



**Fifth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature**  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**  
**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**(Hansard)**

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Fifth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

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NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Sellkirk	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, Cliff	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
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Liberal
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCORMICK, Norma	Osborne	Liberal
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
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	NDP
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
SCHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, April 8, 1994

The House met at 10 a.m.

### PRAYERS

#### Speaker's Statement

**Mr. Speaker:** I have a statement for the House. I must inform the House that Judy Wasylycia-Leis, the honourable member for St. Johns, and Reginald Alcock, the honourable member for Osborne, have resigned their seats in the House effective August 12, 1993, and July 30, 1993, respectively. I am, therefore, tabling their resignations and my letters to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council advising of the vacancies thus created in the membership of the House.

I am pleased to inform the Assembly that the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly has received from the chief electoral officer a notice respecting the election of Harry Schellenberg as the member for the constituency of Rossmere, Eric Robinson as member for the constituency of Rupertsland, Gord Mackintosh as the member for the constituency of St. Johns, Norma McCormick as the member for the constituency of Osborne, and Gary Kowalski as the member for the constituency of The Maples. I hereby table the notice respecting these elections.

#### Introduction of New Members

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to you Harry Schellenberg, member for the electoral division of Rossmere, who has taken the oath, has signed the roll and now claims the right to take his seat.

**Mr. Speaker:** Congratulations, Harry. On behalf of all honourable members, I would like to welcome you to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba and wish you well in your parliamentary career. Good luck, sir.

**Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to you Eric Robinson, member for the electoral division of Rupertsland, who has taken the oath and signed the roll and now claims the right to take his seat.

**Mr. Speaker:** On behalf of all honourable members, I would like to welcome you, sir, to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba and wish you well in your parliamentary career. All the best, Eric. Congratulations.

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to you Gord Mackintosh, member for the electoral division of St. Johns, who has taken the oath and signed the roll and now claims the right to take his seat.

**Mr. Speaker:** On behalf of all honourable members, I would like to welcome you to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba and wish you well in your parliamentary career. Good luck. All the best.

\* (1005)

**Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to you Norma McCormick, member for the electoral division of Osborne, who has taken the oath and signed the roll and now claims the right to take her seat.

**Mr. Speaker:** Congratulations, Norma. On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba and wish you well in your parliamentary career. Good luck. All the best.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to you Gary Kowalski, member for the electoral division of The Maples, who has taken the oath and signed the roll and now claims the right to take his seat.

**Mr. Speaker:** Congratulations, sir. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, and I wish you well in your parliamentary career.

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to table at this time the 1992-93 Annual Report of the Civil Service Commission as well as the Actuarial Report on the Public Service Group Insurance Fund as at December 31st, 1991, as well as the Actuarial Report on The Civil Service Superannuation Fund as at December 31st, 1992.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am also pleased to table the Annual Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on The Election Finances Act for the year 1992.

I am also tabling the Statutory Report for September 21, 1993, by-elections in the electoral divisions of Osborne, Rossmere, Rupertsland, St. Johns and The Maples, and am tabling said documents.

### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us this morning Senator JoAnn Morford-Burg and her husband Quinten from the state of South Dakota.

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

\* (1010)

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

### Health Care System Staffing—Status Report

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier.

In 1992 I asked the Premier a number of questions about staffing and patient care at a number of the hospitals, particularly the Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface, and did not get any answers at that point.

Subsequent to that date, in 1993 we had the health reform fanfare of the government. Of

course, this fanfare is now noticeably missing from the words of the Speech from the Throne that was tabled by the government yesterday, and we had the hiring of a person named Connie Curran to implement the plans of the Minister of Health in terms of health care reductions and cutbacks to the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, after the Premier (Mr. Filmon) changed his cabinet in the middle of the by-elections and changed his Minister of Health, we heard four days later that there would be a "health care pause" so we can reflect and evaluate the impact of the Curran and government cutbacks that were being implemented by his government, the Conservative government.

I would like to ask the Premier today: What is the status of the so-called pause that was announced on September 14, and what is the status of employment and patient care at hospitals, particularly our two teaching hospitals in Winnipeg?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, the pause to which the honourable Leader of the Opposition refers had to do with staffing guidelines being reviewed by my department, by the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses, by the Manitoba Association of Licensed Practical Nurses, by the College of Physicians and Surgeons and by the Registered Psychiatric Nurses' Association of Manitoba so that we could be sure that any staffing changes in hospitals in Manitoba would not have a negative impact on patient care.

That, Mr. Speaker, is our bottom line. That is our bottom line at Health Sciences Centre. That is our bottom line at St. Boniface Hospital.

As you know, the work restructuring project at those two tertiary hospitals has generated hundreds and hundreds of ideas, generated by hundreds and hundreds of our fellow Manitobans, professionals and workers who work in these hospitals—nurses, dietitians, technicians—and those ideas are presently under review by myself.

I expect in a short time to be able to announce the government position on those recommendations.

**Mr. Doer:** Well, I am very disappointed the Premier is not taking control of this issue, Mr. Speaker. It is the largest area of spending in the government.

During the last session and the session before, the Premier sat on his hands, said nothing about health care, obviously does not care about health care. He does not even stand up on the first question in this Chamber, and in the last Question Period last year, he would not answer about health care either.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health is working with a management-labour committee along with his Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik). The Minister of Health met with this committee in December of 1993.

Finally, for the first time, we have in writing in January of 1994 that in addition to all the reductions in staff and all that impact on patient care, an additional 1,500 people will lose their jobs at St. Boniface Hospital and the Health Sciences Centre if the so-called government agenda continues to roll through those hospitals.

I would like to ask the Premier: What is the status of those additional 1,500 people who will lose their jobs, and what will be the impact on patient care in the province of Manitoba?

**Mr. McCrae:** One of the reasons to have a pause last fall, Mr. Speaker, was that changes in health care would indeed have an impact on employment in Manitoba. That was a matter of some concern to me as a member of a government which for the last six years has been able to reduce the size of government without major impact on people and on their employment. That was missing in the health care sector, so in order for us to have an orderly transition in health care to a community-based as opposed to an institution-based system, there would be impact, and so I have insisted with my colleagues, and I have received good co-operation from them, that there be some labour adjustment so that people do not have to feel that there is no future in health care in Manitoba, because there is, Mr. Speaker.

There is an exciting future in health care, not only for those who need health care services, but also those who provide them.

\* (1015)

**Mr. Doer:** I am pleased to see the minister confirming what we have said during all last year's session, that there was no plan, there was no sensitivity to patients and staff, there was no agenda for government. There were just ad hoc decisions and ad hoc rhetoric in this Chamber, with no sensitivity to the patients and people of Manitoba.

I ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon) a very direct question: After he has changed his ministers and after being in government now for close to six years, what is the status of the recommendation on 1,500 people losing their jobs at St. Boniface and Health Sciences Centre? What is the status? Are they going to implement those 1,500 reductions, and what will be the impact on patients? Where are these changes going to take place? Where are these layoffs going to take place? What will be the impact on the facilities that already have people in the hallways, have patients waiting for services?

The system is quite stretched, Mr. Speaker, based on the Tory agenda on health care.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Speaker, the honourable member uses a number that is extremely exaggerated because, if he talks to our fellow Manitobans who are involved in the generation of these recommendations—after all, you know, we have been asked: You want some ideas, ask us, we work in the system.

That is exactly what we did, and the people who work at those hospitals generated the ideas that do talk about improvements to patient care and changes to the labour situation.

The honourable member's question also fails to mention that—I do not know if he showed up that day or not, but we have been opening personal care home beds in Manitoba—oh, yes, I remember he sent a colleague for that. We are providing alternative services in the community through long-term care, so the honourable member in his

question does not remember to mention that part of it.

The number that he uses is grossly, grossly exaggerated. Because of labour adjustment, because of vacancy rates, because of careful use of attrition and all of those things, we are going to be able to provide improved care to patients with a much reduced impact in terms of labour, as might have been expected previously.

As I said, hospitals do not have the same labour adjustment strategies as this government has had over the last six years. We are now going to be able to have that, and it is going to make it much better for the people who work there.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Speaker, this report follows a meeting the minister had with management and labour in all the hospitals. The report sent to the government from these experts, working, as the minister has indicated, at the bedside, indicates fully that—and I will quote from page 2—these numbers will get larger as reform rolls over the months and years ahead.

It is projected that if fully implemented, proposed additional budget cuts—that is budget cuts made by this government—at Winnipeg's two teaching hospitals alone could cost 1,500 people their jobs.

