



First Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(Hansard)

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Sixth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

<u>Name</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Party</u>
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise, Hon.	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary	Concordia	N.D.P.
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	N.D.P.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane	Osborne	N.D.P.
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn	St. James	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	P.C.
NEWMAN, David	Riel	P.C.
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
RADCLIFFE, Mike	River Heights	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
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ROCAN, Denis	Gladstone	P.C.
SALE, Tim	Crescentwood	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	N.D.P.
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	P.C.
TOEWS, Vic, Hon.	Rossmere	P.C.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, September 19, 1995

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Federal Immigration Policies

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Carolina Nario, Norma Nario, Lilia Valle and others requesting the Government of Canada cancel fee increases and instead institute policies that will encourage immigration to Manitoba.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, I have the privilege of tabling several annual reports: firstly, the Annual Report '94-95 for the Manitoba Farm Mediation Board, the Annual Report '94-95 for the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation and the 41st Annual Progress Review of the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, University of Manitoba.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table reports today which have been circulated to the House: the 22nd Annual Report of Legal Aid Manitoba, the 24th Annual Report of the Manitoba Law Reform Commission, The Discriminatory Business Practices Act Annual Report ending March 31, '94 and The Discriminatory Business Practices Act Annual Report ending March 31, '95.

*(1335)

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

1995 R & D 100 Award

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Madam Speaker, I have a statement for the House.

It gives me great pleasure to share with the Legislature today that a rural Manitoba company is receiving one of the most prestigious honours awarded within the international research and development community. Rimer Alco North America Ltd. of Morden is the recipient of an R & D 100 award for 1995, a top honour in the field of applied research. Rimer Alco's president, Earl Gardiner, will attend an awards banquet at the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry later this evening to accept the award.

Rimer Alco was nominated for its development of a new product line known as the Refuge One Air Centre. Madam Speaker, the Refuge One is a unique device which provides respiratory protection to miners forced to take refuge in underground safe havens during emergencies.

Manitoba Rural Development has been pleased to work with Mr. Gardiner and his company in the development of the Refuge One Air Centre. Last March the Rural Economic Development Initiative assisted Rimer Alco in manufacturing and marketing this mine safety product with \$78,300 in financial assistance. Previously, in March 1992 Rimer Alco received a Grow Bond issue worth \$127,900 to enable it to diversify its product line which includes the Refuge One. Rimer Alco exemplifies the type of high-quality entrepreneurial activity we are witnessing in rural Manitoba.

R & D Magazine, which is presenting Rimer Alco with tonight's award, has honoured inventors and scientists around the world annually for the past 32 years. Some past winners of the award have included the electronic video recorder, anti-lock brakes, the automated teller machine, the fax machine and the digital compact cassette.

Madam Speaker, I hope all my colleagues will join with me in wishing Earl Gardiner and the staff at Rimer Alco our heartfelt congratulations on their outstanding achievement of being recognized for developing one of the top 100 research and development products in 1995.

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Madam Speaker, we on this side of the House would also like to join government side with our congratulations to Mr. Gardiner and Rimer Alco North America Ltd. I know that Mr. Gardiner, whom I do know personally from years past, is a hard-working individual who has the community at heart at all times.

I am sure that the company and the product they have provided for the safety of miners and others will be a success and is a success. It is a pleasure and an honour to pass on to Mr. Gardiner and his company congratulations on their outstanding achievement in this field. Thank you.

Speaker's Statement

Manitoba Legislative Internship Program

Madam Speaker: I have a statement for the House. As members know, the Manitoba Legislative Internship Program has been in operation since 1985. Each year a total of six interns are chosen for the program.

Again this year three interns have been assigned to the government and official opposition 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 1995-96 legislative interns. They commenced their assignments at the beginning of September.

Working with the government caucus are: Mr. Kelvin Goertzen of the University of Manitoba; Mr. Shannon Martin of Brandon University; and Mr. John Morris of the University of Manitoba.

Working with the caucus of the official opposition are: Ms. Tannis Cheatle of the University of Winnipeg; Ms. Martha Lywak of the University of Winnipeg; and Mr. Ronuk Modha of the University of Winnipeg. Copies of the biographies of these young men and women will be distributed to members shortly.

* (1340)

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us today Mr. Tournier, President of the University of Valenciennes and Hainaut-Cambrésis and Professor Dr. Ostholt, Rector of Bielefeld University.

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Health Sciences Centre Psychiatric Services

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

During the election campaign, the Premier had a number of ads out in the public promising to maintain health care services for Manitobans when they need it. Unfortunately, after the election campaign, Madam Speaker, we have heard about a number of cuts, including cuts that we have raised in this House of some \$19 million for the Health Sciences Centre.

I would like to ask the Premier, what is the impact of that \$19-million cut on the psychiatric services for adults and children served by the Health Sciences Centre?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I will take that question as notice on behalf of the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae).

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, I would like to table for the Premier's education a document from front-line nurses and doctors working at the Health Sciences Centre. Those documents indicate, Madam Speaker, that even a minimum cut of 5 percent would result in the loss of psychiatric nurses and other staff who are working on outpatients and are working in day hospital situations. In fact, it would be a reduction in services to some 30 percent of the psychiatric adults and children working with those programs.

I would like to ask the Premier how a reduction of this nature in services to Manitoba fits with the so-called community-based mental health services and the so-called commitment that he made during the election to make sure that Manitobans had health care services when they need them.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I am sure that the member opposite need not be reminded, I am sure he is aware that Manitoba spends a greater proportion of its budget on health care than any other province in Canada, some 33.4 percent, some \$1.8 billion. This government does not engage in activities that diminish the health care system for Manitobans. This government engages in commitments that maintain and enhance the health care system for Manitobans.

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, I am disappointed at the lack of an answer from the Premier on something so important as children and adult psychiatric services here in this province.

Madam Speaker, the memo goes on to say, contrary to government statements—

An Honourable Member: Is this Question Period, Madam Speaker?

Mr. Doer: Are you the new Speaker?

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I am sure the honourable member has a question.

Mr. Doer: Yes, I do.

I would like to ask the Premier, is it government policy, consistent with the promise on community-based mental health, to have cuts that will result in the premature discharge of patients in the context of sparse community supports that will result in the worsening risks of rehospitalization or relapse and readmission in light of the fact that they are currently experiencing already a shortage of beds because there are not enough services available in the community?

Is that the policy of this Premier and this government in mental health services to children and adults who require it?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition will want to hear the response of the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) on that matter, so I will be happy to take that question as notice on his behalf.

* (1345)

Health Sciences Centre Psychiatric Services

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): My question is also to the First Minister.

