within western Canada. We have international acclaim, and you should see the enthusiasm of the parents, the students, the teachers and staff and the support for that program.

I look forward to the time when my daughter, who is currently in Grade 5, very shortly will be able to become part of the band program. It has been a very positive experience. Where would you end up, if you end up with the kind of circumstances we are going to see in the next period of time, if the school district had to start looking at programs like the band program? I hope there will be continued support. But what do you do?

There is one kind of program, the TAG program. You know, one of the biggest complaints with the

public school system is that there is not enough ability to deal with the special needs of students. That includes a broad definition of special needs. It also includes gifted students.

You know, Mr. Acting Speaker, the irony is there are a limited number of school districts that have been able to bring in TAG programs, talented and gifted student programs, and in many ways provide what many parents are seeking through the private school system.

There are really two kinds of private schools in Manitoba, and I think we sometimes tend to lump schools in together. I think virtually all are technically, what one might call, parochial schools in the sense that there is a religious affiliation in most cases.

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

Even some of the schools that are elite schools, that affiliation is certainly there, but there is clearly a difference in many cases between those schools that market themselves, if that is the term, because in many cases it is direct marketing, or are perceived or in actual fact are seen as providing a quality education because of the kind of resources that they have.

When parents send their children to St. John's-Ravenscourt, it is not because of any religious affiliation of St. John's-Ravenscourt. People from a variety of faiths are attending the school. It is because, Madam Deputy Speaker, it is perceived as providing quality education. But this is the ironic thing. Through Bill 16 and the combined impact of a cap on the local ability to raise revenue and the cuts to education, you are putting that kind of program at risk, the TAG program. So that is the kind of programs that could be impacted.

Let us talk about other programs in my own school district. Will French Immersion be impacted? Traditionally what tends to happen when one looks at programs, the last-in, first-out syndrome tends to develop. French Immersion is having a dramatic impact on this country. The number of students enrolled in French Immersion in my own community is very significant.

The bottom line is, I think, within a generation if we can keep this country together through such spontaneous developments as French Immersion with a kind of broader linguistic and cultural and I believe eventually political understanding that it will bring, I think there is real hope for this country.

In fact, when I look at what has happened in terms of Constitutions, it is very clear that Constitutions are not going to keep this country together, Madam Deputy Speaker. We may not have any constitutional change for quite some time. What will make the difference will be that grassroots support that one sees from young people and the impact of such educational initiatives as French Immersion, a spontaneous initiative of parents enrolling their children in a program that I think is fundamentally a Canadian program. I think it is very unique, and I think it is tremendous in terms of the impact it can have.

We have two French Immersion schools at the elementary level and a high school. What is a school board going to have to do? Close down one of the French Immersion schools? Cut back in terms of the program that exists? How do you do that? You cannot in midstream cut a grade. You need continuity of people being able to go through from early entry French Immersion through to graduation. That has happened.

There are people going through the entire Thompson school system right now. Both of my children have been enrolled since kindergarten, and I look forward to the day when they can graduate in Thompson from that kind of program.

What kind of pressures do you put on them? [interjection] The member opposite asked if I can converse with them. Let me put it this way, I can understand what they say probably better than they can understand what I say when it comes to my level of French. I am absolutely astounded. My daughter in fact recently competed again in the provincial Concours d'art oratoire at College St. Boniface and she came in second for the province. She came in first last year and, quite frankly, I was amazed. These were both French core programs.

There was a specific competition also in terms of French Immersion.

I was very impressed by the fluency of the children involved. I am sure there must be a lot of other parents out there with children enrolled in such programs who are shaking their heads, because I remember how difficult it was for me in high school to learn my level of high school French. When I see children who are in Grade 1 and Grade 2—my children right now are in Grade 3 and Grade 5—it is tremendous the language ability. My children are lucky to be able to speak three languages: English, French and Greek, my wife's mother tongue. The bottom line is, it is just tremendous the ability of children.

You know, these are the kinds of programs that are new. They have really developed in Thompson, for example, only the last 10 years. I am very concerned about when you get the combination of a bill like this and funding cutbacks and what it is going to do for education. Just look at special needs and children who need greater assistance in school, greater support mechanisms.

Let us take Thompson as an example. Thompson has a significant number of students that move into the community from surrounding communities. There are often different grade levels, there are often language adjustments, there are most often cultural adjustments as well. Very much we are in a very similar situation in School Division No. 1 in Winnipeg, in that kind of adjustment process.

There is a very high degree of mobility between outlying communities and Thompson. One of the reasons why Thompson has continued to steadily grow in population after dropping to a low of 11,000 is not because of expanded numbers of jobs at Inco. The actual number of jobs has decreased over the years. It has been because of some of the educational programs, just the general mobility of people moving to Thompson, becoming a regional centre.

Madam Deputy Speaker, those resources are being strained as it is. The bottom line is, it is a very difficult adjustment process. If one does not have

adjustment programs in place, those children end up being those that drop out of school, and that is the end result of not having those types of programs in place.

* (1520)

What is the impact of dropping out of school? I was reading some statistics on the impact that one's schooling has on employment. It is really staggering. If you were to go back 10 or 20 years ago and check the employment rate for those who did not complete high school, you would find there has been no change. In other words, over the period of time from 20 years ago, currently, if you have not completed high school, you have a very poor chance of gaining full-time employment. That is particularly the case amongst women still—I believe the figure is around 30 percent—but if one completes high school the number increases dramatically.

Over that 20-year period, the more one has obtained an education, the more one has been able to get in the workforce. That has been particularly the case amongst women who 20 years ago were the minority in terms of post-secondary enrollments, particularly at university, and were also even in many cases a minority in terms of high school completion.

The reason many women have been able to get into the workforce, and there are still barriers, has often been through education. It all ties in together. You cannot have a long-term economic strategy without having an educational strategy. Madam Deputy Speaker, that became very clear to me when I recently spoke to students at R.D. Parker Collegiate, along with the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) and our M.P. for the area, Rod Murphy. It was interesting. Rod Murphy, a former teacher—in fact, he was my teacher, myself a former graduate of the school.

Madam Deputy Speaker, people I think have lost sight of how difficult it is right now for many of the young people going through high school. It is very easy for us in this House to try and speak for them, but we are not going through what they are going through now. I just compare myself, when I

graduated from high school, and the opportunities that I had then. Even in those days there were limits because of the single-industry nature of Thompson, but I could work at Inco in the summer. I did on many occasions. I could work full time and did as well. I could basically work my way through university.

You cannot do that anymore, Madam Deputy Speaker. Inco does not hire that much in the summer, has virtually no summer jobs at all, these on-and-off-again hiring freezes. So even that is not available. There are a few more educational opportunities now but not that many for those coming out of high school. There is the first year Distance Education program and some IUN courses. Many of the other programs are not targeted towards those coming out of high school, so the education situation has not improved that much.

What I find particularly frustrating, Madam Deputy Speaker, is when I receive the surveys I did. I surveyed all the high school grads last year. I have done this on a regular basis since I have been elected. I got a very interesting response from the only young woman to go through the carpentry course in high school in Thompson who completed that—certainly a major achievement—and wrote to me and said she has been unable to find any job at all using any of the skills she used in carpentry. She said, what was the point of breaking that ground, as she did, to find only within six months to a year that she was looking only at the same kind of employment she would have looked at if she had not made that effort. That is the situation that is happening with many young women. It is happening with many young men in communities, such as Thompson, throughout this province.

That is what I want to urge, Madam Deputy Speaker, is that people view it in that perspective. Education and economic development are linked. They cannot be separated. I would suggest that one of the major problems we have in this country right now—I think it is general to North America as well—is we are looking at a situation where we are looking at jobless recoveries. We are looking at not educating our workforce to keep up with the new

demands in terms of the labour force. We are looking at antiquated systems that leave those high school students and recent graduates of high school in limbo.

Many European countries, when you reach the age of 13-14, you have a meeting with a counsellor. You are basically offered as many as three or four different careers, jobs. You are trained for it. You have a guaranteed job when you complete the training. How many young people in this province would love, Madam Deputy Speaker, to be able to have that kind of opportunity? These are things that are going to be affected by this kind of legislation as well.

I look at, for example, some of the discussions I have had with the school district and I have had with teachers in terms of the appropriateness of curriculum and programs that are offered. Madam Deputy Speaker, the bottom line is that we are not keeping up with the times in terms of dealing with some of the changing demands not only of society but of students themselves.

What particularly concerns me is the fact that this government, while on the one hand has been appointing various commissions, including the Roblin commission on post-secondary education and others, has sort of a two-track process for education policy in this province. There are reports that collect dust on shelves, while on the other hand we have a Minister of Education and a government that is cutting funding, that is bringing in Bill 16, which further handcuffs the ability of school districts to deal with the challenges they face and, in effect, if anything, is moving our system of education back five, 10, and 15 years instead of moving into the realities of the next century.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I mentioned earlier about what had happened in terms of the high school in Thompson and the fact that there were concerns expressed about cutbacks that had taken place in terms of the number of teaching positions. The school district and the Thompson teachers' association negotiated on that and came up with an agreement. They also settled outstanding wage questions as well in terms of collective bargaining

but, also, discussed in terms of those particular positions, came up with a compromise that satisfied the concerns expressed by both sides.

Madam Deputy Speaker, believe you me, there was a lot of hard feeling for a considerable period of time. I know the school board was frustrated; they felt a lot of this was driven by provincial government decisions. They did not want to make decisions they made but felt they were forced to do so. The teachers felt the decisions were not appropriate, they were hurting educational quality. Many parents were concerned, many students, and I have had people, both parents and students and teachers and school board trustees in Thompson contact me about their concerns.

What they did is, they sat down, they discussed the concerns, they negotiated, and they came to an agreement that has seen the reinstatement of a number of positions in the high school. That should be the model for the provincial government, the Manitoba Teachers' Society and the Manitoba Association of School Trustees. Discussion, negotiations, maybe some hard-nosed negotiations, because no negotiations are easy when you are dealing with difficult times and difficult decisions, but negotiations, Madam Deputy Speaker.

That is what is so wrong about Bill 16. Bill 16 suggests that the only way to deal with the problems in education is to bring in a cap, take away the democratic rights of local school districts. This bill goes in tandem with cutbacks in educational funding that suggests that somehow money and the quality of education are not related. Well, this bill proves, to my mind, that this government is incapable of working in partnership with people in education.

I think that is the basic difference between their approach and, say, the approach of the school district of Mystery Lake in Thompson, the approach that we espouse in this House. We believe there are a lot of changes that need to be made to our educational system. A lot of things I know personally, I would like to see changed, reinforced and, yes, added to. I make no bones about that; I

consider education an investment. I think that this government should look at it in that light.

I believe the way to achieve progress in education is through a co-operative approach. Not necessarily everybody is going to receive what they want or be happy with what happens, but I believe there is a lot of energy out there for reforming the educational system, but the only way you can tap into it is if you go to someone and you say, let us work in partnership, let us work in co-operation.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this government I think is missing out on what is happening with labour relations, nationally and internationally, co-operation between various different sectors. The bottom line is, there will be disagreements. I mean, around The Labour Relations Act, the Chamber of Commerce will take one position and the labour movement will take another, different Manitobans will have different views.