Now, will the minister, if he says this number is exaggerated—and this is already in addition to the number of cuts they have already made with the line-ups that have already taken place in the hospitals—will the Premier (Mr. Filmon) today tell us what is the numbering?

They have been in office six years. What is it?

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Speaker, I have asked that same question of the management of the Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface and, unfortunately, because of the way the union agreements work with respect to bumping, they are not even able to tell how many jobs will be affected in the future.

As I have said, with labour adjustment, we expect that to be minimized, but I am also asking for the honourable member's support as I approach the unions to say, let's do away with this bumping

business, because that does not work when we are in a reform mode. That works perhaps in the annual operation of a hospital where you might have to make adjustments, but we are talking about larger adjustments now and bumping does not work well.

So I am asking the unions and I am asking the members of the opposition to help us, not just to help the honourable member, but to help the people who work in these hospitals who have given us so much service over the years.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, bumping can be dangerous to patients, and our honourable members opposite interested in joining me in asking for that kind of a change, so that as change happens, we do not have to have that kind of negative impact on patients. I do not want that. I do not think the honourable member does.

Work with us, please, on that point.

\* (1020)

**Mr. Doer:** I would go back to the Premier (Mr. Filmon), Mr. Speaker. The minister did not answer the question. He was talking about how he was going to fire people or lay them off, rather than how many there will be and what will be the impact on patients.

Now, if the number of 1,500 is exaggerated, and this number comes from management and from workers based on government budget decisions, their decisions, your decisions, this Premier's decisions, I would just like to know—and I think the people of Manitoba are entitled to know from the Premier, who has two ministers working on this committee and a previous minister that started these cuts, all of which he approved: How many people will be reduced and what will be the impact on patients?

A very simple question—six years in office, you should have the answer.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Speaker, the intention, my clear intention, as stated many, many times, is to keep that number to the absolute minimum. It is impossible because of bumping for me to answer the honourable member's question directly, but his number is greatly exaggerated.

The document the honourable member is flourishing today is not a new thing. This has been a very transparent process, Mr. Speaker. Hundreds and hundreds of people know exactly what is going on in those hospitals because hundreds and hundreds of people have been involved in generating the ideas for improved patient care.

I hope the honourable Leader of the Opposition is not opposed to improving patient care and I hope he is not opposed to treating the people who work in those hospitals as compassionately as we can.

### **Health Care System Staffing—Status Report**

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** The only bumping that has gone on is the bumping of the former Minister of Health to the present Minister of Health by the Premier, Mr. Speaker, and we still cannot get any answers from the person who is supposed to be in charge of this thing—the Premier.

I have asked the question four times now: How many people are going to be laid off at the two teaching hospitals, and what will be the impact on the patients in Manitoba? There are line-ups, chaos in health care.

Surely the Premier can answer the question: Is it 1,500, is it 1,400, is it zero, have they frozen it till past the election?

Please tell the people of Manitoba how many are being reduced and what will be the impact on patients.

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure that it will not go unnoticed by all those who are observers of this Legislature Question Period the cheap politics that the Leader of the Opposition is attempting to play.

When he is asking questions of detail on the Department of Health, those questions are most appropriately answered by the Minister of Health. When he wants to talk about specific reports generated within the hospital system to do with decisions made and their policy issues and reviews being made within that, those are most appropriately answered by the Minister of Health.

The kind of cheap gamesmanship that he wants to play, Mr. Speaker, will not benefit him and certainly will not benefit the people of Manitoba. I am sure that they are observing his kind of behaviour, and I am sure that they judge it as being a failure just as he is.

### **Unemployment Rate Provincial Comparisons**

**Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, today the people of this country received some good news about the unemployment rate nationally for the last month, and I for one want to say that I think we are all pleased to see that trend starting to occur nationally as, hopefully, the country pulls out of this dark and deep recession.

I do want to point out to the Premier and ask the Premier today about the Manitoba situation in particular. While certainly the unemployment rate seasonally adjusted has gone down, and for that I think we are all grateful, the unfortunate fact appears to be that of the 7,000 new people who have gotten jobs, 6,000 of those have taken jobs where people have either left those jobs or left the province. That is, there are only one seventh of those jobs that have actually resulted from job creation, and that unfortunately is the third worst job creation record in the country in terms of provinces in the last month.

My question to the Premier: Given that for the last six years, as reiterated yesterday, the key platform is job creation, why are we third worst in the country on that particular point this last month?

\* (1025)

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I know that the member opposite studied long and hard to try and find a dark cloud behind the silver lining that was contained within the unemployment figures. That, of course, is his normal attitude toward these kinds of things. I would have thought that he would have risen and said that he was very happy that the unemployment rate in Manitoba has improved by 1.2 percent.

**Mr. Edwards:** I did not say that.

**An Honourable Member:** What were you saying about cheap politics?

**Mr. Filmon:** No, no, he referred to the national rate, tried to cozy up and toady up to his federal Liberal government. He was very specific as to how he phrased it. I know that he likes to try and bask in the glow of his federal Liberal counterparts, but it was the Manitoba reduction of 1.2 percent, an improvement in the unemployment rate, that I thought that he might give some credit to this government for.

In addition to that, of course, he declined to congratulate the government for the fact that last year we had the third best job creation growth of any province in Canada, all of 1993. I thought that he might make some comment about that, but he did not, so I will just have to say to him that all of this, I might point out, was before even we had the results or the impact of some of the infrastructure announcements, some \$130 million worth of projects that were announced the day before yesterday.

I think that if he looks at the trends, if he looks at the way in which things are being announced these days, that he will find that Manitoba is on a very positive path, and I look forward to debating these issues and comparing these numbers with him as time goes on throughout the course of the year.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Speaker, let me assure the Premier, it did not take long to see the trend that I pointed out to him. It is on the first page of the labour statistics.

I want to ask the Premier again: Why, of the 7,000 people who got jobs in this province in the last month, 6,000 of them—86 percent, third worst in the country—why were 6,000 as a result of out-migration, were people leaving their jobs?

Why is job creation in this province, when it has been the lead priority for six years, still third worst in the country, Mr. Speaker? I would like an answer from the Premier.

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Speaker, the interesting thing is that the member opposite wants to try and selectively choose from one month's statistics the worst circumstances that he can put together.

I point out to him that last year the province of Manitoba for the entire year of 1993 had the third best record of job creation of all the provinces of Canada—for the entire year, Mr. Speaker. I point out to him that in terms of the jobs that are being created in Manitoba, there are 10,000 more people employed as of these statistics versus May of last year. So we continue to be on a trend of improvement that is a very positive one that he ought to look towards, Mr. Speaker.

I point out to him that in terms of job creation our statistics for full-time jobs being created in '93 were actually the second best in Canada. So the majority of those new jobs that were created in Manitoba in 1993 were even full-time jobs, which is an even better sense of the kind of employment.

Now, I know he is going to ask another question, Mr. Speaker, so I will wait until after to talk about the improvement as well in the manufacturing employment statistics that are shown in these figures.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Speaker, talk about being selective. Yes, 6,000 new jobs last year. That is because we lost 10,000 the year before in 1992.

Mr. Speaker, when they got the majority government in 1990, there were 15,000 more Manitobans working than today. That is the bottom line. The bottom line is that Manitobans are not working, not getting back to work at the same rate as the national level.

He wants to talk about the manufacturing investment. Overall capital investment is down half a billion dollars a year since he got his majority government.

My question for this Premier: Why are we not keeping up? Why are Manitobans still in the doldrums of the national economy? Why are we not joining with the national recovery to the same extent that all Manitobans would like to, that the federal government would like us to?

\* (1030)

**Mr. Filmon:** That is the point, that if you want to selectively take one month's stats out of a whole continuum of figures, you can try and prove anything, but if you look at the whole picture, Mr.



Speaker, 1993 as a whole, we had the third best overall job creation rate of any province in Manitoba. We had the second best full-time job creation rate of any province in Canada, and even today the growth in employment is full time and is in particular fields of strategic importance: 2,000 more people employed, for instance, over the last two months in manufacturing.

So the growth that is taking place is taking place in areas in which we shared the concerns a year or two ago as we went through the combination of a recession and a restructuring of the economy. That is taking place worldwide.

These figures not only are more than competitive in Canada but are exceeding what is happening throughout Europe and much of the industrialized world.

That is what the member opposite does not recognize, and this kind of narrow focus on selective statistics to try and make a political hit in Question Period does not, I think, befit the status of a Leader of a party.

#### **Health Care System Staffing—Status Report**

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Nothing is more strategic than the health care system, Mr. Speaker, and the 1,500 jobs referred to this morning by my leader were not recommendations of the union, they were not recommendations of management, they were not recommendations of the hospital. Those were the guidelines and the recommendations of the government of this minister. The government is recommending 1,500 more layoffs in the next several years.