Is the First Minister prepared to say today, given the rhetoric that he indicated in his previous answer, that he will not permit the cutting of the seven nurses who provide the services to the more than 400 mental health patients on an outpatient basis? He will not allow that cut to take place as a result of his \$19-million cutback. Will he make that statement today, Madam Speaker?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, if the members of the opposition were paying any attention at all, they know that the entire country, every single province, is engaged in the reform of our health care system, a reform that takes different forms in different provinces. In Saskatchewan, 52 rural hospitals have been closed under a New Democratic administration, Madam Speaker. Many, many changes have taken place throughout the health care system in Canada, and all provinces are working together.

The ministers of Health are meeting at this very minute to do what can be possible to do given massive transfer cut payments; \$220 million a year from the federal government will be cut in transfers to Manitoba, and we have to cope with those kinds of strains and stresses. Despite those stresses and strains, despite that pressure, this government has maintained its commitment to health care better than any other province in Canada, with 33.4 percent of all the money spent by the provincial government going to health care, Madam Speaker. That is a commitment unmatched by any province in Canada.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Speaker, can the Premier explain how a cutback to outpatient and community-

based services, something the government was supposed to be committed to, that affects almost 400 mental health patients and eliminates programs, how a cut of that magnitude will assist in their so-called health reform in light of a 28 percent reduction in psychiatric beds already by this government in its cutback in health services?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I will take the specifics of that as notice on behalf of the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae).

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Speaker, can the minister also, when he talks to the Minister of Health about answers to these questions that the Premier does not have, can he instruct his minister that they will not tolerate a cutback in these outpatient mental health services to children and to adults, in light of the fact that a memo by these experts says that resources in Manitoba at present are sparse?

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, I will take that question, as well, as notice on behalf of the Minister of Health.

Maintenance Enforcement Act Proclamation

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): My question is to the Minister of Justice.

After seven years of this government ignoring the need for stronger maintenance enforcement to deal with the financial abuse and poverty of women and children in Manitoba, we were pleased that the government finally promised changes both before and during the election, limited as they were.

The minister in this House then fast-tracked the related bill for passage before the summer with a committee even sitting until 3:30 in the morning, so that changes could immediately go to work for the women and children without further delay.

My question to the minister is, now at least six months after the legislation was passed in this House and two and a half months after the bill was passed and rushed through, would the minister now tell

Manitobans why this bill has not even been proclaimed, and when will it be proclaimed?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to speak about The Maintenance Enforcement Act which this government brought forward. I can tell the member that when the Canadian bar was having its annual meeting here in Winnipeg, it was considered by family law lawyers across this country as the showpiece in maintenance enforcement.

As the member refers to fast-tracking, yes, this government believed that the issues at stake were extremely important, so, Madam Speaker, a number of parts of the bills were active upon Royal Assent which took place at the end of June, very important measures such as the ability to report defaulting payers to the credit bureau. That was a major step forward.

As the member knew, and was discussed fully in the process of the passage of that bill, there were parts of the bill which would be proclaimed because they required systems changes in the departments in order for them to take effect.

* (1350)

Mr. Mackintosh: Would the minister just 'fess up and confirm that the bill will not be proclaimed until next year, that it was just a PR exercise, all that haste, and that the government had in no way the readiness to put this bill into force?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Speaker, again, sections of the bill came into effect on Royal Assent such as reporting to the credit bureau. That, in case it has escaped the notice of members opposite, has really a great effect on those people who are, for instance, self-employed and should certainly encourage and provide a penalty for those who do not pay.

However, the member opposite knows very well that in issues such as the suspension or revocation of drivers' licences or registration, it did require systems changes to occur within departments, and that is in the process of occurring and certainly will be accomplished as quickly as possible.

Make no mistake, this government is absolutely committed, has brought forward the strongest legislation in this country, and it has been well recognized across this country.

Mr. Mackintosh: My question then is a final supplementary to the First Minister.

Would he now fulfill his election promise and direct the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) and the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation to straighten out the bureaucratic tangle, the rat's nest in their areas and get the work done to ensure speedy proclamation of the maintenance enforcement bill, work that should have been taking place as the bill was going through this House, and once it was drafted—

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

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Act): Madam Speaker, that work is ongoing and will be. As was discussed in the committee, the details of the time frame, as was discussed at the time the bill went through, that is underway and will be completed on schedule.

Farm Loan Program Implementation

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, during the election, this government promised a \$10-million loan program to help farmers deal with life after the death of the Crow benefit, and they promised that application forms would be ready by this summer. Well, summer has gone, this crop year is finished and there is no program.

Can the Minister of Agriculture tell this House when farmers can expect this government to live up to their election promise of a farm loan program?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Speaker, when my Premier (Mr. Filmon) made that commitment to the farmers of Manitoba, in the community of Dauphin I believe, he made it very clear

that this was a program that would be developed by the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation, essentially using the loan authority of government to free up private capital from the banks and the credit unions.

I have the document before me. It is the value-added program that was dealt with just this morning, as a matter of fact, in Treasury Board that is going to provide additional support for farmers to get into various livestock endeavours, expanding their cattle herds, expanding their hog production opportunities and, specifically, in light of the buoyancy in our potato industry, help our farmers develop into that specialty crop, which certainly would fit the post-WGTA description of necessary diversification of agriculture in Manitoba.

Ms. Wowchuk: Since the announcement that was made in Dauphin stated very clearly that the applications—and I am quoting from a newspaper article here—would be received this summer, can the minister tell us when the applications will be available and when farmers will be able to access the funds that were promised through this loans program? How soon is that going to happen?

Mr. Enns: Madam Speaker, I expect it to be any time. [interjection] Well, let us be very clear. This is clearly a case of a promise being made and a promise being kept to the farmers of Manitoba.

Understandably, there has to be a considerable amount of consultation with the various commodity groups involved, and as I said in my earlier answer, particularly to get the co-operation of the private lending institutions to fully support the program, to make that \$10 million into a \$100-million program, into a \$200-million program, and that is what is taking place.

But, to answer her question, the applications will be available, and, in fact, are available to her within the next 10 days.

* (1355)

Ms. Wowchuk: I am pleased that those application forms will be ready, but I want to ask the minister,

since they made a promise that there would be help available for farmers in this crop year, this summer, what is this government prepared to do for farmers for whom this program will be too late, farmers who are suffering during this crop year and are expecting to have some support from government and are expecting them to keep their election promise. What are they prepared to do for those farmers?

Mr. Enns: Madam Speaker, although the writer of the Free Press report for whom I have a great deal of respect by and large got his story right, he got the headline of the article wrong. In that same story, you will note that Manitoba's premier agricultural organization, the Keystone Agricultural Producers organization, feels that the program is being delivered precisely as promised and is coming on track as promised for the fall.