Madam Deputy Speaker, you are not going to get consensus on every issue, and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) knows that. [interjection] Sometimes you do, but I am saying there will be the ideological issues, the issues that are driven by the real bottom-line definitions of what our society is about, the principles on which it is based.

* (1530)

You know, Madam Deputy Speaker, there are so many issues that fall in a category and so many that do not. In terms of education, there are obviously some bottom lines, and there are disagreements on principle and educational philosophy, but surely this is one area where we have one thing in common. We want the best for our children and future generations. It may sound like a rather simplistic statement, but that is what drives most people, particularly parents and students and teachers in the educational system.

So why cannot we harness that energy? Why do we have to—as the Premier (Mr. Filmon) did today when the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) asked a question on educational funding and Bill 16. The Premier got up and talked about the member for Dauphin fomenting unrest. When I got up on a point of order and suggested that that was not particularly

appropriate, Madam Deputy Speaker, then he said, well, all my union friends.

This may come as a surprise to the Premier. I have many friends in the labour movement. I have many union friends. I would hope the Premier would try and cultivate a few friendships as well with people in the labour movement and people within unions because they are Manitobans. We are talking about people, their friends, their family, their neighbours. Madam Deputy Speaker, I just go back to what happened in Thompson. People sat down, and they worked co-operatively. Those union friends, in this case, the staff—I do not know if teachers could really be classified as a union per se, the differing views within MTS as to exactly what The Teachers' Society is.

It says a lot about the attitude of this government. The Premier in Question Period, with the eyes of the province watching him, can consider the ultimate insult to say to a member of the Legislature that he has union friends. Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, I am mortally wounded. I have union friends. I admit it. I even have some Chamber of Commerce friends as well, but that is another story.

That really shows the degree to which this Premier has put his personal stamp on this government. I cannot honestly believe that everyone on that side has the same degree of paranoia about union friends. I know one member who has been involved in a union. [interjection] La Verendrye, yes. The member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), I know, was a shop steward, I understand. [interjection] Vice-president. I am not trying to get the member in trouble with his caucus. I am sure the member for La Verendrye had many union friends, and I consider that positive.

Point of Order

Mr. Ben Sveinson (La Verendrye): On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. The honourable member for Thompson mentions that I was a vice-president, and indeed I was. I have also owned three businesses. I have been a federal inspector and now a member of the Legislature. So there are many different things that I have done, and I am not ashamed of any one of them. Thank you.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for La Verendrye does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Ashton: Well, I thank the member for his point of résumé. Indeed he has been many different things. Really, it was no criticism. I realize within the caucus that to be a union member at one time has got to be considered suspect, but, my God, to have union friends, oh, Madam Deputy Speaker, that is pretty serious, to have union friends, pretty suspicious.

I was just pointing out that there are people in this Legislature on all sides that have, I would hope, union friends. But this is typical, as I said, the Premier (Mr. Filmon), when asked about Bill 16, immediately throws back this as if this is some terrible thing, some terrible threatening thing. Well, there are many people out there who are members of unions, active in the labour movement. They are taxpayers, they are residents of local school districts, they are parents, they may be students as well. Some are even school trustees, I know in my own constituency. We are all Manitobans.

Madam Deputy Speaker, let us face reality here. We are not a big province, and according to emigration figures we are getting even smaller, relatively speaking, over the years. We are a million people. We are not like some of the bigger provinces where maybe the people that you can throw these barbs at are people you do not see or know.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this is a small province. If ever there were an example of a province that could work co-operatively, this is it. I mean, in my own community, the vice-president of Inco will live next door to the vice-president of the union, and sure you get variances within town, different areas, different backgrounds and outlooks. Even if you do not live next door, you go to the same recreation centres, the same plazas. We have not got to the point of building the walls yet around different parts of this province that we have seen even in the United States.

Madam Deputy Speaker, on something as important to all of us—that we all agree on—as

educational reform and educational priorities, why would it be so difficult for us to sit down and work co-operatively? What a novel idea. Instead of throwing insults at each other, we could say we are all Manitobans; we all have a concern about the education system; let us put that aside.

I look forward to the comments of the members opposite on this because I get the feeling, in their heart of hearts, the Premier does not always speak for them. Well, we know that was not the case with the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) on many issues. But I am talking about the fundamental issue here of co-operation on such issues as education. We do not need the kind of confrontational approach that we are seeing from the Premier. We need a government that is going to not bring in the Bill 16s, but it is going to sit down and work with partnership.

It can be done. We are a small province. We are all friends and neighbours and family in this province. We are really a province of small communities. Even Winnipeg, as cities go, is a small major city. We are all neighbours. Why cannot we take that principle in that spirit?—and I would suggest not support bills such as Bill 16 which is based on a completely different view of this province. Why cannot we all work together for the betterment of our children's education?

That is why, Madam Deputy Speaker, I will be voting against Bill 16, and I will continue to speak out on what I feel are the important needs in terms of education in this province, and most fundamentally a change in approach, a new approach that is going to put co-operation ahead of confrontation.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 16.

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to participate in this debate on Bill 16 concerning the public school system. I would like to start with an analysis of what is the function of education in our society, what is the purpose of education, and analyze the question of whether education is a private or public good, and why is it publicly funded and supported, analyze the

primary issue of the two-tier type of education that we are developing in our system, the public and the private system of education, and other related issues of excellence and equity.

A teacher was once in charge of a classroom where the students were being asked to write an essay about the most beautiful thing that they had experienced in life, and while everybody was busy writing sentences and trying to compose their essay, one student was just doing nothing and thinking hard, and then he wrote just one sentence in his essay and he said in that sentence: The most beautiful thing I ever saw in life was too beautiful for words. And so he did not write anything. It was too beautiful for words.

What is the purpose of education? What is education? To my mind, education is simply a process of maturation of individual human beings intellectually, and emotionally as well. Education is a continuous process of inquiry that we pursue in life, and we intend that inquiry to be as free as it can be and to lead wherever it may lead. It is an unceasing search for the truth. It is only when we know the truth that we can truly say that we are free. Seek the truth and the truth shall make you free.

* (1540)

Education, furthermore, aims to develop our potential as human beings, our abilities, our latent skills in order that these potentialities may be developed into actual skills that, if we apply to the affairs of life, would benefit not only ourselves but everybody else in society.

The purpose of education therefore is to teach us how to live life, not simply how to make a living but how to make a life, how to live life abundantly in order that we may be able to distinguish what is trivial from what is important, what is incidental from what is substantive, what is transitory from what is long-lasting. We cannot say that we are truly educated unless we can distinguish the important from the unimportant. Education also will teach us how to think, not only to think, but how to make decisions when we are confronted with problematic situations in our life.

How do we react, a typically educated person, how does he react when he is confronted with a problem that cries for some solution? Well, the first thing he normally does is, he collects all his information. He collects the facts, all of the relevant facts that have a bearing to the problematic situation facing him.

When he gets the facts he tries to analyze all of the information. He tries to relate one piece of information with another so that they will be meaningful to him. He tries to find relationships among all of these categories of factual information. Then he tries to understand what the problem really is because, unless you are clear about the nature of the problem itself, you will have difficulty finding any kind of way of dealing with the problem.

I would say that a problem that is well understood is almost a problem that is already half solved. When you already have stated the problem as clearly and precisely as you can, then you formulate the various ways of dealing with a problem. This is coming up with all the alternative means that you can think of in order to deal with the problem.

After you have studied the nature of the problem itself, looked at the problem closely with all the details and also looked at the problem from a distance, you can see all of the implications with respect to the total situation, because you may want to see the tree and miss the forest.

Yes, you have to look at the problem closely, analyze it as well at a distance. Every day of your life you make decisions great and small, but you have to be clear about the facts, about the relationship about the facts. You should be clear about your own values, your own goal, what it is that you want to achieve because, unless you are clear about the values that you want to promote you cannot know and cannot offer any way of dealing with the problem that will be satisfactory to you.

So we come up with various alternative solutions.

If the problem is one that merely calls for some kind of hunch or some kind of an instant intuitive choice, you can just toss a coin and deal with it that way but, if the problem is too complex for that kind of problem solving, then you have to approach it in

a rational way, and what is the most rational way but to formulate all the various alternative solutions that are available to you and then look at all these individual means of dealing with the problem.

So you look at alternative A, and then you say, what are the advantages of this way of dealing with the problem? What are its disadvantages? You look at alternative B the same way. What are the shortcomings of this way? What are its advantages? What are its benefits? You do all these things systematically. When you have satisfied yourself that you have looked at all the alternatives and looked at all the advantages and disadvantages of each one of them, only then are you in a position to make a choice. When you make your choice, that will be your decision.

Education teaches all these things. Otherwise, we run away from problems. We hide our head in the sand and we do not understand the problem.

To face life with all its challenges requires of us that we have courage. Courage is one of the highest virtues that we need in life because without it we will be helpless when confronted with a problem that is beyond our immediate solution.

Courage does not mean pugnacity. It is not blindness, but it is the highest virtue based on your conscience when you know that you are right that you do and decide the way you should. We map out a course of action and follow it and we are sustained by our supreme virtue of courage, courage we must not lose in life. There are people who run out of courage and they simply surrender and give up.

He who loses wealth loses much. He who loses friends loses more. But he who loses courage loses all. We should always be ready and willing to confront.

Is education a private good, like any other commodity, subject to the forces of supply and demand in the market, or is education what they call public goods?

What do we mean by this concept? When you talk to an economist and he says, it is a public good, what does he mean? A public good is a kind of service that has these two distinguishing

characteristics at least. That is a type of service that you cannot provide to one member of society without benefiting the other members of society. Once you provide it to one individual, the cost of providing it to other individuals in society or in the community is practically nil.

For example, security or national defence is a public good. Once a government has provided security to one member of the community by having adequate security forces in the form of armed forces to resist foreign aggression, then the cost to the other members of the community is zero because, when you are successful in protecting one, you are protecting everybody.

In other words, there is a spillover effect of any kind of public good to the rest of the members of the community. It cannot be provided to one individual only and exclude the other members of the community. You cannot exclude because they also benefit from a public good. It is for this reason that public good is always provided by the government, like establishing an adequate national defence system for a country.

* (1550)

What is a private good? Private goods are those that are subject to the forces of the supply and demand in the market. They can be nondurable goods, nondurable private goods that we use up instantly the moment we use them, like food items. We consume them. They are immediately exhausted. These are the nondurable goods.

The semidurable goods are those that last for a reasonably short period of time, like clothing. You can use it more than once, but maybe you cannot use it more than a year. Then there are the durable private goods which you can use for more than a year, generally, like your car, your house, whatever other durable goods you may have bought for yourself.

Now, what is education like if we try to analyze education itself? Is it a private good? If you consume, you exclude the other people. Education, apparently, if you look at it, is a kind of service that is initially private because it can only be provided by a teacher, but it is a service that is so important that

it is invested with an element of public interest. It is important for the survival and faith of the entire community and the entire country that the people are educated. So we can say that education is some kind of a semipublic, semiprivate kind of service, what we call a quasi-public good, because the very foundation of the state is predicated upon a system of good education.