Will the minister categorically today refute those figures? Will he categorically today say no to the 1,500 additional layoffs and directives that the minister has given to his own committee to determine?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** The answer is yes. I will not be favouring any approach that results in 1,500 people leaving their jobs in hospitals in Manitoba. That is not on, Mr. Speaker.

The honourable member and his Leader are wrong in what they are saying. They are grossly exaggerating the numbers.

I again ask the honourable member for his support to get rid of bumping, and I would ask him today to express publicly his support for getting rid of that, because it is not good for people who work in hospitals and it is not good for patient care.

Do I have the honourable member's support, please?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I would like to indicate to the minister, he has my support if the minister will give me his support in getting rid of the layoffs.

Will he refute the 1,500 layoffs that his government is projecting in his own government's committee report? Will he refute the 1,500 layoffs? It is not bumping, Mr. Speaker, it is the layoffs that are the problem.

**Mr. McCrae:** I just did that, Mr. Speaker. I just refuted those numbers. I do not accept them, I will not agree with them. I do not know whose recommendations the honourable member is saying they are, but I will not accept 1,500 layoffs.

I hope that answers the question, but I hope the honourable member will also put the situation we find ourselves in in a national context. Look at our country, look at our health care system.

The honourable member would like us to go back to the way it was 20 years ago. We cannot do that. That system is not sustainable. It leaves nothing for our children. They deserve better than what the honourable member and his Leader are offering.

We stand for that better system of the future, a sustainable health care system, and it does not include the layoff of 1,500 people.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, the minister did refute it in December when he met with his own hand-picked committee.

Will the minister today write to the 28 members of the management-labour committee that they set up in order to deal with labour adjustment and tell them categorically that there will not be 1,500 layoffs in the system in the next several years and

tell them how many layoffs they are supposed to deal with in setting up the recommendations for the labour-management committee?

How many layoffs are they supposed to deal with in the system for the committee that the government set up comprised of labour and management?

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Speaker, I think the committee the honourable member refers to knows that they do not have that kind of a job to do, to lay off 1,500 people. The honourable member knows that. I have already answered the question four times. I do not know what else I can say to the honourable member.

#### **War on Drugs Committee Report Tabling Request**

**Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns):** Mr. Speaker, with the emphasis yesterday in the throne speech on rising youth crime and the need for safer communities in Manitoba, I have a question for the Minister of Justice, a question about one of the saddest political betrayals in Manitoba history, and that is the supposed war on drugs by this government.

The Minister of Justice, formerly a backbencher, led the war on drugs by having 26 hearings across the province of Manitoba. There were 350 oral presentations made. There were over 400 written presentations made. Thousands of dollars were spent on this, raising the expectations of Manitobans—three years later, no report on the War on Drugs.

When will this minister table the report of the war on drugs?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, this government has spoken with action. Perhaps this member should find out about the action that has already taken place.

The Minister of Education (Mr. Manness), the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson) all have initiatives operating within their departments as a result of the recommendations of the war on drugs.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Well, the indication of action is the inaction in tabling the war on drugs.

Will this minister confirm to this House that this government has no war on drugs at all? It has a surrender.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** This member, Mr. Speaker, has indicated that what he would prefer then is to look at some papers, and he has told the people of Manitoba in his question that he would prefer to look at something on paper rather than see the action that this government has already taken and that ministers of this government can speak about on the War on Drugs.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** My question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) then: Will he now stand up and fulfill his election promise from August 16, 1990, and demand that the Minister of Justice table the report of the war on drugs and advise the House of the cost of this failed war and confirm that this government has no war at all?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Mr. Speaker, I will not presume to speak on behalf of my colleagues, but I am sure the member will have the opportunity in the coming weeks and months to question individual ministers—the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness), the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson)—and they will be able to provide and speak about initiatives.

Just by way of example, the Minister of Education might speak about the health education, drug education program that is taking place within the health curriculum now. There are a number of initiatives.

I think the member across the way just needs to have a little bit more opportunity in this House to question members and find out about the action that has taken place.

#### **Gillam/Bird Crisis Centre Opening—Minister's Attendance**

**Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice.

Given the new interest in working with community-based groups that the throne speech

talked about yesterday and assuming that is now government policy, will the minister be attending the official opening of the Gillam/Bird Crisis Centre this weekend?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, the member will know I do receive a number of invitations. I make every effort to attend as many openings and as many opportunities to visit areas within this province and particularly areas which are my responsibility as Minister of Justice and Minister responsible for the Status of Women.

#### **Domestic Violence Northern Resource Centres**

**Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland):** Mr. Speaker, this proposal has been on the minister's desk for the past six months. Why did she not make it a priority instead of making endless efforts for photo opportunities?

Further, surely a zero tolerance policy in terms of domestic violence must include the existence of resource centres and crisis centres for women and families at risk like the one in Gillam and Bird.

Does this minister believe that facilities are only necessary in Winnipeg and that the continuation of northern Manitoba continue as far as gaining respect and as far as being able to have some recognition?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, our commitment to zero tolerance extends across this province. The Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson) has, I know—certainly operational across this province—shelters for women, and this government has operationalized a number of areas of assistance for Manitobans, but we do receive a number of proposals. All of those proposals have to be weighed against the criterion of fairness for all proposals which this government receives.

\* (1040)

**Mr. Robinson:** Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Justice simply tell this House that she will assist crisis centres in northern Manitoba and make an effort to work with northern Manitoba residents?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Mr. Speaker, I make the commitment now, and have certainly made it in the past, that I will be working with all Manitobans, make every effort to do so.

#### **Education System Parental Involvement**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education. Since December of last year, the Minister of Education—

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

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Well, they do not know what he has been doing. I do not know why they would be applauding, Mr. Speaker.

Since December of last year, the Minister of Education has been talking to his partners—educators, school trustees, school superintendents and teachers—concerning education and reform of our education.

Finally, after four months, in yesterday's throne speech, we hear that the government now wants to start talking to the parents of the students.

Does this mean that now the input of parents will be a part of this minister's blueprint for reform, or are parents only being consulted after this blueprint has received the minister's rubber stamp?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise to answer a question from my honourable friend. Through all the dealings of being House leaders in the past, I enjoy his questions.

Unfortunately, with this one he is about a million miles off base because, of the virtually 40 meetings I have had with parent groups over the last four months, I do not think the member for Inkster has been in attendance at even one of them.

So I think it is only rightful to point out to all the members of the House, Mr. Speaker, that I have had a large number of meetings with parent groups over the course of the last four months.

I am prepared to share the chronology with respect to those meetings with the member in due

course, and I ask him to support, with all of his vigour, the parents' forum that is going to be coming up later this month.

I will be making an announcement sometime today with respect to the date and the location, and I would ask for his full support in respect to that parents' forum.

### Curriculum Standards

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, what does the minister mean by establishing standards for the curriculum development?

This statement comes from the same government that forced many school divisions to cancel professional development days, dismissed curriculum branch staff and lowered standards of language arts and social studies in senior highs. Just what does this minister mean?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, I am going to have to correct the record. This government did not force one school division, did not force one teacher to take off the professional development day.

As a matter of fact, as the author and indeed the person who brought forward Bill 22, I pleaded with representatives of the Manitoba Teachers' Society to voluntarily take a reduction in salary so that those professional days did not need to be taken off. That was the approach. So the member again misspeaks himself and makes a mistake.

With respect to standards, standards are standards, Mr. Speaker, and the government will be in dialogue with all of the groups, with all of the community, will be giving greater detail with respect to the standards. Again, I ask for support from the member for Inkster to give candid support to those types of approaches and reform that we will be introducing within the education system.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely ludicrous for the Minister of Education to believe that he has had no impact on the professional development days being lost to teachers. It is absolutely ludicrous to believe something of that nature and to state something inside this Chamber.

Is the minister telling us that he plans to rebuild the decimated curriculum development branch? Will he make that commitment today to reinstate and to live up to some of the commitments that he made yesterday in the throne speech?

**Mr. Manness:** Well, Mr. Speaker, certainly once we move into an opportunity to dialogue in much greater detail with respect to all education reform issues, I look forward to the representation from the member with respect to the curriculum development branch.

His short question is, are we going to rebuild it? The short answer is, yes, of course we are, and it will deal with a number of issues, not the least of which is distance education.

### A.E. McKenzie Co. Ltd. Privatization

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister responsible for A.E. McKenzie Co. Ltd. of Brandon.

The president of McKenzie Seeds has announced that he is now in negotiation with some large American corporations to either enter into a partnership or to sell the company.