This was not a program designed that would help in assisting in this current crop production. After all, the Crow benefit only came up August 1. It is in anticipation of the decisions that farmers will have to make between now, the next planting season and the planting season to come, whether or not they wish to diversify into potatoes or into other special crops, or, those who can, wish to engage in various other forms of livestock production, including some of the nontraditional livestock, Madam Speaker.

Photo Radar Government Support

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Highways.

Without hesitation, this government has dipped into the pockets of Manitobans using VLTs and other sources of gambling revenue in order to meet their fiscal agenda. Yet when the City of Winnipeg and the police respond to MPIC's request to consider photo radar, this government is reluctant to support what its own Crown corporation is asking for.

Does this government only support measures and actions that support its fiscal priorities and decline to support measures such as photo radar that could save lives in Manitoba?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): I thank the member for that question.

Clearly, there is a perception that photo radar automatically saves lives and slows people down. Yes, it might, but there are a number of other factors to consider because accidents are not only caused by speed. They are caused by alcohol and a number of other factors, some of the other factors we must consider to be sure that we improve safety on the road, which is our No. 1 objective and I am sure the members' opposite also, improved safety on the road.

At the same time, if you put machines out there to monitor traffic instead of an officer, that machine will not detect a drunk driver, will not detect an erratic driver, whereas an officer will. So in the broad context of safety, sometimes you definitely want to have officers there.

The second issue is, if you are going to send the notice of speeding to the registered owner and somebody else is driving the vehicle, where is the fairness in that? If you are going to issue demerits if you are caught by a live officer but not demerits if you are picked up by photo radar, again there is an unfairness there.

So, Madam Speaker, there are a number of issues in addition to just putting photo radar out there. Our No. 1 issue is safety on the roads in the broad context. We are not going to put in photo radar just for the city to collect more money. We want to put photo radar in and a number of other measures to improve safety on the road, and that is simply the principle we are working with, and we are continuing to consult and to try to find the evidence, so we can put it in place for the right reasons.

Mr. Kowalski: My supplementary question is to the Minister of Highways. Does he not believe in the Winnipeg Police Services' expertise and trust it in recommending photo radar for the city of Winnipeg?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Speaker, unfortunately, the member did not listen to the other issues in terms of public concerns that must be addressed.

There is another issue yet called constitutionality. Should you be charging somebody whom you cannot prove was driving that vehicle? That is an issue, Madam Speaker. In the interests of protecting the public, we want to be absolutely sure that constitutionally you can send a bill to an owner of a vehicle, but you cannot prove that that person was the driver.

Not everybody out there drives their own vehicles. There are rented vehicles; there are company vehicles; there are government vehicles that are driven by other people, Madam Speaker. So in the broad context, we want to improve safety, as I told the member already, and he must recognize that in fairness to the public, all these issues must be considered and addressed at the same time.

* (1400)

Mr. Kowalski: How many more Manitoba lives have to be lost before this government reviews the material that was passed on by Mayor Susan Thompson and the Winnipeg Police Services recommending photo radar?

Mr. Findlay: Well, Madam Speaker, I could ask the member the same question. He is recommending we put machines out there instead of police officers. Machines cannot detect drunk drivers. Drunk drivers cause trouble. They cause accidents. They cause deaths. Our objective is to reduce the number of accidents, the number of fatalities, the number of injuries, which I am sure he shares with us.

Please recognize that there is the broader question, not just putting the machine out there to collect money. We will put the machine there to protect public safety, in the interests of fairness and we will act.

Winnipeg Airport Authority Negotiations

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism.

In June, I spoke with the chair of the Winnipeg Airport Authority who indicated then that the

negotiations they were having with the federal government were going very badly. Madam Speaker, the manager indicated that the major problem was the new Liberal federal government's insistence on an unfair requirement that this unprofitable airport suddenly become profitable the day it is taken over by a Winnipeg Airport Authority.

Madam Speaker, could the minister indicate what specific steps he has taken since June to raise this matter, to investigate this matter and to begin to understand what we might do to get these negotiations back on track?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Madam Speaker, I am equally concerned about the treatment which Manitoba and Winnipeg International Airport are receiving from the new federal Liberal government. We have had meetings over the past several months. I will get an update from the department as to specific negotiations and discussions that have taken place at the departmental level and report back to the member.

Mr. Sale: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the minister, though, has he personally spoken with Minister Young, who will not even return John Harvard's calls? Has he spoken with Minister Young and protested the unrealistic demands personally to his counterpart on the federal level?

Mr. Downey: No, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Sale: Madam Speaker, then, specifically, how does the minister propose to get this vital Manitoba economic resource and the negotiations surrounding its future back on track, so that the potential of Gateway, the airport and many of our industries which contribute over \$500 million to our economy annually will be fully realized? What specifically are you proposing to do, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Madam Speaker, the Council of Ministers of Transportation, the 10 provinces and the federal minister are meeting at the end of next month. I hope the members opposite will approve my fare to attend the meeting.

Madam Speaker, two weeks ago, I requested that this issue be on the agenda because we felt that there was a building problem, particularly at Winnipeg and also at other airports across the country, about the new requirements, particularly the lease formula that the federal bureaucrats seem to be imposing on the process, which we considered unfair.

I will definitely be the lead minister at that meeting, bringing the issue to the attention of other provinces so we get Mr. Young to respond.

Lynn Lake Airport Subsidy Reduction

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

The negotiations over transfer to local authorities of airports is not just a problem in Winnipeg. At Lynn Lake where three out of five staff already have been laid off, the federal government cut amounts of 75 percent of their revenue. Since this airport is critical for the region, given the terrible conditions of Highway 391, what role is the province playing in assisting these negotiations with small communities that are being pressured by federal MPs like John Harvard, who put out a press release announcing that Lynn Lake signed an agreement prior to even talking to the community?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Madam Speaker, I cannot speak on behalf of John Harvard. Maybe other Liberals in the House might like to.

We certainly recognize that there is a difficulty being created for many northern airports because of federal policy change, which is going to reduce the amount of subsidy to those airports by 20 percent a year. We know that the communities are in discussion with the federal government, and my staff are assisting as much as possible to assist those communities in trying to rationalize a methodology by which they can maintain their airports.

Certainly, the federal government is on a nonchanging course to reduce the subsidies by 20

percent a year, something that we as a province cannot pick up. We will work hard with the communities as they negotiate with the federal government to be sure that as many airports as possible are maintained in the North, preferably all, but it is a very difficult time line that the federal government has put on all those communities in the North; in five years, a 20-percent-a-year reduction—very significant.

Firefighting System

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Could the minister tell the House whether the province is proceeding to put a foam firefighting system at the Lynn Lake airport?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Madam Speaker, I will take that question as notice and respond tomorrow.

Government Support

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Given that over 120 medivacs were flown out of Lynn Lake last year alone and the importance of the airport for tourism and firefighting in the region is obvious, has this government taken a stand on the issue?