According to the Greek philosopher, Diogenes, D-I-O-G-E-N-E-S, the foundation of the state is the education of its youth. If our young people are well educated, these are the people that will become the citizens of tomorrow, and if they are well educated in a good educational system, then you will have a stable citizenry that will sustain the community, the country and the state. Therefore we can say that the quality of the education of the people in a community, the quality of the education of the citizens in a state determines the very destiny and faith of a country or a nation, because in the true sense of the term, only when the people are educated, can the people say truly that they are truly free.

It is because of ignorance, because of lack of education, because of illiteracy, because of inadequate education that people are bound by their weaknesses and they become subjected to exploitation by others who have more knowledge than they. They become the victims of exploitations and other acts of injustices in society when they do not know their interests and do not know how to protect themselves, their group or their country.

So we can say that as a premise, as a general principle, universal, free public education is a precondition to the survival and progress of a people and a nation.

That is precisely the reason why we have developed, in our western societies, the principle of compulsory, free public education for everyone. Indeed, in the early days of the implementation of our educational system, people who refused to go to school were coerced to go to school, because it was a compulsory type of education.

Why is this compulsory? How can you reconcile the principle of compulsion with the freedom of the

people to choose or not to choose to be educated? How can that be reconciled? Is there any consistency here? Can you be forced to be educated?

That is precisely one of the premises of our educational system. I think the basis of this is what Jean Jacques Rousseau had stated in his treatise on social contract when he said that people can be forced to be free.

Sometimes we have to be subjected to a certain level of discipline in order that we may be able to appreciate the true meaning of education and the true meaning of freedom. When in the olden days of our grandfathers and our grandmothers, during their generation when there was a certain level of discipline in the public school system, they had learned how to discipline themselves, because they were subjected to a system that had some discipline.

Now it seems to me that there is a gradual breaking down of this system of discipline in most of our institutions in our society, a breakdown of discipline in the home, a breakdown of discipline in the school, a breakdown of discipline in many of our institutions. What else can we expect but trouble and problems in our society?

When I was in grade school, I had to put up both my hands if I did something wrong, so that my teacher could use her ruler and show me that I had done something wrong. Would that harm me at all? Is this physical abuse? Of course not. But what about now? Who, in the public school teachers, now can say to a little child: Put up your hand, I am going to teach you discipline? No one, because he will be marked as an abuser of a child.

That is a wrong perception, because we are merely encouraging the chaotic, anarchic kind of system where there are no rules whatsoever. You cannot even tell a child, now you stay after class, I want to talk to you. They will just ignore you and go home.

An Honourable Member: What about discipline at home?

Mr. Santos: What about the home? If you have a nuclear family of one, with a child, and that parent has to leave it, who will teach the child? So if the

child is in the hands of a stranger, what kind of interests will the stranger teach the child? Difficult situation.

There is a gradual inversion of the traditional values that we understand in society. We tend to value respect. Now you hardly can find any young person who has that kind of attitude towards their elders. Instead of respect, they have defiance in the mind—uppermost in the mind—defiance of all types of authority and that does not portend any kind of good things to come.

I am not saying that we should return to the old system, but what I am saying is that we should be able to compare the general attitude of the generation past, of our grandmothers and our parents, compared to the present generation and compared to the generation that is coming up. It seems to me that it is a worsening kind of situation, from bad to worse and worse and worse. We have to analyze the problem in a very systematic way.

Therefore, I say the role of the school is very important in society, particularly the public educational system. Why should the educational system be primarily emphasized on the public side rather than on the private side—because as I have said, education is a quasi-public kind of good, very expensive to maintain. Indeed, it is so expensive that only the government, the state, can undertake it and can sustain education and accomplish all of its objectives and its goals.

When government, because of these looming deficits, the troubles on the public sector, on the pretext of saving money would cut the expenditure on education, the money that we shall be saving in our society is the same, or perhaps greater amount of money, that we shall later on be spending for the problems that we have to deal with in our society, the same amount of money we have to spend in our jails, in our reformatories, in our hospitals in the future, because these kids who will not be educated properly will be more of a problem and a burden rather than an asset to our society.

There is a survey of attitudes very recently, national polling, and because of the trouble economically in terms of the deficit and the debts,

the people in Canada nowadays overwhelmingly are saying, yes, we agree that we should reduce the deficit. They said we should—overwhelmingly they say 86 percent support cutting the spending by government because they perceive the spending by government to be rather loose spending.

* (1600)

So they say, let us cut the spending, but the same population are opposed to any cut in public education because they see it as a very important segment of public service. They can allow a cut, for example, in the arts and culture. They want cuts in defence spending. About 68 percent of them say, yes, we should have cuts in defence spending—68 percent. Yes, we should have cuts in arts and culture, 56 percent. Yes, we should have cuts in foreign aid, 70 percent.

But they would not allow any cut in education. They are opposed to any cut in health spending because they see these two types of public service are essential to the well-being of the country as a whole.

Education is simply an investment, because the money that we will be spending for our children will be doubly rewarded in the sense that we will have good and responsible citizens and then fewer social problems in the immediate future.

The moment we cut our public spending on education, we not only worsen the present generation of students, but we also will be spending double the amount in the kind of problems that they will bring about because of our failure in our responsibility to attend to their proper education and training.

So there is a greater demand for public education. Yet, somehow people in society want to make this kind of distinction. They say, oh, the public school system has a very loose standard, low quality. I want to send my kids to something which has a higher quality, namely a private school.

Who can blame any parent who wants the highest quality of education for their children even if they have to spend more? So they perceive that there is a higher quality of education in private sector-type

of education. There is greater demand for it and, of course, the greater the demand, the higher the price. It follows the law of economics.

You have to spend hundreds and perhaps thousands of dollars in order to send your kid to one of the best private education systems. What happens then to the public school system? It is a zero-sum game. The more resources you take from the public sector and give to the private sector, the fewer resources will be available in the public school system.

Yet, the opportunity for education, the element of equality for all the citizens is a more salient characteristic of the public system of education. It is there that everybody has more or less equal opportunity to achieve and get the proper education that they need. Yet, that is the sector that will be suffering the most.

So what are we doing? We are creating a system of education in our province and in our country where the best are the fewest, the most able to afford it, and yet the majority of the citizens who cannot and have not the opportunity or the resources will have less and less quality of education.

So, in general, what kind of a society are we creating? It will be a more and more problematic society than we really want. We say we want excellence for our kid. We want the highest level of quality of education for your children. True?

What is excellence? Excellence means the quality of being superlatively good. In the nature of things, anything that is excellent, by definition, is few and scarce. In other words, if you want something excellent, then you have to pick the cream of the crop, so they say, and the cream of the crop by definition are few. Why? Because not all the children have an equal biological level of ability and intelligence.

Somehow, despite the ethical standard of equality of all human beings that we talk about, in the very nature of being we have innate differences in our potentialities and abilities. But the worst thing that could happen is when those potentialities are in a group of poor school children in the slums. They may have the excellent potential and level of

intelligence that our society may need. These are the future scientists, mathematicians and great men to be in our society.

Yet, because they lack the necessary resources, because they were brought up in a home that is not conducive to the proper rearing and development, because they have been neglected and because they were poor and deprived, we will be losing all this potentiality. They will never be able to achieve the access that they need in order to develop the potential that our society needs.

That is the trouble with a two-tiered type of education. If we have to improve the level of education in our system, then we should satisfy ourselves with a merged system with ample opportunities for choices, but there should only be one framework, one system that we need to improve in all its aspects.

I do not see any problem here if we somehow, in the future, would like to integrate the public and the private into a single type of education that is affordable and reasonably accessible to all members of society, where the best can excel and the rest can find the highest level of their development.

Equitable access is an important issue. Equity is grounded on the ethical notion of equality, but this is not a biological principle, as I have stated. It is an ethical principle of rightness and correctness.

Thomas Jefferson, in The American Declaration of Independence, wrote: We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

So we have that ideal of equality. It is an ethical standard to which we must aspire. But then Adam Smith, he also wrote: Wherever there is property, there are great inequalities; for one very rich man, there must be at least 500 poor men. So you see—this is Adam Smith—it is this possession that makes unequal of those that are created ethically equal.

* (1610)

Question—if people are ethically equal, but biologically and socially unequal, then what type of equality is realistically possible? You see, all of us do not have the same level of intelligence. All of us do not have the same level of endurance. All of us differ as individuals. So we are in a sense, in a physical sense, unequal, but in a moral and ethical sense, we are all equal because we all have the same two feet, the same two eyes, the same two legs and the same everything.

An Honourable Member: We do not have the same ambition.

Mr. Santos: But we do not have the same ambition. We do not have the same drive. We do not have the same potentialities. [interjection] So it depends from case to case. So if we are all morally and ethically equal but physically, biologically and socially unequal, what kind of equality is realistically possible to design in our society? What is the answer? Aristotle said—

An Honourable Member: What is the answer?

Mr. Santos: Aristotle will answer the question. The only stable state is one in which all men are equal before the law.

An Honourable Member: And women?

Mr. Santos: By men I mean humankind, and if women consider themselves members of humankind, then they are included, because whenever the philosophers speak of men, they mean humankind.

All men are created equal before the law. In a precise sense, all men and women are equal before the law. That is the precise statement. If we create a two-tiered system in our society which is basically based on what Adam Smith had already identified as the root cause of inequality, namely possessions and wealth, if that is the root cause of inequality, and we are creating a two-tiered system of education, are we promoting through education or are we creating problems for ourselves?

Despite what Lyndon Johnson may be in other things, he said this thing that I remember. If we condemn our people to inequality in our society, we also condemn people to inequality in our economy. If we create a two-tiered system of education in our province, one educational system for the poor and

one educational system for the rich, then we are condemning our own people to inequality in the economy as well. It is no secret that those who have achieved by their effort, sometimes by luck, the kind of education that they need and want, it is no secret that generally they have a higher level of earning than those who do not or were not able to.

Therefore, inequality and educational opportunity also means inequality in the economy in social status in society later on in life. Many people will be frustrated about their inability to develop their fullest potential in our society, and that they will become antisocial elements in our society that will create problems for the rest of the community. Whether equal or unequal, whether advanced or not, there is a kind of difficulty in the financial support of the government of this province in our educational system.

For example, the expenditure in education in this province generally consists of two general groups of programs in our educational system: What they call the supportable programs as distinguished from the nonsupportable, otherwise known as the supportable program at the recognized or mandated program, the regular curriculum, the regular offering. The other category, what they call the categorical, nonmandated, allowable, conditional kind of program which the school board, in their wisdom, in their knowledge of the local situation, they are willing to support. As distinguished from the nonrecognized, nonsupportable—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 22—The Public Sector Reduced Work Week and Compensation Management Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading of Bill 22 (The Public Sector Reduced Work Week and Compensation Management Act; Loi sur la réduction de la semaine de travail et la gestion des salaires dans le secteur public), on the proposed motion of the honourable

Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [agreed]

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on Manitoba Day to begin debate on Bill 22.

Manitoba Day, as we heard today in the House, is a day when we draw attention to the achievements of the past, when we reflect on the accomplishments of Manitobans both directly and indirectly, individually and collectively.

We reflect, too, on the nature of our province, the kind of political and social community which has been created here over, I would say, the last 12,000 years, but particularly in the last two centuries of European control and impact on the history of this province.