Given the fact that a privately owned or controlled company would move the operation to central Canada to maximize profits, would move the company out of Manitoba to maximize profits, why has this government, why has the minister authorized these negotiations, which will lead to the eventual removal of this company from Brandon because of the location economics of this industry?

**Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister responsible for A.E. McKenzie Co. Ltd.):** The member for Brandon East, of course, knows better than anyone in the House the dark days of McKenzie Seeds in the early '80s and the mid-'80s, and I am not sure he shares the pride that we do with the tremendous turnaround that has taken place with that company.

I want the member to know that there are six preconditions, and I hope that I only have to tell him once so he will listen carefully.

No strategic alliance or partnership will be entered into unless these preconditions are met: The unconditional employment security for the employees of McKenzie Seeds; that the operations remain in Brandon; that the union remains intact; that there is an enhancement and expansion of the business through an upgrade of the facility's technology; that we maintain and increase the market share; and, finally, that we provide an unconditional commitment to the future of McKenzie Seeds in the community of Brandon.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I remember the dark days of 1969 when the Conservative government was going to sell McKenzie Seeds. I remember the dark days of Sterling Lyon when they advertised coast to coast to sell McKenzie Seeds, and I remember in '82 when we refinanced it to keep it alive.

My question to this minister is: How can this government even pretend to secure any meaningful guarantee to keep the operation in Brandon when the cost factors and the market factors dictate any private company to maximize profits by moving to Ontario?

**Mr. Gilleshammer:** I would simply point out to the honourable member for Brandon East that McKenzie in recent years has taken over a firm in Ontario. I would also point out to him that the tax regime in Ontario is skyrocketing and many firms are wanting to leave Ontario.

We have clearly set down six preconditions which will maintain the employment in Brandon and ensure the future of McKenzie Seeds in Brandon.

I know that all Manitobans will join with us in looking at these preconditions and understanding that the priority of this government is to maintain that operation in the city of Brandon.

\* (1050)

### **Impact of Trade Agreements**

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** If the company is doing so well, I do not know why it is engaged in these kinds of negotiations, Mr. Speaker.

Will the minister acknowledge that the Free Trade Agreement and NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement, have created an environment whereby major U.S. seed catalogue companies and U.S. large retailers such as Wal-Mart are now entering the Canadian market and threatening the future of this company in Brandon?

**Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister responsible for A.E. McKenzie Co. Ltd.):** The member for Brandon East knows that in his tenure in government the future of McKenzie Seeds was threatened when there were millions and millions of dollars put in there by government. We are very proud in the last three, four years there has been in excess of a million-dollar profit. Some of that money has returned to government.

Our preconditions that I have enunciated for the member, and I know he did not listen very carefully because he is busy talking, but he can read the record on Monday and those six preconditions will ensure the future of McKenzie Seeds in Brandon.

**Mr. Speaker:** The time for Oral Questions has expired.

### **Speaker's Statement**

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to recognizing the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), I have some more introductions for the House.

As members know, the Manitoba Legislative Internship Program has been in operation since 1985 and each year a total of six interns are chosen for the program. Again this year, two interns have been assigned to each of the three caucuses. Their term of employment is 12 months. During their term, interns perform a variety of research and other tasks for private members as distinct from ministers.

My purpose today is to announce the names of the six young people who are serving as Manitoba's '93-94 legislative interns and they commenced their assignment at the beginning of September. They are seated in the Speaker's Gallery this morning.

Working with the government caucus are Mr. Stephane Dorge of the College Universitaire de Saint Boniface at the U of M and Mr. Jeff Goodyear of the University of Manitoba.

Working with the caucus of the official opposition are Ms. Karla Hilton of the University of Winnipeg and Ms. Elaine Hood of the University of Manitoba.

Working with the caucus of the second opposition party are Ms. Melanie Bezyk of the University of Manitoba and Mr. Jeffrey Kerr of the University of Manitoba.

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

#### Introduction of Guests

**Mr. Speaker:** We have, seated in the public gallery from St. John's High School, ninety Grade 8 students. They are under the direction of Mr. Murray Scott. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh).

From the Grant Park High School, we have twenty-five Grade 11 students under the direction of Mr. Ed Lenzman. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray).

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

### MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

#### Health Care Changes

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), that under Rule 27.(1) that the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely, that contrary to the promises made last fall

that a pause would be placed on all health care changes. These cuts are continuing, causing unnecessary hardship to Manitobans.

**Mr. Speaker:** Before recognizing the honourable member for Kildonan, I believe I should remind all honourable members that under our Rule 27.(2) the mover of the motion on a matter of urgent public importance and one member of each of the other parties in the House is allowed not more than five minutes to explain the urgency of debating the matter immediately.

As stated in Beauchesne Citation 390, "urgency" in this context means the urgency of immediate debate, not of the subject matter of the motion. In their remarks, members should focus exclusively on whether or not there is urgency of debate and whether or not the ordinary opportunities for debate will enable the House to consider the matter early enough to ensure that the public interest will not suffer.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, quite clearly in terms of the first condition that we must satisfy, this is our first opportunity. After eight long months of the government stalling in calling the session, after eight months of the government sitting and trying to determine what its agenda will be, after eight months after by-elections, the government finally called the session to order. The members were finally prepared to appear before us and answer questions about the state of health care.

Based on the fact that this is the first day of debate in this session, Mr. Speaker, this is my and our first opportunity to raise this matter before the Chamber. So with respect to the first condition, I think it is quite clearly satisfied by virtue of that.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the second condition, that question had been basically that there is no other opportunity in which this kind of debate would take place. We will put forth the arguments that health care is so crucial to Manitobans that the eight months delay has been intolerable by members of the opposite side of the House. We cannot go on another day, we cannot go on another week, we cannot go on indeed any more hours in limiting the debate and not having

an opportunity to call to task the very undesirable changes that this government has implemented in the health care system.

I know that we will be going to the throne speech debate. I will not have an opportunity. We will not have an opportunity to discuss the matter today. I dare say, if anyone had the opportunity of listening to the documentary done on CJOB last week as to the state of our health care system, Mr. Speaker, Manitobans have stated categorically they do not want to wait another minute, another week, another hour for this government to try to do something to the health care system. They spoke loud and clear in the by-elections.

The Premier attempted to shuffle the deck in terms of the by-elections, but it is still the same cabinet making the same decisions. Connie Curran still rolls on, rolling up the dollars and cutting the jobs.

Home care continues to be cut. As we speak, people are being cut off home care and continuing to be cut off home care. As we speak, people are paying the user fees on the home care supplies and the home care equipment and the ostomy supplies, Mr. Speaker, and this cannot go on one minute longer under this government.

We cannot go on further increasing the Pharmacare as the ministers have done, botching the implementation of the Pharmacare card which the members have botched, keeping reports hidden, like the Bell-Wade Report that had to be leaked and Frank Manning's Report on Obstetrics that had to be leaked and the midwifery report that has been made public—they have all been on the desk of the minister—and this morning a report of the government's own recommendations to its own adjustment committee to lay off an additional 1,500 people in the health care system.

In addition, one talks about timing, Mr. Speaker. As the Canadian dollar falls, Connie Curran's salary goes up. Members of this Chamber ought to be aware that the contracts, very ably negotiated by Connie Curran and her lawyers, had a provision for as the Canadian dollar drops—and it is dropping.

Do the members of this House and the members of the public of Manitoba know that Connie Curran's fees, those intolerable, disgusting fees—\$4 million plus \$800,000 in expenses, tax free—are going up as we speak because of the Canadian dollar going down? There is a provision in that contract, built in, that provides for Connie Curran.

As we speak, if we do not have an opportunity to deal with this issue, the Canadian dollar continues to drop and that means Connie Curran's salary continues to go up.

In addition, there is a holdback provision negotiated in the Connie Curran contract, where the minister any day now is going to release to Connie Curran a big bundle with dollar signs all around it and he is going to release that to Connie Curran.

So, Mr. Speaker, the urgency of this matter cannot be overstated. As we speak, the Canadian dollar goes down, Connie Curran's contract goes up, we lose money in this province and the disgusting spectacle and what has happened to our health care system cannot continue. The layoffs cannot continue.

\* (1100)

The minister has on his desk recommendations for layoffs. Perhaps he will make them today. Perhaps he will make them tomorrow. Perhaps he will make them on a day when he wants to make a good news announcement so it gets lost. We need to discuss that before those layoffs take place. He has on his desk right now recommendations for over 200 cuts at Health Sciences Centre, over 100 cuts at St. Boniface alone, and both institutions are awaiting his announcement of whether those cuts proceed.