If it has, can the minister table a single letter or report issued by the province in support of the airport?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Madam Speaker, we have written letters in respect to supporting Lynn Lake, and I am sure the member is aware of those letters. I will table them or bring them to him tomorrow.

We advocate that it be called an isolated airport and that it be considered like that, the same as Churchill. So far, the federal government has not responded, but we have not given up the battle.

I have met with the deputy minister, and we continue the process of trying to get it into a position to be called an isolated airport, so that the federal support is maintained at that airport. It is very critical that that happen. I feel there is a 50-50 chance the federal government will change their position.

Water Supply—Selkirk Government Strategy

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Natural Resources.

On December 14 of last year, the minister took as notice my questions regarding a study which put in doubt the capacity of the aquifer under both sides of the Red River between Winnipeg and Lockport. Since that time, the Selkirk & District Planning Board has proposed an additional 3,000 residential building lots in that area.

My question is to the minister. Is the minister confident that this aquifer will be able to sustain a strain of 3,000 more additional residential wells?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Speaker, I am not sure, and I will take the specifics of the question as notice.

Mr. Dewar: He has had three months after that question, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Selkirk, with a subsequent question.

Mr. Dewar: Madam Speaker, my next question is to the same minister.

Will this minister urge his cabinet colleagues to place the control of residential wells under provincial jurisdiction, as has been advised by the Selkirk & District Planning Board, to deal with this issue in the long term?

Mr. Driedger: Madam Speaker, to the member for Selkirk, I am prepared to get the details of what is happening out there and make that information available to him as well as to the other members across.

Mr. Dewar: Madam Speaker, my final question is to the Minister of Environment.

Has the Environment department done an impact study on the effects of 3,000 new septic fields in that

area, the effects of these septic fields on the fecal coliform count in the Red River?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): I hear a comment from across the way that that would be scary. The fact is that local planning development will be scrutinized, and we are in the process of developing more stringent guidelines for private waste disposal fields. It has been a problem in that area for a considerable length of time.

We have, in fact, had a recent study that shows that the installation is to a large degree one of the problems associated with that type of field, and we are working quite closely with the local municipalities to make sure that they adequately address the problem, so we do not have an environmental problem down the road.

* (1410)

Gambling Social Costs

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister for Lotteries. I would first of all like to thank him for his statement after Question Period that he will be releasing the KPMG study that we had requested yesterday.

I would like to ask the minister some further questions related to this document which takes 38 pages out of 70 to attempt to defend some of the concerns expressed by Manitobans over lotteries, and, in particular, makes the claim citing a number of American studies, including a U.S. Senate study, that suggests that crime goes down when gambling is put in place.

I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Lotteries whether he or his seatmate the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) have contacted the private company, the loss-prevention group, the treatment group Restorative Resolutions, the Winnipeg police or Judge Ian Dubiensi, who have all within the last number of months pointed to the direct link between the increased level of gambling in this province and crime. Has this minister talked to the people who know what is going on, Madam Speaker?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Act): Well, Madam Speaker, I have to admit I continue to be somewhat bewildered by the questions from the member for Thompson because on the one hand he has been a part of a group that has called continually for more information, more comparisons, to open dialogue and discussions on issues around gaming and gambling in Manitoba.

The Lotteries Corporation, as obviously an entity directly involved in the entire issue, has attempted from their perspective to make as much information as possible available on a series of issues from criminal activities to a whole range of other issues from economic impact in Manitoba and so on, to continue to add to that dialogue and to provide more information.

As he knows, we will be before a committee, as agreed, on September 28. I will have representatives there from the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation in attendance at that particular committee meeting, Madam Speaker, and I look forward to discussing in great detail the background reports that have been utilized and prepared for this document.

As he acknowledged, we have indicated we will be releasing the KPMG study on the economic impact of gaming here in Manitoba and so on, and I look forward to that discussion at committee, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Ashton: Madam Speaker, well, if the Minister responsible for Lotteries has not contacted any of these individuals I cited, I would like to ask the Minister of Justice, has the Minister of Justice made any inquiries to Judge Ian Dubiensi, the Winnipeg police and the other organizations I cited that have stated very clearly that there is a direct link between the increased level of gambling and crime in this province? Has the Minister of Justice taken action on this important issue?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, the member refers to a comment by one of the judges which I believe was explained more fully and did not arrive at the same conclusion in very short order following that discussion. So he continues to put forward information,

Madam Speaker, which I believe the court has made further statements on.

Mr. Ashton: Well, as a final supplementary, if I cannot get answers on those two questions, I would like to ask the Minister of Lotteries whether this government agrees with the statement in this document, this report, that states and quotes a study and the citation that suggests that the degree of problem gambling is related to a personality disorder and does not relate to the availability of gambling.

Is it this government's position that people who have a problem with gambling in this province have it because of a personality disorder, as is stated in this report, Madam Speaker?—something that I think is offensive to many Manitobans who are having great difficulty with their families right now because of problems with addiction to gambling.

Mr. Stefanson: Madam Speaker, again, I think the overriding comment under the section on crime and criminal activities is that there is no empirical evidence existing to demonstrate that gaming results in an increased criminal activity according to leading social impact experts. What the member for Thompson is referring to are quotes and comments from various reports and studies that have been done.

I think all of that information is helpful not only for the dialogue here in this House but for the discussion that the public of Manitoba wants to be a part of in terms of gaming activities. Any information, any research, any work that can be done obviously adds to all of our knowledge, our understanding and ultimate decisions that we have to make.

We currently have a moratorium in place here in Manitoba in terms of gaming expansion. We have the Desjardins committee doing a major review, consulting with Manitobans on both the social and the economic impacts of gaming in Manitoba. We will be receiving their report no later than the end of this calendar year, Madam Speaker, and it will form a very important part of future policy direction here in Manitoba.

Highway Construction/Upgrading Wabowden/Setting Lake

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): My questions are for the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

A short while ago, the Department of Highways cold-packed nine kilometres of road from Wabowden to Setting Lake. Something obviously went wrong because the paving was done during a rainstorm.

Will the minister confirm that over a thousand vehicles, perhaps even 1,500 vehicles, were negatively affected and that the province will end up paying the bill for tires, deductibles and paint jobs?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Madam Speaker, that sounds like a very serious situation. I will investigate it and report back to the member as quickly as possible.

Mr. Jennissen: Could the minister give us an estimate as to how much this boondoggle may cost the province?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Speaker, I have already indicated to the member I will get the details and report back.

Mr. Jennissen: A final supplementary, when the minister does have that information, will he let us know how much this bungling will affect the MPIC rates over the next year for northern Manitoba?

Mr. Findlay: We will report all that information to the member.