There are, Madam Deputy Speaker, if you look at the history of Manitoba, many versions of that history, many interpretations, many reflections upon the nature of the society which we have created. One might suggest, for the purposes of debate, for the purposes of argument today, that there are two versions of Manitoba, that in fact there have been two Manitobas.

* (1620)

There is the Manitoba of division, the Manitoba of discord, the Manitoba that in a sense is a very deeply divided society. We can look at histories in the past, the way in which history has been written, and we can look at the events of the past in that divisive manner, because the divisions, Madam Deputy Speaker, in Manitoba society can run very deep. Every provincial election, every civic election, demonstrates for some writers and some historians and many Manitobans the inheritance of the general strike and the consciousness of society on which it was built.

The French language issue has divided us in many decades, most recently in the 1980s. It is an issue in terms of the schools and education which still divides families and communities. The erection

of a plaque, a statue or even a postage stamp dedicated to Riel as it was in the 1970s can evoke bitter memories for many Manitobans. The ideology of a peaceful, multicultural society is one which is relatively recent for us. In fact, there are many historians and many histories of Manitoba which do interpret our past as one of violence, of race—French versus English and aboriginal—of language, of division based upon linguistic communities and a division of politics.

There is, however, Madam Deputy Speaker, a different kind of Manitoba, and we are equally familiar with a Manitoba of co-operation, of sense of one community, of a sense of common identity and common purpose in this part of northern North America.

We could go back as far as the 1860s and look at the community reaction to plague and famine which did occur in those years and the way in which that small community at Red River did bring itself together across race and language lines to create, in fact, the basis of some of the institutions which we have today such as our hospitals and, particularly, the Children's Hospital.

If we look at the 1870s, although we might there see some of the divisions of the old settlers versus the new Ontario immigrants, we can also see the community of language, of English- and French-speaking mixed blood and Metis peoples of that community who did bring themselves together to create a new province based on very different principles from those which Ontario and Sir John A. Macdonald had envisioned for us.

We can look at some of the community activities of the 1930s, of the Depression, the creation of community centres and of community action. One which springs to mind, of course, is the Brandon East community centre. We can look more recently at the 1950 flood and look at the communal activities and the way in which the community pulled together during that time of flood and crisis for Winnipeg and for Manitoba.

We can look even more recently at the centennial activities in Manitoba, both those of 1867 and those of the 1974 centennial of the city of Winnipeg.

During those centennial celebrations of the 1970s, we do see a tremendous outpouring of communal enthusiasm, of building together a wide variety of cultural and artistic and social institutions that do in fact provide the basis for many communities' recreational and cultural activities today.

So there are two Manitobas, Madam Deputy Speaker, a Manitoba of division, of confrontation and a Manitoba of co-operation and of communities pulling together in times of crisis.

I would like to suggest that that is the choice we have today. We have a choice in a time of economic recession and it is a critical time for many Canadians. Under Tory governments and Tory interest rates we have seen our debt balloon. We have seen our deficit uncontrolled by many Tory governments right across this country who speak on one angle the language of restraint but practice in fact a very different kind of economic policy.

We are in difficult economic times, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I would suggest that this is not the time for confrontation. It is a time for co-operation and for bringing Manitobans together in the way in which other governments in other years have sought to do, and which the community itself has shown the way in difficult times, that co-operation not confrontation is the root that we should choose.

It is in that context that I want to look at Bill 22 to suggest to the government that they have or had a choice of co-operation or confrontation. They had a choice of two paths and they chose the path of confrontation. They chose division. They chose lack of consultation. They chose to let the burden of their economic decisions fall unfairly upon one sector of the population. It is a deliberate choice, Madam Deputy Speaker, and it is one which I believe has been undertaken with care, with thought and it is the wrong choice. We shall oppose this bill, as do thousands of Manitobans from all parts of this province, from all communities and from all groups within our society.

We shall not oppose the clause which reduces the salaries of members of this Legislature, and I want that to be clear from the beginning, but we shall

oppose what we consider to be an unfair, confrontational and divisive bill.

I want to speak on several aspects of this bill, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I know that all of my colleagues will want to speak to this bill as well. They will be able to speak in areas of their own critic areas and from the perspective of their own regions and communities, and they will elaborate many other points of view upon this bill.

I know that when we go to committee that we are all hearing from the people who are being affected by this bill now and we are hearing the anxieties and the concerns of those people who will feel the impact of the loss of services in the future. I anticipate that when we go to committee with this bill, we shall be hearing a great diversity of Manitoba views on this. So that the beginning of this debate is simply that, it is the beginning of what we believe will be in fact a wide-ranging and, I think, very important bill in the history of this particular government.

My view is that this bill represents a thoughtless policy, that it has been hastily thrown together, that it has taken a broad sweep, a wide broom and it hits out at the easily available targets, at the government's own, indeed, our own public service and public servants. It is a bill which has been drafted, I believe, without any regard for fairness, for the way in which it will have an impact upon individuals, communities, upon the poor who depend upon government services and upon our own public servants.

The government chose—and they chose—to portray this as a holiday, a long weekend, a time to go fishing. How arrogant, Madam Deputy Speaker. How arrogant the thought of that is when you say that to the single parent who is working at \$18,000 a year, and how many of those in this government and elsewhere throughout the public sector are going to be affected by this legislation?

But, no, the government chose to portray it as a holiday, a long weekend, just a time to get your fishing line a little earlier in the water. What a callous, thoughtless and arrogant government this is, because what this bill represents is an unfair tax

on the public sector worker on the grounds simply of where they work and whom they serve.

I want to speak first of all of the impact of this bill upon the communities of Manitoba, the impact on services, because the effects of this bill will not just be felt by the workers, by the public servants, by the people who work for municipalities, for school boards, for hospitals, for daycare centres, the entire public sector, but it will also be felt by every individual and every community in Manitoba.

Its impact will be felt in both the short term and the long term. It is still unclear as we are speaking today how essential services will be defined. We do not know yet what will be defined as an essential service. We do not know what the staffing levels will be throughout our hospitals or our care centres, our personal care homes, or in the essential municipal services of fire or police, or in the Crown corporations, in hydro, in the telephone services.

*(1630)

All of those areas will be affected by this bill, and yet as we speak, the government has still made no indication to us of how those essential services are going to be defined and protected. It is difficult to see how the government can in fact put this bill, even the principles of this bill, into practice without affecting the lives of most Manitobans.

If we take, for example, the intention of the government to suggest to school boards that they use the professional development days of teachers as a way of cutting their wage bill, as a way of withdrawing areas of public service, and that is what the government has chosen to do, it suggests to every school board in Manitoba that professional development days can be sacrificed, that they are not important. They are the least important aspect of education. That is in effect what they are saying.

It seems to me, Madam Deputy Speaker, that this is an extremely shortsighted view of education, a very shortsighted and unprofessional view of the role that our teachers play in education. I think the impact of this policy will be felt for a long term. You simply do not take two years of professional development away from teachers and expect that

you are going to have enthusiastic, professional, well-prepared, energetic and up-to-date teachers.

There is a purpose, there has always been a purpose to professional development. The government, in fact, by targeting those days, in the eyes of the school boards, is simply saying that this is one of the least important aspects of education.

If you believe that, what you believe is that our school system can be served by teachers who are the same today as they were when they left their classroom at the university. None of us, I cannot believe that any Manitoban, would subscribe to that point of view.

Teachers who were trained 10 years ago, teachers who were trained even five years ago can always benefit and should benefit from the updating of techniques, from their discussions with their colleagues, benefit from learning of new techniques and of new procedures, whatever area of education they serve.

How many of our teachers today in fact are well trained in computers? Gradually, the majority of teachers are becoming trained in that area, but it takes professional development days over a long series of those days to do that. It is not something which happens overnight.

How many of our teachers are trained in the new multimedia applications? Very few school boards have that yet, but gradually they will, and teachers need to be trained in those. It does not happen overnight.

How many of our teachers are trained in the new developments in Distance Education? Yet here is a government which on the one hand is saying Distance Education is due to be the salvation of education in rural Manitoba. But Distance Education requires training. It does not just require equipment in the classroom and a teacher at one end. It requires the development of new curriculum materials. It requires the development of new training techniques for teachers and new kinds of teachers at both ends of those classrooms—the one that is delivering the program and the supervision that is provided on the spot to those classrooms

which do not have the professional expertise in that particular subject.

You have to develop, in effect, a new way of teaching, and the minister knows that. She has had a number of reports on Distance Education, all of which I believe should have, if they have not, stressed the importance of teacher training and retraining if this area of education is in fact to be a success in the classroom and is to serve the role that the government hopes it will in rural Manitoba, bringing an equality and trying to maintain a sense of equality in education across the province.

Now, how do you train those teachers in Distance Education if you do not have professional development days, if you take away two years of professional development days? What a shortsighted, unplanned, thoughtless and arrogant government it is that can propose such a kind of cut to our educational system.

It is also I think an unfair policy, because there will be school boards who do have confidence in their collective bargaining and in their collective agreements who will not proceed with the cutting of their professional development days. There will be school boards who have greater financial resources than others who equally will choose not to cut their professional development days, and who will maintain a sense of pride in having teachers who are up to date, who are enthusiastic and who do feel that they are at that cutting edge of their discipline and they are doing the best they can for the students in their care.

So this bill, Madam Deputy Speaker, I think is thoughtless. It is unequal. It will fall heavily on some school boards and some teachers and some students more so than it will on others. The many other areas, I think, that my colleagues will touch upon in health care: How will emergency services be maintained? How will the personal care homes be maintained on a four-day week? There are so many areas of service that have not been examined yet. Will our laboratories be kept open on Fridays, or will it behoove us in fact to have our accidents and all our X-rays and all our problems Monday to

Thursday? What kinds of basic services are going to be denied to Manitobans as a result of this bill?

One would have expected that a government which had a plan, which had put some thought into this, would have been able to come forward with the answers to those questions, that they would have been able to reassure Manitobans that their basic services and those which are so important to them in health care and education and throughout the public service would be maintained, but there is no plan. They are scrambling now as we speak to decide on who is going to take the four-day week and who is not.

There is no sense of being able to reassure Manitobans that those provincial labs, those X-ray services, those rural medical services will be available when people need them—a thoughtless and arrogant government with no plan, just simply a broad broom that hits out at those who are most easily vulnerable.

The impact on services, Madam Deputy Speaker, as it always does, will fall most heavily on the poor. The wealthy can purchase alternative services, but the poor cannot. The poor are the people who depend most upon the public service in all areas, whether it is in family service, in medicare, in personal care homes or in daycare or in other areas of the child care services of Manitoba. They are not just clients, but they are dependent, in many cases, upon daily contact or constant contact with many of the workers in these areas.

Their crises that they find themselves in are going to have to be dealt with Monday to Thursday, not on Friday, not on the long weekend, not on this great vacation that the government of Manitoba claims it is providing to its public servants, but what it is doing is denying to the people of Manitoba the basic services which they have paid for in their taxes and which, in many cases, the poorest of them all depend upon in some cases for their social survival.