Mr. Speaker, hundreds of jobs are in the waiting as we speak, so I hope members will recognize the urgency and debate this matter today. Thank you.

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this urgent public debate.

I think there is no question that public interest would be served today if all members of this House have an opportunity to debate health care and to

debate the issues which are now not only affecting health care workers in our hospitals, but health care workers in the community who are affecting—these health care changes are affecting consumers, are affecting patients and I think it is very important that we have an opportunity to debate the issue of what is going on in the two hospitals.

Mr. Speaker, I have had an opportunity over the last number of months to meet with various people in St. Boniface Hospital, in Health Sciences Centre—front-line workers, administration. I have had the opportunity to meet with people who work in nonprofit health care organizations and the one theme that seems to be consistent throughout is that in fact people are concerned about where health care reform is going with the advent of the new minister.

One of the real concerns is that some of the good work that has been done will in fact not proceed and that that can be worse for staff morale, particularly in the hospitals than anywhere else. There is a lot of concern from staff in regard to what exactly is going on and not knowing if you are going to have a job tomorrow and not knowing if you are going to have a job next week. So that is a concern. I think it would serve this House well and would serve Manitobans well if we had an opportunity to debate it.

Mr. Speaker, we have not had the opportunity for debate in some eight long months. It has been a very long time since we have had an opportunity to hear from this government on where they are going with health care. I would like that opportunity today. I think people in our constituencies are very concerned and would like to know where is health care going. We have had a throne speech document yesterday which really does not provide us with any information as to what this government is doing, what their direction is in health care reform, and I think we have a responsibility to Manitobans to discuss that issue today.

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, when you cautioned the Chamber with regard to this proposal, this motion put

forward by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), you readily pointed out that urgency as defined in Beauchesne is in fact urgency of debate and whether there is an opportunity to debate this issue soon in this Legislature or whether it is a matter of such urgent public importance that it needs to be debated today.

Over the next eight days in the Throne Speech Debate, members of this Chamber will have ample opportunity to debate this issue. Every day, all day long and into the night on Monday, we will have an opportunity to debate this issue over and over again. Every member in the Chamber will have an opportunity to speak at one point or another for 40 minutes ad nauseam on this particular issue as opposed to the limited time permitted under a matter of urgent public importance. Following that, on the 20th of April the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) has indicated he will introduce his budget, and we will have eight more days of wide-ranging public debate on any issue that members opposite wish to raise. Mr. Speaker, 16 days, the next 16 sitting days, members of the opposition and members of the government will have an opportunity to talk about those issues that the member for Kildonan and the member for Crescentwood have raised here today.

So I offer, Mr. Speaker, that what is being put forward by the member for Kildonan, that is, a matter of urgent public importance that would give them a little more than an hour of debate, is merely political posturing and not a question of urgent and public importance, because for the next 16 days there will be ample opportunity for all to debate that issue.

#### **Speaker's Ruling**

**Mr. Speaker:** I would like to thank all honourable members for their contribution to the argument of whether the motion proposed by the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) is in order as a matter of urgent public importance.

Our subrule 27.(1) states that I must receive notice of such a motion at least one hour in



advance of the House sitting, and I did receive that notice.

Our Rule 27 and Beauchesne Citations 389 and 390 tell us that two conditions must be met before a matter of urgent public importance can proceed. First, that the subject matter must be so pressing that the ordinary opportunities for debate will not allow it to be discussed early enough and, second, there must be evidence that the public interest will suffer if the matter is not given immediate attention. In short, is the matter urgent? In this context, urgency does not apply to the matter itself. It applies to how quickly can the issue be discussed in the ordinary proceedings of this House.

There are other opportunities for debate available, in my opinion. This is the second day of a new legislative session, and we have before us up to eight days of debate on the Speech from the Throne during which time the member who raised this matter, and indeed any other member wishing to, may address the subject of health care.

Right after the vote and the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne, we will be moving into the Budget Debate and again honourable members will have a chance to debate questions relating to health care. In addition, there are the Estimates of the Department of Health where this subject can be debated, as well as the opportunity the member for Kildonan will have to use his right to grieve.

Further, I am not satisfied that the public interest will suffer if the issue is not debated today. Therefore, I am ruling the motion out of order because it does not meet the criteria established by this House. That is, there are other opportunities for debate and because the public interest will not suffer if the issue is not debated today.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I challenge your ruling.

**Mr. Speaker:** The ruling of the Chair having been challenged, all those in favour of sustaining the Chair, please say yea. All those opposed, please say nay. In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

**Mr. Ashton:** Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** A recorded vote having been requested, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms, call in the members, please.

#### Division

*A RECORDED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:*

#### Yeas

*Cummings, Dacquay, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Helwer, Laurendeau, McAlpine, McCrae, McIntosh, Manness, Mitchelson, Orchard, Pallister, Penner, Praznik, Reimer, Render, Rose, Stefanson, Sveinson, Vodrey.*

#### Nays

*Ashton, Barrett, Carstairs, Cerilli, Chomiak, Dewar, Doer, Edwards, Evans (Brandon East), Evans (Interlake), Friesen, Gaudry, Gray, Hickes, Kowalski, Lamoureux, Lathlin, Mackintosh, Maloway, Martindale, McCormick, Plohman, Reid, Robinson, Santos, Schellenberg, Storie, Wowchuk.*

**Mr. Clerk (William Remnant):** Yeas 28, Nays 28.

**Mr. Speaker:** The vote having been tied, I am voting to sustain the ruling of the Chair. I had already given my decision on the matter by providing a ruling. I am now upholding that decision.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

##### (First Day of Debate)

**Mr. Speaker:** Consideration of the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

**Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau), that an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor as follows:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the

gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address us at the opening of the present session.

**Motion presented.**

**Mr. McAlpine:** Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to move the acceptance of the throne speech and I would like to thank the Premier (Mr. Filmon) for giving me the honour of doing that and the confidence that he and his colleagues have shown in me in allowing me to move the throne speech.

I would like to welcome back all the members to the Legislature and especially those who are with us for the first time: the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), the member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg), the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), the member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick) and the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson). I welcome you to this Legislature and I wish you well.

A special welcome to our new Pages, Mr. Speaker. They have a wonderful task ahead of them and I hope that they will find it to be a great learning experience as other Pages have had over the years.

Also, I welcome you back, Mr. Speaker, and once again we look forward to your wisdom and guidance in the House as you have done so well over the years. There has been considerable attention, given your position going into this session, and I commend you and appreciate the effort and the sincerity and that you will undoubtedly carry out your responsibilities in the best interests of all Manitobans.

I am also pleased to see that my colleague the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) is once again the Deputy Speaker. You too have also done an admirable job in serving all Manitobans and I wish you continued success.

This is also an opportunity for me to thank the residents of my constituency, Sturgeon Creek, who have given me their input and their support as I have asked them for their opinions to help guide us in governing our province. I want to take this time to thank them for that input on behalf of the government of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, it is the valued opinion and the ideas of constituents like Sturgeon Creek and all Manitobans that I would like to discuss for a moment. It is something that this government holds in high esteem, the opinions of those who have trusted us with the task of governing the province of Manitoba. Obviously there is a great diversity of opinions on almost any topic.

\* (1130)

Our goal is to listen to what people say as part of the decision-making process. I submit that this government has made listening to Manitobans a priority. I commend our Premier (Mr. Filmon) in always communicating that message. I have found that apparent in the years that I have had the privilege of serving in this House. Much may have changed since we were first elected in 1988, but I can assure you that one thing has remained constant. This government is doing the right things for the people of Manitoba and for the future of this great province. This throne speech is an illustration of our goals for Manitoba. It is a road map of our plans for the coming months.

One of the things that this government has shown in the past throne speeches is that we outlined our plans for all Manitobans to see, and I am pleased to say we have remained consistent.

Mr. Speaker, in order for us to know where we are going, we have to recognize where we have been. For example, since Manitoba joined Confederation in 1870, our province has had 19 Premiers, Premier Filmon, our present Premier, being the 19th Premier. In this period of time, the governments of 17 Premiers, including Premier Schreyer, created a debt of just under \$4 billion from 1870 until 1981. During that period of time, our province built universities, colleges, hospitals, dams, floodways, our entire infrastructure and more. All of these things have served our province well.

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

Madam Deputy Speaker, that brings to me the period of 1981 to 1988. Premier Howard Pawley, with this government, and the Leader of the

Opposition (Mr. Doer), who served in his government at that time, spent in the area of \$6 billion to increase our debt to what it is today. It should also be known that during that time annual revenue growth in our province reached a high of 16 to 17 percent. It is because of that fiscally irresponsible government that we are left today spending a large portion of our budget financing the debts of the NDP.