Flooding—Transcona Cost-Shared Agreement

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Urban Affairs. People in south Transcona are happy that we had a hot, dry summer because they still have no solution or funding in place to deal with the flooding problem in that part of Winnipeg. I am pleased to see that the minister has agreed that the government will cost-share a solution for the flooding problem in south Transcona

with the City of Winnipeg, but I have a few questions about the procedure because it seems that this process is slow.

I want to ask the minister if he can clarify for me in the House today and the residents of south Transcona the procedure for securing funds on this type of a cost-shared infrastructure project with the City of Winnipeg and what he and his department need so that we can move forward to a solution on this matter.

Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Urban Affairs): Madam Speaker, the member is aware of the correspondence that has gone back and forth between herself, the City of Winnipeg, the mayor and the council regarding the flooding in the south Transcona area.

One of the things that was brought to the attention of the member and myself through City Council was the fact that part of the funding arrangement of any type of improvement in that area would require some sort of residential participation in the cost structuring and the cost of whatever type of renovation or direction that was going to take place.

The emphasis that was put forth by the City of Winnipeg and the council through the letter from the mayor to the member, with a copy to myself, was that unless there was a participation by the residents in the area of some sort of cost-sharing, no project would go forth at this time.

Ms. Cerilli: There are other issues I want to have clarified from that. First of all, in speaking of the provincial government's proportion of the funding for this type of project, what are the requirements that the department needs to ensure that the province will cost-share this type of infrastructure project?

Mr. Reimer: It would be hard to speculate as to what type of arrangement would be put forth because there has been no proposal that has come forth from the city on the type of cost-sharing arrangement or what total amount of monies are allocated, so it would be premature to put any type of allocation or direction of fundings toward the project when there has not even been a proposal come forth or a willingness by the

participants to participate in the funding, by the residents in that particular area.

Ms. Cerilli: I thank the minister for that answer.

Further then, I want to clarify, since this government no longer has a flood protection fund in any of the departments in the government at this time—I think there is a small one in the Department of Natural Resources—I want the government to clarify the fund in the provincial government where monies flow from for this type of project in south Transcona.

Mr. Reimer: Well, I would think with any type of disaster or disaster assistance, there are a lot of departments that would be involved with any type of co-ordination, whether it would be through the EMO department or through Natural Resources. If there is a flood or a catastrophe, the departments and the government would look at the proposals at that time.

* (1420)

Gambling Social Costs

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Speaker, I have a further question again and this time for either the Minister responsible for Lotteries or the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), since there seems to be a great deal of confusion on that side about the fact that the Lotteries commission is attempting to cite a study that indicates that crime goes down with the availability of gambling.

I will repeat this again in my preamble, everyone ranging from groups dealing with employee theft to groups dealing with providing counselling to problem gamblers to the Winnipeg Police and Judge Ian Dubiensi, whom now the Minister of Justice is trying to suggest misquoted himself, and this was in a sentence to an individual who had been involved in a crime—I would like to ask either of the ministers whether they have talked to anyone in the law enforcement community or anyone else of the many people who are saying there is an increased problem with crime in this province because of the dramatic increase in gambling that has taken place under this government.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Act): Madam Speaker, the only confusion in this room today is on that side of the House in terms of arranging enough questions to get through Question Period with meaningful questions without coming back to repetitive questions that we have already heard.

We have already discussed this issue. We will have representatives of the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation at the committee hearing on September 28. They have done various research. They have quoted research that is being done on issues about the link between criminal activity and gaming not only in Manitoba but across Canada. That, obviously, is an issue that they are dealing with, that they have some concerns about, as well, and as I say, we will get into a further discussion when our committee meets.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Speaker's Rulings

Madam Speaker: I have two rulings for the House.

On June 20, 1995, I took under advisement a point of order raised by the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), the House leader for the official opposition. At that time I indicated that I would review Hansard to check the context in which a word complained of was spoken and that I would return to the House with a ruling if necessary.

I have indeed read Hansard. The word in question, "dishonest," was spoken by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) during Question Period. He said in reference to the Leader of the official opposition, "he should not be so dishonest as to put that on the record." There are numerous rulings by Manitoba Speakers where the use of the word "dishonest" when directed at a specific member has been ruled unparliamentary.

Indeed, the context in which the word was used by the Premier on June 20 fits into this pattern, and I am calling upon the honourable First Minister to withdraw unequivocally the word.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I unequivocally withdraw the word, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: I thank the honourable First Minister.

* * *

Madam Speaker: I have a second ruling for the House.

On June 27, 1995, during Question Period, a point of order was raised by the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), the House leader for the official opposition, about words spoken by the First Minister, which I took under advisement. I indicated at that time that I would review Hansard to check whether the words in question were directed specifically at the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale).

The words in question, "as a member of Thin Ice and as a member of Choices, and as a member of all these loony left-wing organizations" were spoken by the Premier (Mr. Filmon). I have carefully reviewed the context in which the words were spoken, and the Premier did not direct the words in question specifically at the member. Therefore, there is no point of order.

However, I would like to take this opportunity to say to the House that it is very important that we take care in how we address each other. I would like to paraphrase a recent ruling from Speaker Parent of the House of Commons: This is a place of strong emotions and when tempers flare, honourable members can get carried away. I strongly urge all members to respect the conventions and traditions of this House and to conduct ourselves with the civility becoming representatives of the people of Manitoba.

Committee Changes

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Do I have leave to make some committee changes?

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable member for Gimli have leave to make committee changes? [agreed]

Mr. Helwer: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be amended as follows: the member for River Heights (Mr. Radcliffe) for the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer); the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) for the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson). [agreed]

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS

Peguis Central School Exemplary School Recognition

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

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and commend teachers, staff and students at Peguis Central School and Peguis First Nation as being one of only two schools in Manitoba that are being recognized as exemplary schools in a study undertaken by the Canadian Education Association.

The 1993-94 study involved 260 schools across Canada with only 21 being selected and honoured in a publication on secondary schools in Manitoba and Canada. The report is the National Report of the Exemplary Schools Project.

One of the qualities, Madam Speaker, that the report highlights is a greater link between the school's social and educational goals throughout the system. Peguis School staff have indicated that the report points out the school's degree of community participation and parental involvement in the day-to-day operations of Peguis Central School.

This year, Madam Speaker, the school comprises 55 staff and over 700 students.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Principal Doreen McPherson and all those involved in the Peguis Central School for this honour and for a job well done and success in the future. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Red Sucker Lake
New School Opening**

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable member for Rupertsland have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Leave? [agreed]

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland): Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the community of Red Sucker Lake.

Last Thursday, September 14, the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Jennissen) and I had the opportunity of being invited to the community to witness the grand opening of a school which is going to be open to students from kindergarten to Grade 12.