Let us have a look, Madam Deputy Speaker, at the effect of this bill in the context of the wider Tory policies, because this is not just an isolated bill. It is one bill and one policy among many policies.

Let us look at the loss of 10 to 15 days of wages upon that low- and middle-income family, that same family which may or may not have lost its baby bonus, whose unemployment insurance has been cut, who finds that their daycare costs have increased in some cases by 140 percent as a result of the actions of this Manitoba government, and yet who, even though they must take the 10-day or 15-day cut for two years, must still pay those daycare costs in order to keep those places that will enable them to return to work once their forced leave or their lockout is over. Those are people who are facing very severe difficulties. In some cases, it is the difference between making their rental payment or their mortgage payment and not paying and not making it.

I wonder if this government talked to anybody before they implemented this bill. Did they consult with any of their workers, the people whom they meet in the daily conduct of their lives as ministers? Did they have any sense of the impact of taking away 10 to 15 days of labour, of wages from the secretary who serves in their office, the \$18,000 to \$20,000 clerk? Did they have any sense of what the impact of that is upon that single mother or upon that family of lower and middle income? I cannot believe that they have done that. It is thoughtless. It is an unplanned bill. It is simply a lashing out at the people who are the most defenseless, choosing a section of our population to bear the burden of the Tory economic mismanagement of this economy and the Canadian economy.

* (1640)

It seems to me, Madam Deputy Speaker, that this is overall a very lazy government with only one idea, and that is to cut, no sense of trying to find ways of protecting the weakest, protecting the poorest people in our province from further hardship, no sense perhaps that they might have introduced a threshold below which there would have been no cuts.

Where is the sense of any compassion in this government? It is arrogant, thoughtless and turning the burden of its own mismanagement onto those who are the most poor, the most weak in our society.

Those people on low incomes, those people in care, those people in crisis are the ones who will bear the continuing burden for two years of this Tory policy.

I want to speak a little bit about the impact of this bill as well upon Manitobans' sense of fairness because, here again, I think we are looking at a choice that the government has made.

There is the Manitoba of division, the Manitoba of the language of divisiveness, of separation and of confrontation. There is the Manitoba of co-operation, the Manitoba which comes together in times of crises, labour and management and business and workers and all the communities of Manitoba.

This government has made its choice along the path of confrontation, of opposition, of choosing without compassion to put the burdens of their mismanagement on the poorest people in our community.

This bill has many elements of unfairness. It gives on one level an autocratic power to the employer that has not been there before. It empowers employers throughout Manitoba in the public sector to act in a unilateral and autocratic manner. It provides for imposed settlements where previously Manitobans took pride in negotiating, in coming to the same negotiating table, in eventually making agreements, in finding a co-operative path through different perspectives.

Look at the City of Winnipeg with its new mayor who have negotiated settlements and yet this government did not have the plan, did not have the imagination to even begin to negotiate with its own workers.

It was not a sense of failed negotiation; this was no negotiation. This was a government which had no intention of negotiating with its own employees. Yet the City of Winnipeg could do it.

If we look at other jurisdictions facing in some cases more severe problems than we are and in some cases different problems, we can also see governments which have chosen to negotiate.

In Saskatchewan, which has suffered enormously, disastrously under the activities of the

Devine Tories, they have chosen, in very, very difficult times—they have been put in extremely difficult circumstances, but they chose a series of negotiations with their public sector employees.

It was not an easy path. In fact, at times it was very difficult, but they were successful. They did negotiate. They went to their employees and said, there are difficulties and let us negotiate over a series of years. Nothing like that from this government because it is at base an arrogant and thoughtless and ideological government who is choosing very deliberately the path of confrontation.

British Columbia faces different problems than we do, and one of the areas that they looked at was the health care costs. They saw that one of the things that they had to do in health care was, in fact, to begin to negotiate with a series of sectors within the health care services of British Columbia. They were negotiating perhaps in better economic circumstances than we are, but they again chose to negotiate, and again it was not an easy negotiation. But they talked to their own employees. They talked to their own citizens. They took the approach that said, there is a co-operative path through this. There is a way that we can find a path through these economic conditions, and we will do it together. But from this government, confrontation, a very negative approach and one which simply has utter disregard for the views and for the conditions of its own employees and its fellow citizens.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this is enabling legislation, and not all employers will use it. In so doing, by offloading essentially the role of government to the employers across the province, what is happening here is in effect the government is opening the way to unequal use of this particular legislation.

I have already mentioned the way in which this may well be applied in school boards and in school districts across the province. Those who have trustees committed to collective bargaining or who have greater financial resources in their division will, in fact, have a different kind of education system for their people.

What we see here, Madam Deputy Speaker, is a flat percentage reduction. Leave days are to be imposed without any consideration for existing wages. The \$20,000 employee will have to take the same number of days as a \$70,000 employee in many cases. It is particularly hard on health care workers who have already had their number of hours reduced, many of them to part time and less. On top of that very real reduction in wages, they are now being asked to take another hit, another callous deduction with very little recourse, and certainly no recourse of speaking to government or negotiating with them.

The right to negotiate a contract, the right to negotiate hours of work, the right to seniority are all union rights which have not been won without a struggle, and for each of those rights throughout the history of Canada and Manitoba, workers put their jobs on the line. They gave up wages, either in strikes or in lower settlements to win those rights. All of that has been taken away for these two years by this government.

I cannot believe that those workers, many of them now retired, will find that this is a fair piece of legislation.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I also want to talk about the question of trust of the Filmon government. Here is government which proclaimed that it would not raise taxes, and it has broken that promise, and every Manitoban, whatever condition they are in knows that that promise has been broken.

Who, anymore, trusts this Filmon government? What is their word worth? This is a government who signs a contract and claws it back. This is a government which proclaims out of one side of its mouth that it believes in the principle of collective bargaining, and on the other side of its mouth simply without discussion, without consultation, in the most arrogant manner possible, simply eliminates the possibilities of collective bargaining for large elements of the public sector for two years.

* (1650)

The question of trust of governments, I think, is an important one. One of the most important things I think that Tommy Douglas ever did, and he said it

was one of his proudest accomplishments, was to say when he left provincial politics that he had been able to say that the people of Saskatchewan believed that the government was on their side. What this Tory government and the Mulroney government in Ottawa have done is essentially to break that trust between government and the people, and that I think is a very serious and long-term issue in the history of Canadian society. It is a deliberate path that governments have chosen and we see it very clearly in this bill, the question of trust of government word. What is that Filmon signature worth on any document?

No public sector worker, no worker in the health care, nobody who works in the hospitals of Manitoba believes in that trust of government policies and the idea that the government is acting in the people's interest. I think people also must be able to believe and to have confidence that they can talk to their governments. Yet here we have a government which, without any consultation, without any sense of negotiation, has turned away from the public service and from any kind of belief or faith in collective bargaining.

I think that absence of consultation is another element of that putting aside the question of trust of governments. People must believe that they can talk to their governments, that they can consult and that they can negotiate, and that is something which this government has put on one side. It is not a short-term issue. That is a long-term issue in the relationships between the people and their representatives.

The attack on the collective bargaining environment, I think, does not send a responsible message from government to the partners in the Manitoba economy. Is this the same government which talks about partnership and involving business and labour in the process of the economy? When you undermine collective bargaining and the principles of collective bargaining, you are undermining the sense of security of both business and labour. What both business and labour need is predictability. They need that security. They need confidence in the evenhandedness of government. They need a peaceful and trusting labour

environment, and all of these things are crucial to the long-term economic security and future of Manitoba. That is what we are losing with this bill.

The government should be very, very careful in proceeding with it, because the long-term consequences, I think, are very, very dangerous. We should look I think too at the economic impact on Manitoba of this bill. How many hours of nonproductive labour or nonproductive hours really are we adding to the Manitoba economy?

We already have a high rate of unemployment, and we have a higher rate, in fact, if we look at the youth unemployment or if we include the people who have stopped looking for work. What we are doing now is adding an increasing—and a very large number—of unproductive hours to our economy. What will be the impact on lost wages to small towns? I know that many of my colleagues will speak to this, but I think those people who live in communities where there is a considerable proportion of public sector workers, Brandon, for example, Selkirk or The Pas—think very carefully about this bill, because what you are doing is taking out a good chunk of disposable income out of that community, and we are already in a situation in Manitoba where we have amongst the lowest proportion of disposable income anywhere in Canada.

So small businessmen in those communities should look very carefully at this bill. When they look at their balance books at the end of the year or at the end of two years, I think they should also look at the proportion of their losses which will be directly attributable to the loss of wages of these public-sector workers.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Has the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) looked at what the impact of this bill will be on the Treasury in the lost taxes to the Manitoba economy? If he has, will he table the information? Will he table the study that he has done which shows us at the end of two years how much the Treasury will have lost in taxation as a result of this bill? What will be the full and real cost of employing either replacement workers in the essential services or paying overtime

as people try to accommodate the necessary and essential services? We see no papers and no presentation of information in that area.

What we do see is a government which is intent upon confrontation, not upon a path of co-operation which has been open to it and which it could have chosen. It has chosen the language of division. It has chosen to use the language of division. It has chosen to diminish the trust of the people in their government, and it has chosen to create a political climate which is very different from a climate of co-operation, of economic security which I believe Manitobans need now.

They have chosen, finally, Mr. Speaker, to diminish the public service. This is truly a stand-aside government which in incremental ways is choosing deliberately to undermine the public sector and the public sector worker. It is here, too, that Manitobans I think will feel the impact, because as I have said before, these Tories are going to hit you twice. First of all, when you lose your job, when they take away 10 or 15 days work from you, and then when you turn to the public sector—the daycare services, the health care services, to public transport, to libraries, to cultural institutions. When you turn to those areas of the public sector, you will find that those have been diminished too. So those people on low and middle incomes in Manitoba, who do not have the wealth to purchase these services privately and independently, will suffer twice.

That I believe is part of the government's agenda. It is a concerted ideological attack upon the public sector. It is what the Tories call—and I have heard them say it in this House, the public sector is the public trough. That is exactly what they think of medicare, of libraries, of cultural institutions, of public transport, of all of the recreational facilities which this community has built up over the last two or three generations. They are in economic terms the social wage, which levels the playing field, particularly in health and education.

Many of those public services were built by activity outside of legislatures, by Manitobans who saw the provision of social services, equality of access to good health and good education and the right to

bargain collectively and to exert some control over your conditions of work. They saw this as one progressive package.

It is clear to me that the Tories see it as one package too. The reduction of public service, the decline in equality and the attack on labour are parts of a package which attempt to bring us to the standards of Tennessee and Tijuana.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue, with the exception of the clause reducing the salaries of MLAs in this Legislature, to oppose this bill.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): I rise to speak on Bill 22.

The member for Wolseley has very eloquently outlined the concerns of our caucus and our party and, I might add, the concerns of the people of Manitoba with the implications and the impact and the principles behind Bill 22.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) in his comments on the budget address spoke about the fact that these were difficult times, these were tough times, that all Manitobans have to share in the pain equally.

Well, we agree. These are tough times; these are difficult times; these are Tory times. Tory times definitely are tough times and I think that that phrase, I am afraid to say, has as much credence today as it did when it was first stated in this province.