Now that I have been giving some of the bad news in the past, let me give you some of the good news, in addition to what has been referred to in the throne speech. There have been a great number of items in our throne speech over the years, and I would like to mention some of the major accomplishments of our Premier (Mr. Filmon) and government.

Despite the recession and the difficulties of global restructuring, this government has frozen taxes since 1988. No increase in personal income tax, no increase in corporate tax and no increase in the sales tax. These are great accomplishments in what have been difficult times. Manitobans are benefiting from these achievements. What this means is that we have gone from the second highest combined federal-provincial tax rate to the fourth lowest in the country. If you look at our sales tax rate, you will find that we are the second lowest in Canada. It seems that our Liberal and New Democrat colleagues in other provinces are in a battle to be No. 1; that is, of course, No. 1 for the highest tax rate. I remind all Manitobans to seriously consider these accomplishments and put them against the have-nots of the Liberal and NDP provinces.

Madam Deputy Speaker, our throne speech shows that we are not straying from our course of creating a better environment for both business and indeed all Manitobans.

One of our highest priorities is reforming the health care system. Manitobans have told us that we want new ideas and that they are looking for leadership. That is exactly what we are doing.

The throne speech outlines priorities to improve the overall organization of the health care system.

We are making every effort to make the system more responsive to public needs and far more cost-effective. Right now we are spending a huge portion of our budget on health care. Hundreds of millions of dollars are being spent on the treatment of disease and illness, and very little on creating health.

We are also looking to not only treat the ill but to create healthier Manitobans. This will be achieved only when the health care professionals and every Manitoban realizes that we must create health rather than just treat symptoms and disease. Prevention is the best medicine, and it is my hope that those in the medical community will help meet this fight. We have to get away from the mentality of filling our hospitals with the sick. Healthier lifestyles, good individual management of ourselves and individual responsibility is the only way to overcome the terrible imbalance in our health care system, not like the honourable member for Concordia, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer).

He stands at his chair today and he references the fact that he is showing so much interest in our health care system. I submit to all Manitobans the only thing that he is interested in is dealing with the unions with the people who are serving the health care system in this province. He does not care about the health care in this province; he only is interested in serving the union. That is the mentality of the leader and the members of the opposite, the NDP.

I am also concerned about the effect of cigarette smoking on our young children and what that can lead to down the road. Young children can quickly become addicted to cigarettes, and that bothers me, because once addicted to nicotine, the addictions to others like hard drugs and alcohol happen more readily. This is part of a drug and alcohol and substance abuse presentation that I have emphasized to students in my constituency. I can assure you that although I do not profess to be an expert, I have acquired considerable knowledge on this topic of alcohol and substance abuse.

That is why I speak out about the federal government's stand on tobacco taxes. It seems to

have been merely a move to boost the Province of Quebec and the Parti Quebecois. To our Liberal friends across the way who seem to be hanging on the coattails of their federal counterparts, shame on you for not standing up for Manitobans.

As Harold Macmillan once said, and I quote: As usual, the Liberals offer a mixture of sound and original ideas. Unfortunately, none of the sound ideas is original, and none of the original ideas is sound.

As noted in the throne speech, we must create a health care system that is equitable and fair, a system that is responsive. I applaud this move, because with the health care budget that is approaching \$2 billion and rising, all Manitobans must support this move. They must do this in the interests of the best health care system in the country and in the world.

I propose that we must teach Manitobans how to create health and I believe that giving people right information of thought, they will make the right choices of creating health. They will either do it willingly or be forced to for fear of death. This can be achieved with the implementation of, for example, well-run wellness centres, centres that teach people how to attain health rather than a crisis centre based on a symptom-oriented mentality. Throwing more money into this system will not work. It has been failing us for decades. We had the resources here in Manitoba and the people to help implement this. Of the health care reform, this is the opportunity that is waiting for us and all Manitobans. All we need is the will to do it.

\* (1140)

Also important to creating good health is creating a healthy economic environment. That goes hand in hand with attracting more jobs and investments in Manitoba. I could list the jobs created through ventures involving Unitel, an example of 400 jobs; CP National Call Centre, 210 jobs; Canada Post's Call Centre, 100 jobs; a directed marketing company called Connexions, four jobs; International Game Technologies, 26 jobs; Monsanto in Morden, 15 jobs; Ayerst expansion in Brandon, 1,000 jobs; GWE in

Brandon, 100 jobs; Net Links in Sturgeon Creek with 40 jobs; and another company that I have been involved with in Sturgeon Creek over the last couple of years, Infocorp, have created 20 new jobs and growing. As a matter of fact, within a year they have outgrown their facilities and are expanding and adding more people to their employment ranks.

I am sure my honourable friends in the NDP will join me in welcoming Louisiana Pacific in Swan River with between 275 and 300 jobs. Every one of these and others that I have not mentioned means growth in the Manitoba economy, an economy that is healthy and strong.

Something our Liberal friends do not understand is that you build an economy a few jobs at a time. That is why they did a disservice to all Manitobans by failing to speak out when their federal colleagues decided to by-pass Manitoba with the environmental office in Montreal. My friends across the floor did not see the significance of the move because it was only about 10 jobs. I am sure I could find 10 Manitobans and their families who would have welcomed those jobs.

Then, Madam Deputy Speaker, let us not also forget about the cancellation of the EH-101 contract. One company, Paramax, in my constituency was forced to lay off 150 high-tech workers as a result of this irresponsible move on the part of Liberal strategists who cancelled this agreement.

Right or wrong, it did not matter to them that—

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I am having great difficulty hearing the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), and I am certain all members would share in the appreciation of having their speech listened to.

**Mr. McAlpine:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Right or wrong, it did not matter to them, to our Liberal friends across the way. Their only response was: What? There will be other jobs.

Where was our honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) when I was trying to fight for the jobs in Sturgeon Creek? Many people in the St. James area, in his constituency, work in the

aerospace industry and are affected by this. They work in such places as Bristol Aerospace, Standard Aero. Certainly many businesses would be interested to know that their member of the Legislature from St. James sat quietly while all this was going on. Is this the kind of representation the people of St. James deserve? I think not. They need a member who is prepared to speak out for them regardless of what his federal friends want to do.

Also the member of Parliament for Winnipeg-St. James, who should have had the same concerns, was nowhere to be seen. Where was he, and what did he have to say about the government's decision to strip Manitobans of their jobs?

Madam Deputy Speaker, another important area outlined in the throne speech was jobs and economic security. In the coming weeks, this government will outline initiatives to encourage more small business expansion. It is a way to improve the climate, to help people to help themselves.

Governments should certainly not have a hand in every job created because the business community do it better and are more efficient. That I say from experience. That responsibility lies best with the expansion by small business.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to read a quote to the House that illustrates some of what I have been saying. The author for the moment is unknown, but it goes like this: Man is made or unmade by himself. In the armoury of thought, he forges the weapon by which he destroys himself. He also fashions the tools with which he builds heavenly mansions of joy, strength and peace. By the right choice and the true application of thought, man ascends to divine perfection. By the abuse and the wrong application of thought, he descends below the level of the beast. Between these two are all the grades of character. Man is their maker and master. Of all the beautiful truths pertaining to the soul, none is more gladdening or fruitful of divine promise and confidence than this. That man is the master of thought, the molder of character and the maker and shaper of condition of environment and destiny.

This sentiment applies also to workers and that is why a major set of welfare-to-work initiatives will be unveiled. We will also continue to strengthen our position in the global marketplace and enhance trade with the United States and Mexico.

One of the issues that I personally feel strongly about is our commitment to personal and community security. I am pleased that a number of initiatives will tackle the issue of youth crime and violence through the establishment of wilderness camps.

Of course, we will continue the Justice minister's effort to toughen the Young Offenders Act. Young people must be held more accountable for their actions.

We will also have to toughen licensing restrictions for motor vehicles for those who have had convictions.

We can also give more authority to our teachers in disciplining young offenders. We can also give more credit and responsibility to parents of young offenders.

Our government is also committed to giving parents a greater opportunity to take part in all aspects of their children's education through a parents' forum. The Minister of Education has announced the forum as a way of further consulting Manitobans about making the education system more relevant and adapting it as the workforce changes. We will also enhance the distance education program to ensure that no Manitoban is denied the benefits of programs located in other areas.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to extend my thanks to the Minister of Justice for quickly acting upon my concern for our children in the area of the Linwood School. As you may know, this is an issue that I feel quite strongly about and have worked to ensure the safety of residents of Sturgeon Creek.