It took many years of hard work on the part of the community to achieve this very positive realization, in the ongoing work of the community with respect to education. In years gone by, Madam Speaker, children had to be sent elsewhere for their education. Now, the band was able to work out arrangements and partnership arrangements with other businesses in order for them to obtain the building to make the new school possible.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the teachers, the principal, Saul Harper and others. Most particularly, we want to wish the children of the community the very best of luck as they embark upon their future. We hope for them a very positive experience in education.

Also, congratulations to the hard work and dedication expressed by Chief Fred Harper and councillors and elders of the Red Sucker Lake community. Thank you.

* (1430)

**Tadoule Lake
New School Opening**

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Madam Speaker, I seek leave from this Assembly to make a nonpolitical statement.

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable member for Flin Flon have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Leave. [agreed]

Mr. Jennissen: Along with my honourable colleague the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson), I was privileged this Friday past in participating at the official opening of the Peter Yassie Memorial School in Tadoule Lake.

This impressive new school at Tadoule Lake is also a new symbol of hope for the Sayisi Dene First Nation. It is truly heartening and inspiring to witness the Sayisi Dene First Nation rebuilding itself with a creative combination of modern educational approaches and facilities with sound Dene traditions and values.

I congratulate Chief Ernie Bussidor and council, the education steering committee members, the Sayisi Dene education authority, the elders and any other participants who helped the dream become a reality.

**Kildonan East Collegiate
Exemplary School Recognition**

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): I, too, am seeking leave for a nonpolitical statement.

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable member for Radisson have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Leave? [agreed]

Ms. Cerilli: Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate and commend Kildonan East Collegiate which is one of two schools in Manitoba being recognized as an exemplary school in a study by the Canadian Education Association. This was the largest, most detailed study ever done in Canada of successful practices in secondary schools and the dominant issues facing secondary schools. It was done in 1993 and '94 and consisted of 260 school applications from across Canada. Of those, 21 schools were selected to be honoured in a publication, Secondary Schools in Canada: The National Report of the Exemplary Schools Project.

It is significant that we have had two very different schools from Manitoba recognized in this study. One

of those schools is in the constituency for the honourable member for Concordia, our Leader, Gary Doer.

A number of students from a variety of constituencies, including Radisson, attend that school. Some of the qualities that the report highlights are greater links between school social and education issues and strengthening a commitment in schools for equality for all students.

Kildonan East is recognized, in its vocational and academic areas, in its work to blur the lines, if you will, between academic and vocational programs. It has a unique program in math and science of an applied math and science program where it has mathematics labs which have practical applications for both math and science in hands-on projects.

It has a unique program in the area of transition from school to work called the career bridge program which helps prepare students in a prework program. There is a life skills program that helps connect students who can help students who need assistance with those students who can provide extra assistance. There is a natural helpers program in the school, a peer tutoring program, a unique program that has trained staff as mediators for student conflicts.

They have a unique open-area program in the social studies department that facilitates discussion of ideas and has had in the past a program called Hyde Park. They have a unique student exchange program with China in their Asia-Pacific projects, and it has links with the business community.

They also had highlighted in the news coverage of their honour in this program their physical education program, and they are recognized for the forward thinking with their parent council which is well established at the high school level.

I want to congratulate all the staff and the students, the parents from the school, as well as the school's community partners.

I wish them well not only in the work that they have done in the years for this study in '93-94 but prior to

that and continuing on this year and into the future. Thank you.

Legion Week

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable member for Transcona have leave for a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Madam Speaker, I thank the members of the House for leave.

I want to draw to the attention of members of the House that this week is Legion Week here in Manitoba and also in Northwestern Ontario.

Legion Week has been occurring since 1985 and has included several events and activities as are sponsored by the various legions throughout our province, Madam Speaker.

The events include activities for seniors such as special bingos, picnics, excursions, dinners and housing programs, while for youth the legion will sponsor activities including dinners and barbecues, honours and awards for sponsored cadets as well as activities for scouts, guides, hockey and baseball teams and recognizing scholarship and bursary awards as well. So Legion Week involves many activities.

Also, while I am on my feet, Madam Speaker, I had the opportunity this Sunday past to attend the rededication ceremony of the Transcona Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 7.

The Royal Canadian Legion branch reopened its doors after a devastating fire approximately a year ago which had destroyed the clubrooms. Much hard work and perseverance was required by the Branch 7 executive and building committee members to have a reconstruction of a modern, new facility.

I am told that the Branch 7 ladies auxiliary played a very large role in the interior design and decoration and I would like to extend my congratulations and I am sure congratulations of all members of the House to the Branch 7 members on their rededication ceremonies. Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, on a matter of House business, I would like to inform the House that the Venture Manitoba Tour's financial statements which had been referred yesterday to the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources on October 17, 1995, at 10 a.m. in Room 255 will instead be considered by the Standing Committee on Economic Development on the same date at the same time as previously announced.

Madam Speaker, would you call Bills 9, 11, 2 and then the balance of the bills as listed in the Order Paper.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 9—The Wills Amendment Act

Madam Speaker: To resume debate on second reading on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), Bill 9, The Wills Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les testaments), standing in the name of the honourable member for St. Johns.

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Madam Speaker, the purpose of this bill I think was described very well by the minister. The Wills Act as drawn up currently is relatively unique to Manitoba. It says that you do not have to comply with all the formal requirements for making a will for the courts to recognize that there is a valid direction or request existing. Now that particular revision, that particular section, I think, was a great contribution to the law of wills not just within Canada, but I think within the common law jurisdictions of the world.

I think it was a great contribution because it said that there was something more important than strict rules. It was more important that the real intention of a person making a will be respected. We recognize that this bill does not have application to thousands of Manitobans, but it can be very critical in certain circumstances. I think it is important that the legal system, the justice system allow access by people to

their intentions. The legal system should not be there merely to put up barriers or formalities that can thwart the real needs and the intentions of individuals.

We know that since the provision under consideration was passed by this Legislature, that is, the requirement that strict rules be secondary to the real intention of a testator, the courts gave an interpretation to this section on a couple of occasions. Unfortunately, in 1990, a Court of Appeal in the Langseth estate case appeared to say that some compliance with the formal requirements was required. I think that was bothersome and frightening to those who had seen the provision in the bill—it was actually Section 23—as representing a liberal and purposeful approach to the interpretation of wills because what that decision said was that at least one of the formal requirements required by the legislation had to be complied with, whether that be the signature or the dating of the will or how the will was witnessed. That led to the Law Reform Commission presenting a report to the then-Minister of Justice on December 14, 1992, some time ago, I think unfortunately some time ago.

* (1440)

In the Law Reform Commission report the commission identified the difference between requiring substantial compliance with the formal requirements for wills that was exhibited in the Langseth case with what I think was truer to the original intentions of the provision, and that is that there be a dispensation power, in other words, the courts be given the powers to dispense with all the formal requirements required for making a will. The Law Reform Commission concluded that The Wills Act should be amended and that the provision under consideration have the wording as set out in this bill.