There are many problems with Bill 22. One of the underlying issues is the whole concept of fairness, the concept of equality, the concept that all Manitobans do have an equal share in the rights and the responsibilities of being citizens of this province.

* (1700)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) will have 38 minutes remaining. This matter will also remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) as previously agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' Business.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 22—Aerospace Training Initiative

Mr. Brian Pallster (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), that

WHEREAS Manitoba's aerospace industry, a growing sector of our economy, could be faced with a skill shortage that could limit growth of the industry if training is not expanded; and

WHEREAS new entry level courses at Red River Community College will be developed specific to the aerospace industry occupational needs in skill shortage areas; and

WHEREAS these educational initiatives will allow Manitobans greater access to skill training specific to the aerospace industry, helping curtail possible skill shortages; and

WHEREAS the province of Manitoba, through the Department of Education and the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, along with the federal government and the aerospace industry have joined together in a creative approach to utilizing the Portage la Prairie base in an industry-driven program.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba support this educational partnership between industry and government to address the skill shortage situation in the aerospace industry.

Motion presented.

Mr. Pallster: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable members.

In April 1991, a \$6-million initiative between the province of Manitoba, the federal government and the aerospace industry was announced for the development of a highly skilled aerospace workforce for Manitoba.

The provincial government's contribution to this initiative includes three components: first of all, the provision of \$2 million over five years to the industry-wide human resource planning component of the Workforce 2000 program; secondly, the relocation of the Stevenson Aviation Technical

Training Centre to my home town, Portage la Prairie, in support of the development of an aerospace training centre at Canadian Forces Base Portage; thirdly, the introduction of new and expanded aerospace specific programs at Red River Community College, specifically aerospace repair and technology, composite and aircraft materials, post-diploma aerospace technology, computer numerical control machinery in avionics technology—a forward-looking move, I might add, Mr. Speaker.

The Manitoba Aerospace Human Resource Co-ordinating Committee made up of provincial, federal and aerospace industry participants representing the three parties to this initiative has been formed to identify the long-range training needs of Manitoba's aerospace industry. Workforce 2000 allocated \$400,000 to this co-ordinating committee in '91-92, which will lead to the training of 1,800 employees in the aerospace industry. Program training consultants are currently working with the committee to develop a human resource development and training plan for approval by the three parties—a co-operative approach, Mr. Speaker.

Stevenson Aviation Technical Training Centre provides specific technical and apprenticeship training to 130 individuals annually who are employed within the aviation industry. There continues to be a national skill shortage within the air maintenance engineer field. SATTTC responds by providing a match between present and future labour market needs. The program also develops and updates new training courses in order to meet the change in skill requirements of the labour market. Through its decentralization to the Southport Aerospace Centre, Mr. Speaker, in Portage la Prairie—did I mention that before?—the program will strengthen its partnership with industry as it collaborates with Candair and other members of the Canadian Aviation Training Centre—

An Honourable Member: And where is this again?

Mr. Pallster: This is Portage la Prairie—to develop new training markets and short-term course offerings to industry. Now partnerships with

industry will establish collaboration on curriculum priorities and build a shared responsibility in the educational industry employees. These partnerships assure Southport Aerospace's role and Stevenson's role as the aviation industry's human resource labour market response, as it can custom design training based on identified needs and update programming for the changing labour market requirements.

If I may, Mr. Speaker, at this time, I think it would be appropriate to comment a wee bit on Portage la Prairie's relevance to this whole aviation training initiative and perhaps to make some general comments on Portage la Prairie and its future. I believe that most of the members here know of the challenges faced by Portage in recent months with the loss of some major employers, but I believe the attitude in Portage la Prairie is changing. Certainly it has been the result of these challenges, I think, in part that that attitude has changed. Now Portage la Prairie certainly looks to the future with enthusiasm, embracing the new age of technology and redefining areas of opportunity.

Aerospace, Mr. Speaker, is not new to Portage la Prairie. In my community, we have had aerospace training for over half a century, but it has taken on new meaning as we prepare ourselves for the future by forming partnerships between the private and the public sectors. Portage la Prairie has become more and more innovative in its approach to creating opportunities. I think it is important to note that this has come about as a result of, in part at least, strong support from both levels of government.

Some recent examples of other initiatives in my community that have come about as a result of these partnerships has been the waste water treatment plant upgrading, which has come about through a partnership with the provincial and federal governments, with the city and also with the private sector; CalWest Textiles, as well, which involves a close-working team approach involving the province, the federal government, the city, and of course the key component to this, the people at CalWest Textiles.

Over a quarter of a billion dollars worth of opportunity has been created in Portage la Prairie through working together.

An Honourable Member: Good community.

Mr. Pallster: Yes, it is.

These opportunities have redefined the outlook that Portage la Prairie has for itself and what rural Manitoba might look to achieve by working together.

I think it is fair to note, Mr. Speaker, that the provincial government has been a key and full partner in this whole process.

Now the activities at Southport represent a sizable portion of the opportunities in our riding. Moving in new directions by taking stock of natural assets has resulted in what I consider to be a winning situation for our community. The air space, the community acceptance, the location, certainly the outstanding facilities combined to ensure that Portage la Prairie is a major player in Manitoba's aerospace sector.

The community has been extremely successful due to a number of basic resources that we have been able to co-ordinate and I believe begin to market. Late in 1991, CKND, the flagship of the global television network, recognized Portage la Prairie as having the largest portfolio of development activity in the province outside of Winnipeg.

The community of 20,000, including the rural municipality, for the benefit of some of my urban members who may not be aware, is about 70 kilometres west of the city of Winnipeg. It has, as a community and as a region, some recognized strengths. I will just touch on a couple of them, and certainly these strengths position it very well as a centre of aerospace excellence but also in many other respects for future development in other areas.

Certainly our central location in Portage la Prairie, with the excellent road and rail access that we have there, being on the Trans-Canada Highway and close proximity to the Yellowhead route and along the CN and CP main lines, gives us an ideal location for development.

Our experienced and our available workforce has been utilized to some degree certainly by all the

major employers in Portage la Prairie, such as McCain Foods, Woodstone Foods, Portage Manufacturing, WMC Industries, Can-Oat Milling and Westward Enterprises. It is fair to note that there is a high degree of employee loyalty, and I think that is at least in part due to the fact that Portage la Prairie has such a fine, fine standard of life, a quality of life that it offers its employees, and they wish to retain their positions of employment in my community and justifiably so.

* (1710)

Certainly, the cost of living in Portage la Prairie is very competitive with other communities in Manitoba. It has lovely attributes, of course, for tourism and for leisure, as well as fine quality of schools. It is a regional service centre offering a full range of health care and educational services and facilities for such things as regional health care, medical clinics, senior care homes, and did I mention our fine schools? [interjection] Yes, I am glad I did because I think they are worthy of mentioning twice.

I guess it is fair to say as well, and I will make this comment in closing, in terms of the attributes in Portage la Prairie, that coming from a fourth-generation family farm, I feel it is an honest observation that Portage la Prairie is blessed with the richest diversified agricultural economic presence perhaps in western Canada.

Overall Portage la Prairie's development has been, certainly in recent months and I expect will continue to be, very dynamic, very exciting for all the people who choose to make their home in that region, I am sure for all the people of Manitoba, certainly not just those in rural Manitoba.

An Honourable Member: They have a jolly good MLA as well.

Mr. Pallster: I would like to think so. Like any industry, Mr. Speaker, aerospace is not a recessionproof industry, and when this is combined with the downsizing in the military throughout North America and the world, we can understand why there must be some corporate restructuring and certainly some manpower reductions. But in spite of that, the outlook for the aerospace training initiative, I believe, is a very positive one. A number

of professional studies which have forecast the considerable shortages the industry will face in skilled personnel give reason for optimism for this field.

As we move into the second half of this decade, I see a great deal of potential certainly for the aerospace training facility in my own community and for other like facilities elsewhere in this province and country.

If accurate, these studies suggest that the shortages will arise from a number of factors such as the increasing age of the existing trained workforce, the changing technology and the future increased industry demands. Furthermore, industry in past years has often attracted personnel from the military, and there will be less to choose from down the road. I believe that there is reason for good optimism on that front, Mr. Speaker.

At the Southport Centre, under the direction of Bombardier's Canadian aviation training program, we have the privatized military flight training of the Slingsby [phonetic] aircraft for beginner pilots. We have the Kingair [phonetic] multiengine and Bell helicopter programs, and expansion could see these programs extended to include foreign military operations as well.

I would like to, just make a couple of quick comments on the Southport Aerospace Centre itself. The Southport Aerospace Centre was given the responsibility of being self-sufficient in five years. In their first year, I am pleased to tell the House that they are well ahead of schedule. In fact, currently they have 57 percent of their leasable space leased out. That is cause for real congratulations to those people and, certainly, optimism in the province and in my community.

The province has recognized Southport as a centre of excellence, and at least in part because of that recognition we now see over 250 people gainfully employed at the Southport Aerospace Centre. These are welcome jobs in my community, Mr. Speaker. Aerospace is, indeed, a vital part of the provincial economy and training will be critical to sustaining and further developing the industry.

Through the aerospace training initiative, Portage la Prairie has been blessed, by the moving of Stevenson Aviation Technical Training Centre to my fine community. Investigations are underway to extend this program to a broader aircraft maintenance engineer marketplace and to expand into the modern age of such products as composites.

The aerospace training initiative funding program is a vital part of the future development of my region, certainly, of this province, and has been recognized as such by being included in one of the six major economic thrusts of the province's economic development strategy. I believe that the success that we will see at Southport Aerospace Centre in coming years is going to be a very great boon to our community. I encourage Southport Aerospace in their efforts and thank them for their efforts.

Certainly I see our community benefiting in a number of other areas, but it has been my pleasure to focus on the efforts in this regard today.

At this time, I also would like to go on the record as thanking all the members of this House for their support in the recent loss of my father. It touched me, and I thank all the members for their expressions of sympathy and condolence. It is very much appreciated.

Thank you.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I am rising to speak on the private member's resolution brought forward by the member for Portage (Mr. Pallister). While I may not know very much about the technicalities of the aerospace industry, I do understand many of the principles and the items that were talked about not only in the resolution itself but in the member's comments on that resolution. I would like to speak to some of those ideas in my remarks this evening.

The member for Portage used some phrases in his comments that were very good phrases. They are phrases that we on this side of the House can agree with. Things like a co-operative approach, recognition of present and future labour market needs, recognition of skill shortages and strengthening partnership between government, community and industry. Those comments are

comments that we on this side of the House can completely agree with and applaud and support.

As a matter of fact I am a bit surprised that the member for Portage is actually putting them on the record because these are exactly the kinds of ideas and principles that we on this side of the House believe in and worked with while we were in government, and have been urging this government to implement in its deliberations in these difficult economic times. They are ideas that this government has chosen not to abide by in the vast majority of instances where it could have dealt with situations co-operatively and in partnership. In our earlier discussion this afternoon, and in our continuing discussion on the government's Bill 16, those kinds of elements of co-operation and partnership are sorely lacking.