Now, on the issue of auto insurance, I have been told that the Liberals hope to make one of their goals getting rid of no-fault insurance. Let me give you some friendly advice, and I will be the first to

stand in my place and say that I have had difficulty with no-fault insurance to a degree too, but let me give this advice to my colleagues across the way. High Autopac rates and the failure to listen to Manitobans got the NDP government of Howard Pawley in hot water with Manitobans. Well, if no-fault auto insurance is thrown out, those Autopac rates would have to increase substantially. I am afraid the Liberals would not find that a popular move with most Manitobans. Madam Deputy Speaker, it is obvious to me that Manitobans need our government to protect them from the NDP and the Liberals, who do not care how much people have to spend for insurance.

This government is also committed to our environment and to promoting sustainable development.

\*(1150)

Madam Deputy Speaker, while on that topic I would like to phrase and mention an organization in Sturgeon Creek that I have had the privilege of working with for the past few years. The Friends of Bruce Park came to me early in my tenure in this Legislature for support in making Bruce Park in Sturgeon Creek a better place for the enjoyment of all users. It was particularly gratifying to me to work with them in planting trees to stabilize the creek bank and make plans together for sustained improvements that will hopefully last for generations to come.

These Friends of Bruce Park and their organization are a committed and focused group of families and individuals. They want to do what is right in the enhancement of the grounds and I am proud and committed to help them achieve their goals. This commitment and focus I see in the Friends of Bruce Park I have also witnessed with this government in making Manitoba a better place to live and to be enjoyed by all.

Further to the things that we have done in the past, we are committed to introducing a major new sustainable development act which will lead the way in North America. Like the Friends of Bruce Park, this government will lead by example and be the envy of many communities and jurisdictions.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as noted in the throne speech, we will also discuss a proposed act for dealing with contaminated sites, an act that has become necessary with time with the emphasis and importance we place on the environment. I commend our government on this initiative.

There are a number of other issues that I would like to discuss, Madam Deputy Speaker. Airport noise is a concern that I have had to deal with on behalf of the residents in the Deer Lodge area of Sturgeon Creek. Because of a discussion that was made two years ago, airplanes were directed resulting in planes like Air Canada, Northwest, Canadian and some military to fly over Deer Lodge Centre. This decision, I was told, was sanctioned by no other than the airport advisory committee made up of some 20 residents in St. James, River Heights and Charleswood, including no other than the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), now the Leader of the Liberal Party, and the member of Parliament for Winnipeg-St. James, I am advised.

When questioned, I am told by a resident in this area of the Liberal M.P. for Winnipeg-St. James, they were directed to take this matter up with their local MLA. Can you believe an elected official like this member would not have jumped at the opportunity to help a constituent in need? I have made it my responsibility to work with the airport authority management, and I must say that although this problem is not yet completely corrected from all accounts, I will continue to answer the call from these constituents.

Another call that my wife Jeanie and I have been interested in along with other volunteers and having worked with a group of these volunteers is helping to provide a youth drop-in centre in the area. This drop-in centre has been operating for several years but for the past two years has been in a vacant school in my constituency. This centre is open most Friday and Saturday nights from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m., and as a matter of interest to my colleagues, that is where I will probably be tonight between 7:30 and 10:30.

We hope to provide this facility over the summer months to include afternoons and evenings six

days a week. With some help from service organizations and the business community, we expect that that will happen.

The youth in the community appreciate the need for this centre and the support we give them. It is an alternative to the streets and the hangouts that subject our youth to many undesirable opportunities they could experience if the drop-in centre did not exist. Our philosophy, Madam Deputy Speaker, if we help one person to stay out of trouble, it is worth it.

I want to congratulate the Alliance of Scottish Clans and the St. Andrews Society for the third successful Tartan Day, April 6. I also want to thank these Scottish men and women for their support of me in hosting the celebration in this Legislature. Although we could not introduce these people to the Chamber as in the previous years, the celebration was a success. On behalf of these organizations, I would like to thank our Premier (Mr. Filmon) once again for proclaiming April 6 as Tartan Day in Manitoba. The Scots have appreciated that. Thank you very much, Mr. Premier.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to also pay tribute to another person who has been working with me to make Sturgeon Creek a better community. I want to thank Mr. Jim Rowson, Manager of the Courts of St. James IGA. Two years ago, he came to me and asked for my help as Canada Post were removing the postal service out of the drug store and the residents, many of whom are seniors in the Courts of St. James, would be terribly inconvenienced by this move.

Initially, Canada Post said there was nothing that could be done, that the decision had been made. After working on this for some time, I am now happy to share with the House the official opening of the post office outlet will be forthcoming in a few weeks. I want to thank Canada Post for reconsidering this decision. I know it is the right one for all the people in the Courts of St. James and in this community.

It was interesting to see how our Liberal opportunists handled this concern. I am told that

about a year ago in this process my friend and the manager of the Courts of St. James suggested to me: We must be getting close to a favourable decision because our Liberal friend in the federal government is now showing some interest. This appears to be typical. They run from the problems, but will always be there to bask in the glory of a success. They might want to bear this in mind when they attend these celebrations from now on. I ask my honourable friends across to bear that in mind and to remember this.

Madam Deputy Speaker, to sum up, I would submit that this throne speech is a well-thought-out blueprint for Manitoba. There are initiatives that will be presented more before this House for consideration, and I ask my friends across the floor to consider these items carefully for the good of all Manitobans. Too often, the opposition takes on a role of criticism for the sake of rhetoric. We heard that this morning in Question Period with the honourable member for Concordia, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer).

Rather than any constructive purpose offering to the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), he stands up there, in an attempt to protect his interests with the union members, suggesting that he is interested in health. Too often the opposition takes on the role of this criticism and for the sake of rhetoric rather than for constructive purpose. We suggest to the opposition it is time to now look at the positive things that we are doing here in Manitoba and to support the interests of all Manitobans, not just for the sake of rhetoric.

We, of course, welcome input on our initiatives with the goal of strengthening our province not just for us, but for our children.

Madam Deputy Speaker, our Premier (Mr. Filmon) said that we will strive to achieve the most important goals of all Manitobans. Those include reasonable employment and satisfying jobs, a strong educational foundation that we can build upon, safe streets for our families and our neighbours.

With regard to our education foundation, we can improve on it by providing quality teaching time

and creating an environment that stimulates both teaching and learning.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to share with this House and propose that we look at creating this environment in our education system by looking at the opportunities that are offered in year-round education. By at least looking at year-round education in some of our schools, I am sure there are schools and communities where this would be suitable and appropriate.

I had the privilege of attending such a conference recently and learned that although one of the main reasons for going to year-round education in some schools was to deal with overcrowding the other benefits were endless. Listing only a few, Madam Deputy Speaker, it was found that such things as bigger bangs for the buck, improved attendance, lower discipline problems, higher test scores, less teacher and student burnout, less violence to mention but a few. It was interesting that these tests and statistics were provided in areas where schools were serving children in the ghettos.

The month of June also, in terms of our education system here in Manitoba and across this country, is wind-down time and the month of September is used for review. Both of those months the students do not experience any teaching and learning that they should be in the system that should be looked on like year-round education.

Madam Deputy Speaker, our government has worked diligently to create also a climate of confidence in our future. For the most part, considering the difficult times we have had to endure, I would believe most Manitobans are comfortable with our direction.

\* (1200)

We are committed to responsible government. It has brought our province through some extremely difficult times, but importantly, it is also setting the stage for a bright future for all Manitobans.

I urge all my colleagues in this Legislature to join me in supporting this throne speech and the initiatives that will be coming from this

government in the coming weeks. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert):** Mr. Speaker, it is a great day to be a Tory in the province of Manitoba. As a man I greatly respect once said, a majority is a majority is a majority.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by thanking you and this House for the opportunity to speak today and to second the Speech from the Throne. I regard the challenge of seconding the throne speech as both a privilege and an honour. I would like to thank our Premier (Mr. Filmon) for providing me with this opportunity and placing his faith in me.

I would also like to welcome all members back to the Chamber. To the newly elected members, I extend a special greeting and wish you all the best in your deliberations over the next number of months.

Equally, I am sure all members will join me in congratulating our new Pages. I know they will find their time here in the House both rewarding and exciting, hopefully not too exciting.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to praise the good people of my constituency, St. Norbert, who have been supportive and helpful to me over the years I have had the pleasure of serving as their elected member and it is indeed an honour. Clearly, without them I would not be here today.

There have been many positive developments in St. Norbert. I feel very fortunate to represent an area that has so much to offer. Having been a lifelong resident of St. Norbert, I am proud of my constituency and the people, culture and quality of life within.