We support this amendment to The Wills Act. I might add that it appears that the wording accurately sets forth the intention of the original Section 23 and the intention of what the Law Reform Commission set out to do, so we look forward to seeing this bill go to committee, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): This is, in fact, a bill that is fairly straightforward. From what we

understand, the bill will allow the law to continue to have the desired effect of insuring that testators' wishes are in fact carried out. This is, in fact, something which has been run by the Law Reform Commission, and at this point in time we do not have any problem seeing it going to committee at this time.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 9, The Wills Amendment Act. Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 11—The Trustee Amendment Act

Madam Speaker: To resume debate on second reading of Bill 11, The Trustee Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les fiduciaires), on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), standing in the name of the honourable member for St. Johns.

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Again, Madam Speaker, essentially repeating my comments from the last session, the amendment proposed to The Trustee Act is similar to the intent of the amendment proposed to The Wills Act. Both allow for more liberal interpretation or application of the law to circumstances.

I am familiar with the Law Reform Commission considerations and the report on the topic of what is called ethical investments. Essentially what this amendment attempts to do is allow trustees to make investments on behalf of beneficiaries which do not only consider financial criteria. I think it is much more common today that all of us make investment decisions based not simply on the expected rate of return but on other considerations whether they be religious, whether they be otherwise moral considerations, ethical considerations, perhaps based on environmental concerns.

I know of the offering of what is called green stocks on the market and they are very successfully marketed and I think widely accepted in our community. People are making a conscience decision. They are saying that it is important to invest in this case in sustainable development, important to invest in green ventures more so than it is to get the top dollar that one could get with perhaps some other investment. It is not uncommon for investors now to recognize moral decision making being acknowledged as legitimate.

We have seen, for example, investments avoided in South African businesses in the recent past. That is one example. When we want to invest in certain offerings made by community economic development initiatives or such investment vehicles as the Crocus Fund in Manitoba, it may be that the predominant reason for the investment is not merely financial, but there is a balance that is required nonetheless.

So clearly when one makes a decision for oneself, there is no review, there is no accountability in law, but there is for a trustee, because when one is a trustee there is a requirement that decisions be made with financial criteria being predominant.

Indeed the only measure of prudent trusteeship, this bill says, should not be financial criteria so long as safeguards are in place against an unreasonable financial detriment occurring from the investment. So the provision appears to balance that recognition that nonfinancial criteria has a role to play and should be legitimized. At the same time it appears to be saying that there still must be prudence in making investment decisions by trustees.

We will question and look forward to the presentations and the minister's detailed responses to this bill, and we want to consider further whether the predominant criteria is still financial. I think that is the main question, Madam Speaker.

We support this bill in principle, and we look forward to the committee stage.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Again, Madam Speaker, this is a bill in which we do not have any problems in terms of seeing going to the committee as

the amendment protects trustees from legal action for reasonable, prudent investment decisions that incorporate other considerations such as the social, religious and environmental factors. In principle, as I say, we do not have any problem with this particular bill going to committee.

Madam Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Speaker: The question before the House is second reading of Bill 11, The Trustee Amendment Act. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

**Bill 2—The Balanced Budget,
Debt Repayment and Taxpayer Protection
and Consequential Amendments Act**

Madam Speaker: To resume debate on second reading on the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), Bill 2, The Balanced Budget, Debt Repayment and Taxpayer Protection and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi sur l'équilibre budgétaire, le remboursement de la dette et la protection des contribuables et apportant des modifications corrélatives), standing in the name of the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett).

Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Wellington? [agreed]

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to put some comments on the record regarding this bill. I see this bill as one of the more important ones that the government has brought in. The reason I say that is because it highlights the hypocrisy of this government, a government that at any time in the last seven years could have governed itself by bringing in even a surplus budget in each and every one of the last seven years. What this government has done, it has run excessive deficits. In fact, it has

increased the debt load of this province by over one-third.

Since this government attained office seven years ago, it has taken the total debt load from almost \$10 billion up to \$14 billion. Now this is from a group that pride themselves on being fiscally responsible, being able to, as the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) says, manage a peanut stand. This record of this government is something quite different. It is a record of bungling. It is a record of mismanagement. In fact, Conservative governments across the country historically have had atrocious records on fiscal responsibility. One only has to look at the Mulroney years. One only has to look at the Devine years in Saskatchewan. Conservative governments have atrocious records of fiscal responsibility. Yet they talk the talk, but they do not walk the walk, and that is the history.

It is our job, our job in opposition, to communicate that fact to the voters, because what this government is doing very cynically is responding to the current flavour of the month, the current polls which say that it is now popular to bring in balanced budget legislation. It is the thing to do. It is the thing to do at the moment to confuse the public and to try to make the public forget about their sorry record over the last seven years.

* (1450)

I know what some of the members opposite think about debt, but how they have been able to sit in a caucus, how they have been able to sit in a caucus for seven years and pile up year after year after year massive debts. In fact, one of the largest debts in Manitoba history was brought in by their previous Finance minister. In fact, the former member for Rossmere virtually resigned over the whole issue because he could not reason with people in his caucus.

So, Madam Speaker, this is very much a public relations exercise on the part of this government. It is incumbent upon the opposition to remind people out there of their record, of their record for the last seven years, and the fact that at any time they could have brought in the legislation that they talk about. In fact, they did not have to bring in legislation at any time.

They do not have to bring in legislation now. They simply can do what they promised to do and that is run a surplus budget and be fiscally responsible in government and that is not something we have seen here.

Now, this government has had choices. This government has had basic choices to make as to what to do with its money, and it has made some choices that I think even the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), and I know he would question this, because the member for Lakeside I believe agrees with the Federation of Independent Business and others who say that governments should not be throwing tax money at profitable businesses. Okay?

Now, what has this government done, Madam Speaker, in the last seven years? It has given money to a whole range. This gets into the whole question that the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) is interested in hearing about, and that is the differentiation between good debt and bad debt.

You know, I have often said that I feel that good debt is debt that we put into hydro projects, the floodway, other useful building projects that have a beneficial effect to the people of the province.

Yet there is another classification of debt that I find very hard to tolerate, and that is that whole area of doling out money essentially to pay off campaign supporters and keep them happy, to businesses who do not need it.

I mean, tell me, why would Labatt's Breweries need \$55,000 of taxpayers' money? Why? Why would Pizza Hut need \$22,000? Are they not responsible enough to know that the province is in a deficit and there are other people in this province in need of help much more so than they? Tell me, why would McDonald's Restaurants need \$68,000? Why would Molson's need \$23,000? Why would Taco Bell need \$8,000 in taxpayers' help? Why would Wendy's Restaurants, A & W foods? Why do these companies need tax money? Does the government not understand that by giving them tax money, it is borrowed money? That is the borrowed money they love to talk about. Mortgaging the future, they say.