We do not take anything away from what is happening in the town of Portage with the aerospace industry and the work that is being done on revitalizing the Portage economy. As I have said earlier, this is exactly the sort of co-operative venture that we believe should be undertaken throughout the province of Manitoba. It is quite interesting, Mr. Speaker, that through the luck of the draw, when we made the draws for the ordering of private members' resolutions, that this resolution follows directly on the resolution from the member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes) dealing with the Churchill Rocket Range.

I think the parallels are startling: A community that has had economic troubles; a community that has relied heavily on transportation; a community that has the local resources, the local community acceptance and the location to be able to be revitalized through a partnership with government and industry and the community. One distinction, the community of Churchill is located in the northern part of this province, and the community of Portage is located in the rural part of this province, and I am not going to say anything more about that distinction because every single member in this House knows exactly what that means.

The community of Churchill gets no support from this government in its work towards the revitalization

of the Churchill rocket range and the revitalization of the bayline and the Port of Churchill. The city, the community of Portage gets a great deal of positive support from this government. So I think it is very interesting that juxtaposition of communities has such a different government reaction to very similar needs.

I think it is also very interesting that this provincial government has shown, through the activities that it has undertaken with the aerospace industry, with Red River and with the community of Portage, that it can, if it wants to, act in a co-operative manner, act in partnership with all of the stakeholders in our communities.

I think we on this side of the House were beginning to feel that that was an impossibility, and it is a virtual impossibility, because it is not happening in any other area of this province. In virtually every other area of the province, in virtually every other discussion and dialogue that this government attempts to undertake with groups in this province, there is no co-operation, there is no sense of community, there is no sense of partnership.

* (1720)

It is interesting because, when the government chooses to do so, it can act in a very responsible manner.

The member for Portage (Mr. Pallister) talks about the fact, and it is a real fact, a fact that is having an impact throughout the developed countries, the impact of "peace breaking out" several years ago with the reduction in hostilities among the superpowers and the increasing recognition on the parts of governments that the major emphasis and funding that went into the defence industry is no longer necessary.

There are examples throughout North America and certainly in the Western European countries of the dislocations that are taking place by governments attempting to decrease their spending on military hardware, armaments, expenditures, research and development of all sorts, the problems that that is having on communities and large parts of countries that have relied so heavily on that defence spending for the last 45 years.

The member for Portage makes a very good point, that it is still a potentially problematic situation with the Portage process. We hope that those problems are worked out and it turns out to be a very healthy and vibrant part of the Portage and the Manitoba economy.

Again, one parallel with the Port of Churchill and the Churchill Rocket Range situation is that the problem of military spending is not present in the Port of Churchill, in the Churchill Rocket Range, because it is scientific development that is being suggested for Churchill. It is not military, it is scientific.

The Churchill Rocket Range is one of the world's best locations for the kind of scientific undertaking that the town of Churchill is asking for. So while there is some potential problem in the Portage situation, there is not that potential problem in the Churchill situation.

Mr. Speaker, as well, the member, in his actual resolution, talks about new, entry level courses at Red River Community College to respond to skill shortage areas. When this resolution was put into the private member's resolution order I believe it was last November, I cannot believe that the members who placed this resolution in the hopper for discussion had any concept of what the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey) and that very government has done to Red River Community College, has done to those same skill-shortage areas that the member for Portage (Mr. Pallister) is talking about. The government taketh on the one hand and giveth with the other.

Again, the Minister of Education has eliminated completely the prejob training courses that allowed people to go to Red River Community College and get the training that they needed to be able to participate successfully in more advanced job training courses.

When we have 30 percent of our high school students not graduating, even though the Minister of Education refuses to accept that Statistics Canada statistic, we on this side of the House know that it is upwards of one-third of the students who matriculate do not graduate for a number of reasons.

They are missing some of the basic skills they need in order to access this highly technological and highly changing job market today in Manitoba and throughout the world.

These courses at Red River provided some of that pretraining basic skill development that was needed. As well, they have sharply curtailed the telecommunications courses at Red River Community College. Now, if there is one area that is a growth industry in our society it is in the area of telecommunications. You cannot pick up a newspaper, and you certainly cannot pick up any kind of journal for anyone who is at all interested in computers, you cannot pick up anything today without seeing some new technological advance or technological change taking place. In some cases these are not necessarily advances, but that is another topic for another day, but there are certainly enormous changes that are taking place in the telecommunications industries.

We need a skilled work force that can participate in those changes. This government says they want to make us competitive. If we are going to be able to compete in the marketplace in the 21st Century, we have to be able to have education systems that will allow us to provide the training for our young people to be able to access those jobs.

Training not only for our young people but for people who have been dispossessed by the restructuring, the downsizing, the rightsizing, the massive layoffs that have occurred in our society. Eliminating telecommunications courses from the Red River Community College is not the way to go about this.

They have completely eliminated the nontraditional courses that were open for women. This is one of the ones that makes me the angriest. Talk about women's equality. Talk about the need to make sure that there is access. The Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Mitchelson) is talking all the time about the need to make access broader for young women today. She talks in terms of access to maths and sciences, but at the same time she participates as a member of cabinet with decisions that are made to eliminate

every single course at Red River Community College for women to enter nontraditional occupations.

Courses such as baking have been eliminated from Red River Community College. Now this may appear to be not a huge important cut, but we are experiencing a shortage of bakers in this province. One of the areas in the immigration categories that is now seen as a shortage in Manitoba are cooks and bakers, and that is because we are not training our own people to be able to take these jobs.

So, Mr. Speaker, the idea that this resolution applauds the government for its work in skills shortage areas would be laughable if it were not so sad. This government has choices to make. All governments have choices to make; by definition that is what governments do. They are either more active or more passive in making those choices, but every decision or nondecision of a government has implications for the people, and the implications for the people in this province for the government's decisions in some cases, like in the case with the Portage aerospace industry, are positive.

In other cases, the very similar situation, the government has chosen not to act, not to participate. The impact of that lack of decision is going to be devastating for the people of Churchill and northern Manitoba and, by extension, one could say the people of Manitoba entirely because, without the Churchill rocket range, without some co-operative moves with the various components, the various levels of government in the community, the Churchill bayline will be eliminated, and the Port of Churchill will be left to wither on the vine.

One can only assume that perhaps this is not an error of omission on the part of this government but an active error of commission.

So, Mr. Speaker, in closing, while we applaud the co-operative work of this government in the work with Portage to help revitalize its aerospace industry and bring much needed economic development to that community, we still say that the government has made many, many choices in other areas that have had a devastating effect and will continue to have a

devastating effect and wish that they would be a little more evenhanded in their decision making.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): I am delighted to rise on this particular aerospace training initiative, a recognition of a positive move on the part of the government in the Portage la Prairie area.

Those of us who sat in the House, when we heard the devastating announcement of the closure of the base in Portage la Prairie, where all three parties worked together to protest with the federal government about a closure which was disproportionate in relation to the closure of bases in other provinces, we were experiencing a cutback in the support provided to Manitoba in terms of the military budget of the federal government.

All of us would like to, I think, see the elimination of a military budget if it was possible to so do. I mean, if we could never have a war anywhere in the world and there was never a necessity for spending money on armaments and on troops, I think all of us would be quite delighted.

Unfortunately, that is a long way from today, and we all have to regret that the world, rather than moving towards more peaceful solutions, seemed to be moving quite often in major confrontations, perhaps not of a worldwide nature as we experienced with World War I and World War II, but certainly at a local area.

* (1730)

One only has to watch prime time news or any other news broadcast and to watch what is happening in today's Yugoslavia and the questions that are being asked on a daily basis about whether the western world should participate in some way to prevent the annihilation of people within that community and to recognize that the military presence is very much going to be with us.

So if the federal government was going to downsize in terms of military bases across the country, and if they had done that equally for every province, then Manitobans, I think, would have been prepared to accept our fair share.

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

What we saw with the closure of the Portage la Prairie base, however, was a very unfair action on the part of the federal government because it placed a disproportionate burden on the province of Manitoba. So while I am delighted with this training initiative, I wish in some ways it had not had to come about the way that it did.

But what we saw within the community of Portage, as we saw to some degree, by the way, in the community of Summerside in Prince Edward Island, was a group of people working together who said, look, we have really been hit, and we have been hit unfairly, but we are going to do what we can to try and rebuild a community. We are going to try and maintain some viability within that community, and we are going to look at new ways of doing things with the facilities that are already in place.

Because of actions taken by the federal government, much less in the way of funding, I might say, than what had been formerly going into the base, they did respond. The fact is that they recognized, after a great deal of persuasion on the part of the people from Portage la Prairie that they had better do something, they did respond with some monies towards the development of the training initiative.

I congratulate this government for also putting its dollars into a new training initiative with respect to aerospace. My only difficulty is that I do not see a consistent policy with regard to the training that is going to be necessary.

I know that there is a training initiative going on in the community, but I still know that if you want to be trained in aeronautical engineering of any kind in the province of Manitoba, you have to leave the province. You cannot get it in the province of Manitoba.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

So we have young people who would like to stay here, who would like to eventually be able to participate in this kind of aerospace development, who cannot do it because the training opportunities and initiatives are simply not here for them.

That has been the tragedy, that you have not carried it as a government all the way through and that young people who would come in at some of the upper levels in this training initiative are simply not going to be able to do so because the training opportunities are not here.

As I have said so often in the past, unfortunately, when our young people choose to leave the province to seek training opportunities elsewhere, whether it is for speech therapy because we do not offer speech therapy in the province or whether it is for an educational experience that they think is richer in whatever dynamic that may be, they frequently do not return.

That is one of the implications of not having the kind of training system in place in Manitoba that will encourage young people to not only obtain their training in Manitoba, but to remain in the province thereafter.

We know, for example, that every Canadian, including young people, has mobility rights and that many of them, no matter what we put in place in the province of Manitoba, will always choose to go elsewhere for their training. Some will choose that for a wide variety of reasons. Some will choose it simply because their mother is a politician and they quite frankly do not want to live in her shadow any longer. They will pick themselves up and move elsewhere in order to get that training in another province or, in one case, even in the United States.

We cannot, obviously, provide for all of these young people, but there are some initiatives and some skills training that we must provide in the province of Manitoba if Manitoba is going to change the way in which we do things in the future.

We know that we are becoming less and less dependent upon our agriculture sector. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) knows that in terms of new employment opportunities for young people, if one compares statistics of the number of Manitobans on farms 20 years ago and compares it with today, we know we have to find different forms of jobs for those people in alternative sectors of the economy.

We know that manufacturing is down in Manitoba, and it seems to be a little disproportionately down but, in reality, it is down throughout the western world. It is down throughout the western world because the whole world is becoming much more service oriented.

There is one area, however, in which we do note a rise. That is in high-tech industries. The high technologies, whether they be computers, whether they be in areas like aeronautical engineering, whether they be in areas of careers which require the use of a high degree of computation abilities, those occupations seem to be growing in increasing numbers. They are primarily service because they do not produce a product, but they are not the service jobs that we have seen in the past that are the so-called McDonald's jobs. They are jobs in which an individual, in order to provide that service, has to have an extremely high level of training.

That has to be where we focus the new initiatives in our community colleges and in our universities, so that those high level skills can be easily acquired by our young people in our educational institutions. That will then make us a province in which we can appeal to potential employers because we have a broad base of skilled employees. [interjection]

The Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst) said that we are not competitive. Well, that is in fact not true. Manitoba is highly competitive in terms of our ability to provide a high quality of life to people throughout this country.