Mr. Speaker, we have beautiful parklands, a number of historical sites, rich culture and, perhaps most importantly, residents who are dedicated to a stronger community. In St. Norbert you can feel you are living in a quiet rural community without leaving the city of Winnipeg.

Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the close-knit community that has developed in St.



Norbert. The St. Norbert Children's Centre and the Chalet St. Norbert are two prime examples. With the children's centre, we now have a facility that is a model for other daycare centres across Manitoba. It provides a full slate of child care services, as well as working with the residents to support the development of a community-based family resource centre. This resource centre is striving to enhance the quality of living for individuals, families and teens in the area.

The Chalet St. Norbert allows seniors to stay in the community which they helped to build and make it strong. It has become a central meeting place for seniors in St. Norbert.

Mr. Speaker, I am extremely proud that the Filmon government has assisted in funding both of these very worthy projects. This government has shown that it is committed to making our communities a better place for our residents.

Two very important transportation projects receiving millions of dollars from the Manitoba government are improvements to Pembina Highway and the commitment to an overpass at Waverley Street and the Perimeter. These major projects, Mr. Speaker, will certainly benefit the residents of the St. Norbert constituency.

Our government announced last summer the four-lane reconstruction work on the urban section of Pembina Highway from the south limit of the city of Winnipeg to Rue Des Trappistes, and this project has ensured that this very important transportation route is now safer for St. Norbert residents and all Manitobans who use it on a daily basis.

The new interchange at Waverley Street and the Perimeter Highway is another initiative which I am very proud of. This proposed overpass will mean safer travel for motorists and truckers using the Brady Landfill. This interchange will significantly reduce the traffic problems for the local residents.

I adamantly agree that 1994 represents many challenges, but I know that by working together with local residents, the St. Norbert constituency will continue to grow and become stronger. Mr. Speaker, I would invite my constituents and all

Manitobans to join this government in our renewed efforts to build long-term economic growth and development in Manitoba, for this is the only path to secure futures for us and our generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, fiscal responsibility is the only route we can take to accomplish this goal. Our government has been the leader in creating the climate to achieve this end. This is confirmed by the fact that other provinces across Canada, regardless of their political stripe, have followed our lead.

In the past, excessive public spending has led to high debt, which in turn led to high personal and corporate taxes, two things that are not consistent with our vision. Hence, our government has not increased major taxes for the last six budgets. Personal income taxes have actually seen a decrease. Manitoba has the second lowest sales tax rate in Canada, and the tax incentives have been introduced to encourage small business.

We have held the line on taxes, government spending and the deficit for two reasons: to reduce the burden on taxpayers and to keep building a competitive climate for job-creating investment and renewal in our province.

Collectively, we have all had to make some tough choices with respect to our financial affairs, so I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we are cognizant of the fact that governments also had to make tough decisions. Therefore, in order to ensure that Manitoba is strong and competitive, we must have the courage to make difficult decisions as well as the wisdom and the skill to ensure the most positive results as possible.

These sacrifices are not without benefits. As we heard yesterday in the throne speech, Manitoba added 6,000 jobs in the private sector in 1993. Winnipeg has been recognized as one of the best places in Canada to do business. The proof is in the pudding. Saskatchewan Premier Romanow, recent NDP study states that Manitoba is the best place for a family that earns \$25,000 a year to live, the second best place for a family that earns \$50,000

per year, and third best place for a family that earns \$75,000 a year.

Our province has very favourable bond ratings, Mr. Speaker, and it also has very favourable responses from other Premiers in other provinces. We had the third highest job creation rate in all of Canada.

Our government believes in jobs for Manitobans. We will continue to build through recent innovations such as the Economic Development Board, the Economic Innovation Technology Council, rural Grow Bonds, the Crocus Fund, the Vision Capital Fund, tax initiatives and credits in mining and telecommunications, and manufacturing investment. We will also continue to improve the way government does business by reviewing and updating important components and programs.

Mr. Speaker, our government realizes that taxpayers of Manitoba are not in a position to satisfy all the demands being placed on government. At the same time, we want to preserve and protect the vital services all Manitobans depend on like health care and education for today and for the future generation of Manitobans.

Education and training are the keys that unlock opportunity. Our government recognized this and initiated programs, such as payroll tax credits and initiatives like CareerStart, to stimulate education and training. Skills training is too important to our future. We will continue to bring forward initiatives that encourage us to constantly improve our education and skills training base. It is essential that Manitobans are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to compete in the next century. It is for this reason, Mr. Speaker, that our government has made a commitment to fundamental reforms in this area. These reforms will help to instill in our children the strong base they require to become contributing members to our changing world.

\* (1210)

There are many examples, Mr. Speaker, of new initiatives already happening in our province. One

such initiative by Seine River School Division is their Project Partners, an alternative high school program at the St. Vital Center. This program was a recent winner of the Conference Board of Canada's "National Awards for Excellence in Business-Education Partnerships." This program has been offered since 1986 by Seine River School Division in conjunction with Famous Players Inc. Our government celebrates this example of a sound business-education partnership and will continue to provide the ongoing encouragement to further develop partnerships such as this.

Our students are also very valuable partners in the future direction of education in our province. I recently read a school division newsletter on how a group of high school students, teachers and school administrators held a two-day retreat to create a vision for their division's high schools. This initiative, Mr. Speaker, must be congratulated. This group realized that the education community is in a period of transition, that the factory model of teaching is no longer valid. They further felt that we are moving towards an information society where it is increasingly important to be skilled in problem-solving and in manipulating information.

Society is changing. They realize that the challenge for educators is to identify how we are adapting to these changes. Yes, the face of education is changing and will continue to change in the foreseeable future, but we will as a government strive to support and enhance and further develop all possible partnerships within the education community.

In addition, the new program and policies will encourage our teaching professionals to excel in their efforts to provide the highest standard of education possible. It will provide an opportunity for the different levels of government to develop avenues to assist Manitobans in investing in lifelong learning.

Our government has expressed an equally firm commitment to strengthening and supporting Manitoba families, caring for those less fortunate and protecting Manitoba's vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens. Initiatives we have outlined in this area include legislation and

measures to enhance the well-being of children, seniors and disabled persons as well as the pursuit of the ongoing reforms of the Child and Family Services system.

My government has placed paramount importance on the family. Mr. Speaker, 1994 has been designated by the United Nations General Assembly as the International Year of the Family. Manitoba has followed the U.N.'s lead by establishing the International Year of the Family Secretariat. Through the effort of the secretariat, the family will be promoted and celebrated as it is our basic unit of society. Every one of us in this Legislature has a family. We all understand the importance of the family unit and its role that it plays in society.

Mr. Speaker, we also believe in protecting the family. The safety and security of our families and homes are of vital importance. Our government believes that the youth crime has affected every Manitoban in every neighbourhood of the province in some way.

What is needed is a partnership approach and consultation. We have initiated that process. The report from last year's youth summit entitled Community Voices, Community Action, proposes a nine-point plan to deal with young offenders which includes the introduction of wilderness camps, a new antiviolence program for the schools, increased police surveillance of gang members and a youth violence contact line.

Our government, Mr. Speaker, will continue to strive for the toughening of the Young Offenders Act. I, as a concerned parent, am concerned for the welfare and well-being of my children. I feel it is a responsibility that cannot be taken lightly. We care and we are the caretakers of the next generation. Therefore, we are responsible. We must ensure that parental responsibility is directly related to the actions of our youth. Clearly, our government is moving in this direction.

Our overall strength and well-being as a province is due largely to our health and well-being as individuals and as families. One of

the fundamental values that unites us as Manitobans and as Canadians is a universal access to the quality of health care. In order to ensure the availability of quality care, our government will continue to implement its action plan, Quality Health for Manitobans. This approach will see many beneficial changes and advances in delivery and the focus of our health care system.

Mr. Speaker, we are not like the NDP in Saskatchewan. We do not go out and close all the hospitals and say we are doing what is right. We work within the system.

I sincerely hope that this session will be different. The members opposite must realize that ideas cannot be fought except by means of better ideas. The battles consist not of opposing but of exposing, not of denouncing but of disapproving, not of evading but of boldly proclaiming a full and consistent alternative. Clearly, this logic cannot be found in the opposition.

The past few months have seen announcements that are positive proof that initiative, innovation, flexibility and sheer determination results in successfully turning challenges into opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want you to know, I want this House to know, and above all I want all Manitobans to know, that I believe in this government, I have trust in this government. This is the government we deserve as a province. This is the government that the people of Manitoba demand, and I fully support this government and our Premier the Honourable Gary Filmon. Thank you.

\* (1220)

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that debate be adjourned.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the will of the House to call it 12:30? [agreed]

The hour being 12:30 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. Monday.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, April 8, 1994

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