One only has to look at the bargains available in real estate throughout Manitoba and compare that real estate sector to what is available in British Columbia or what is available in Ontario and recognize that one can have accommodations in our community at considerably lower prices than you can have it in almost any other province in this country.

So we are able to sell a lifestyle. I think that we have not promoted it adequately enough, but we also have to sell the fact that we have a well-trained, educated population. It is always tragic to me when I pick up the statistics and read that Manitoba still sends a lower percentage of young people on to

post-secondary education institutions than any other province in this country on a per capita basis.

Part of the reason we do that is because of the number of spaces in our community colleges, which is well below the number of spaces available per capita even in Prince Edward Island which is the smallest province in the country with 130,000 people. Yet they can send more students per capita to a post-secondary educational institution than we can in the province of Manitoba.

That is a legacy that we must seek to change. We must look at these new technologies. We must make those two technologies available to our young people so they will be able to remain at home, so that they can continue their education, and that they can then remain in the province to contribute to the very necessary tax base which any province requires in order to be successful.

So this particular initiative on the part of the government should not in any way, shape or form be condemned. It should be applauded. It is a positive initiative. It is going to provide young people with some training. It is going to provide people in Portage la Prairie with an ability to remain in that community and an ability to live in that community. [interjection]

Well, the other shoe is not going to drop. The member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister) says he is concerned about the other shoe is going to drop. All I want to do is to say to the government this is a very small first step.

There are many other initiatives of a similar nature which are required at the community college level that are required on hands with business and with the other level of government which is going to be necessary if we are going to turn this province around and have it as a viable community for employers to come here so that they will have the kinds of employees that they require.

As this is one initiative in what I had hoped was going to be a number of initiatives—but it seems to have come to a bit of a stop—I have no difficulty in supporting this particular resolution that has been submitted by the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister). I would ask him to take back the good

wishes of the Liberal Party to Portage la Prairie for having been the home of this initiative and for having got it going.

* (1740)

I have met with people at the base in Portage la Prairie. I know how hard they are working to get this up and running. I think that it bodes well for the future community of Portage la Prairie.

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to add my comments to this resolution and just discuss some of the concerns that I have about the rural economy.

The member for Portage, in this resolution, is praising his government for what they have done to address the economic situation in Portage la Prairie and so he should. It is his community, as he has said, and they have had some job losses in that community, but we have to look at what the reason was for that job loss.

There was the closing down of the military base in Portage and we wonder why Portage was the one that was chosen. When we think about some of the lines that we heard from the government about strong communication with the federal government, why there was not a stronger voice put forward by this government to retain that base at Portage, why that community was targeted. As we have less military activity, there is going to be a closing down of those facilities. We have to address the needs and we have to look at the skills shortages and how we are going to train these people and where these people are going to be trained.

I have some concerns about when there are a lot of different areas that you need training in, that we would be cutting down on the amount of training that we are doing at our community colleges and not meeting those specific needs there. We should be looking at enhancing those training areas as well. I am sure, as the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) indicated when she was making her comments, that when this resolution was being put forward no one ever expected, or those people who were writing this resolution ever expected that we would have the

cutbacks and a reduction of courses being offered in our community colleges.

I can respect the member for Portage (Mr. Pallister) for fighting for his community and praising the government for addressing those concerns, but there is a much broader issue that has to be addressed and that is how we are reducing the opportunities for all people to get their education and get the skills that they need, for we are getting into a much more technical age.

There is a higher level of skill that is needed to take up the jobs in this workforce and those courses should be available in colleges, and we are having a cutback there.

The member talked about decentralization and the steps his government had taken in decentralization. We have said that we support decentralization, but decentralization should be based on areas of the province where the services are needed but also where there is high unemployment. Although this initiative addresses the unemployment in Portage la Prairie, there are areas in this province where we have much, much higher unemployment, and that should be addressed by this government, but it is not happening, Mr. Speaker. We are not seeing any leadership from this government on job creation in rural Manitoba. We are having very high unemployment rates, and those must be developed.

If we believe in the rural community, and I often hear the words from this government that they do believe in rural Manitoba and they want to see the economy grow there, there has to be a commitment, but to this point we have not seen a real commitment; it has been much lip service for growth.

I think not only about rural Manitoba, but I also think about the North and particularly about the community of Churchill, where there is another group of people who are extremely interested in having their rocket range developed, to provide services, to have training in those areas. If this government had some commitment to the North, they would be looking at how they could use that facility as well.

There has been a tremendous lobby by a large number of people, a lot of hard work that was done by the people in Churchill to show the value of this facility. In fact, at last year's municipal convention, there were resolutions passed supporting the Port of Churchill and the rocket range at Churchill.

I was quite surprised to see the amount of support that was there, particularly coming from reeves and councillors in southern Manitoba. These reeves and councillors recognized the economic value of the port to this province, and they recognized the economic value that developing that rocket range could create for the town of Churchill, where there is very, very high unemployment, much higher than we have in southern Manitoba.

Although this resolution addresses the concerns of the community of Portage, and I recognize the concerns that the member for Portage (Mr. Pallister) brings for his community to this Legislature, I am disappointed that when there was a resolution dealing with another area, and that being the Churchill Rocket Range, the government members chose to just amend that resolution, that it was a self-serving resolution but did nothing to address the needs of those people in that community. It is disappointing.

An Honourable Member: Two wrongs do not make a right.

Ms. Wowchuk: The member across the way says two wrongs do not make a right. I want to assure him that we have absolutely no intention of amending his resolution and that I am sure it will pass. But it gives us an opportunity to raise our concerns, and in particular, for me, I feel that I must raise the concerns of other communities in rural Manitoba.

We have to have economic development throughout this province. We have to give all people in rural Manitoba the ability to live in their communities, to give them the opportunities for jobs in their communities, for business to get started in those communities and to work co-operatively with them, not only in one area of the province.

Mr. Speaker, when the member spoke on his resolution, he talked about co-operation and working together and getting the people the skills

that they need to meet the needs of the workplace. That is something that has to be addressed. There are changing needs in this world. Jobs have changed. There is a need to educate people and train people with different skills. One of the places is the base at Portage where we can get some of that training done, but we have to have much more effort put into training and preparing our young people for the workforce. That is not happening under the leadership of this government.

In fact, we see a much more confrontational attitude and agenda approached by this government rather than working along with the labour force, with the working people, and preparing them and offering them opportunities to upgrade their skills and work for the betterment of this province.

* (1750)

We see a more confrontational attitude being taken by this government, and that is not good. That is not good for the economic growth of this province, and it is not good for working relationships between government and the people, and it is not healthy for economic growth.

The member outlined, talked about his community, and the many opportunities that are there for economic growth. The people of Portage are very fortunate to have such a diverse economy and opportunity for development.

They have some of the infrastructures that many other communities would like to have. I think particularly of my part of the province in the Swan River area where we would like to have alternate energy sources so we could have the development of business. We would like to have our educational opportunities enhanced, particularly where we could get some training, particularly, I think about First Year by Distance Education which would certainly enhance the opportunities for the people in that part of the province.

I would hope as the government recognizes the needs of the community of Portage and other areas like that, that they would also recognize that they have the responsibility to offer those opportunities in other parts of the province, the opportunity to get an education closer to home. Because when you

look at the North, again I speak about the Swan River constituency, it is very difficult under the economic times that we have right now for people to go to the city to the south to get an education.

So the government has a responsibility to also look at that part of the province so that people can have the opportunity to get the skills that they also need to upgrade their education, so then they can also meet the needs and take their fair place in the workforce.

We have to look at how we can offer that in the fairest way, the most economical way that all people can have the opportunities. We have to look at how we can have economic development in other parts of the province.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I want to refer to the community of Churchill, where this community would like to have some growth. I think that the government should look at what the impacts will be if they do not take the initiative, do not offer that community support. If they are not prepared to invest in the northern community and get some jobs there, develop and reactivate the Churchill rocket range, there will be negative impacts throughout the North.

We are very worried about what is going to happen with the railway lines, particularly the line to Churchill. If there is not some economic development there, we are going to see an excuse there to close down that line, and what will be impacts of that? There are many communities along the way that are going to suffer, that have no access, so it all ties in with what happens to the port and what happens to the rocket range.

I can appreciate that the member is enthusiastic about the economic development and the aerospace industry in his community. I would encourage him as a rural member to look at the other communities and speak to his colleagues and encourage them to look at other parts of rural Manitoba, because there are many other communities that need the same kind of investment, that need the same kind of supports.

I would encourage the government to look at ways we can get those opportunities into all of our

communities. Granted not every town is going to have an industry build up, not every town is going to have opportunities for people to have their training right there, but we have to look at how we can expand this and how we can have the training in other areas as well.

There are other impacts as well that affect the community and in the community of Portage, and I know that one of the concerns that that community is having as well is on the quality of their water and the supply of water. That also is going to have to be addressed, and I know it is causing a lot of concern.

Mr. Speaker, as I say, the community of Portage la Prairie is very fortunate. I hope other communities will be as fortunate—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): It is a pleasure to follow the thoughtful comments of the member for Swan River on this important issue, an important issue affecting rural Manitoba. When the member for Portage (Mr. Pallister) first stood up, I was not sure if he was going to apologize to the House, apologize to rural Manitobans for his inability to stand up in caucus and defend the aboriginal and Metis people in Manitoba when he allowed this government to cut the funding to friendship centres in this province, a blatant attack on—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for Selkirk that what is before the House at this point in time is the resolution about the aerospace industry. The member for Selkirk, keep his remarks relevant.

Point of Order

Mr. Pallister: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say that I strongly object to the member for Selkirk attacking me personally and attacking this government and the vast projects—

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

Mr. Dewar: Mr. Speaker, I was not attacking the member for Portage. I was attacking the policies of the government.

Point of Order

Hon. Jim Ernst (Acting Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the member for Selkirk made a personal attack upon the member for Portage la Prairie. In this House, we are all honourable members, and to attribute motives and so on that the member for Selkirk did would be inappropriate, and he should apologize.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister does not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts. The honourable member for Selkirk, carry on with his remarks, please.

* * *

Mr. Dewar: Again, Mr. Speaker, I was not attacking the member for Portage personally. I was attacking his government's policies. We are talking here about rural Manitoba. We are talking about training opportunities. Well, let us talk about the Selkirk school of nursing, which his government closed—a 70-year-old institution and our facility.

Mr. Speaker: The aerospace industry, please.

Mr. Dewar: The point I am trying to raise is that the specific resolution before us deals with aerospace and training in rural Manitoba. I was speaking about the school of nursing and how this one time would train rural Manitobans. The member opposite raised a point of two rights do not make a wrong, but nevertheless this government decided in a very blatant attack upon the community to close the school of nursing.

Not only that, again speaking about training opportunities in rural Manitoba, the training plant in Selkirk, the Human Resource Opportunity Centre, they call it the training plant, you could not be more relevant to training in rural Manitoba. This government closed that again, denying, robbing many Selkirk residents, more of the vulnerable residents of our community of any training opportunities.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Selkirk will have 12 minutes remaining.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 12, 1993

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