When we were in government, they constantly talked about how it was that we were putting our grandchildren in hock, the ball and chain, the bankers, the gnomes from Zurich were going to foreclose on us and this accumulating debt was going to be a ball and chain on our grandchildren, that we would never pay it off.

They took government, and what have they done? They have compounded the problem. They have compounded the problem by increasing the total debt by a third.

Now, Madam Speaker, we do believe that there is a role for government borrowing. Like I said, we do believe that when the province is building hydro projects, that is necessary borrowing. That is good debt. We have likened the situation to a family situation where we have to try to balance our family budgets but we do not go out and sell the car when we are a few dollars short. That is what is going to happen with this legislation, you see. What is going to happen is, in years when the government is short of money, they will simply sell off a Crown corporation at fire-sale prices. That is like going around a Monopoly board, landing on the gas company where the rent is \$4 and having to take off one of your hotels at half price to continue in the game.

That is one of the things we are concerned about, that if the government straitjackets itself to the point that it has to sell off assets at fire-sale prices just to meet the targets in the budget, then we say that that is not very prudent in fiscal management. If the government insists upon doing that, then they will have a shorter lifetime as a government than they might otherwise have.

I just find it absolutely unbelievable that they could be so self-righteous in their approach to this particular problem, that they could in fact bring in this legislation at this time and in fact use it in the election and win a bigger majority by appearing to be fiscally responsible when the figures show that that is certainly not the truth.

In fact, Madam Speaker, the general purpose debt in the last seven years increased from \$5.2 billion to \$6.9

billion. That is a \$1.7-billion increase in the general-purpose debt in their period of time. As I said, the government had choices. It had a number of choices.

They will argue that the debt is an international problem. It is true that in the '50s and so on people from all persuasions acted in much the same way. In the '50s and '60s, people, whether it was an NDP government or CCF government in Saskatchewan, whether it was a Social Credit government, whether it was Conservative, Liberal governments, in those days people were not comfortable with debt. They did not have credit cards. They were not comfortable taking out long-term mortgages. They tended to pay their bills as they went along, and that was the attitude in those days.

Over the years, with the availability of credit and the seductive advertising programs that are in place with the financial institutions and other people selling consumer goods to lure people into debt, people have managed to convince themselves over a generation that it is all right to do that. The result is that we are seeing the downside of getting into hock.

What has happened is that politicians are being no different from people in the general public. Whether they be Conservative politicians, NDP or Liberal, politicians today are comfortable taking out mortgages at 60 years of age. They are comfortable buying cars on credit. They are comfortable buying cottages. So what we have done is, we have basically extended ourselves to the point where each and every one of us is carrying around a ball and chain that we were not carrying around in the '50s.

Now we have come to the wall. We have finally come to the wall and now we have to scramble and find out how we are collectively to deal with the problem. I say and we say here that we have to recognize the problem, and that is something that I think all parties have had trouble recognizing.

The Tories talk about it. They claim they recognize it but, clearly, their seven-year history shows they have not done anything about it. Now we are being forced to recognize the problem. The question is, how do we deal with it? Of course, the Conservatives way of

dealing with it will not be the same as ours. We will not be giving McDonald's Restaurants \$68,000. We will not be giving car dealers grants to train used car salespeople. These are profitable corporations. They should take care of their own training and pay for it themselves. The taxpayers of this province should not be paying for that. So we will save money by not doing things like that, but we will not cut entitlements to people who are most in need.

* (1500)

The Conservatives are really running headlong here to catch up. They feel they have been outflanked by Harris in the East and Klein in the West. When you think of the new rights' approach to things, it is basically welfare benefits are a problem, so says Mr. Harris, and the answer is just chop it by 20 percent. Meanwhile, those same private companies that paid for the Conservative election campaign in Ontario will still be getting their benefits. On top of that, they are demanding and they will get tax cuts which is another basic tenet of the new right.

So this government, having reached the wall, having hit the wall, is now in the process of trying to decide, how are we going to bring things back into line; how are we going to take that \$14 billion and pay it off? That is the total debt, the \$14 billion. It is \$7 billion as far as the general purpose debt is concerned. How are we going to do that and, more importantly, who is going to do this? What we are going to see under this legislation when it is passed is that this government is going to successively over a period of years use this legislation and use this debt crisis to further—

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Justify cuts.

Mr. Maloway: Justify cuts, as the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) says, but also further that agenda of getting the government out of various activities.

So what we will see is a privatization of government housing programs and a whole range, because they have sold off a few corporations as it is, and they will be sold off to people at fire sale prices. When I say friends, I mean that very generically. I do not mean that there is a personal friend of the Premier (Mr.

Filmon) or the personal friend of the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) is getting this or that. I am saying there are supporters of the philosophy of the government, and they are being given public assets that taxpayers have paid for, and, in fact, borrowed money has paid for in a lot of cases, and they are being sold at a fraction of their value in many cases to outside interests.

So what you are going to see as a result of this is a race to the bottom. You are going to see a selling off of public assets. We are seeing right now the federal Liberal government—and I know we are talking about a provincial bill—but the federal Liberals are trying to sell off the railway. What are they doing?

To save money or to stop the bleed of money, they are taking an additional billion dollars of taxpayers' money, paying down the debt, basically fattening up the cow for sale because the private entrepreneur does not want to take it if it is losing money. So you pay more tax money to fatten it up, and then hand it off to these business people who in fact turn around and break it up and sell it off.

So if you want to get back to the law of the jungle—and that is what these people want. That is what these people are comfortable with is the law of the jungle, but certainly one of the biggest hypocrisies of business people and particularly Conservatives that I have seen is that they do not believe in the talk. The first time they have to deal in a free enterprise environment they come crying to the government. I mean, good God. It is constant. These free enterprisers, riding tall in the saddle across the prairie ready to take on the world, want the government to stay out of their affairs; they do not want to pay taxes and so on. Yet they are the first ones who are crying about grants for business.

Well, tell me, where is the free enterprise? Where is it? The Conservatives are not free enterprisers. I do not see any over there. They are not free enterprisers because at the end of the day what they believe is basically a hijacking of the system to benefit a few. Their ideology grabs the system and doles out the goodies, the tax deductions and the grants to their few. That is how this system works.

Now they are going to use this legislation to attempt to throttle the deficit and convince the public that now it is time to sell off their hard-earned and already paid-for assets at fire-sale prices to take care of a deficit that in fact they have created. To be fair, they have not created the total deficit. As I mentioned, in terms of the entire generation, we had our share of responsibility for that debt as well, and we have to accept that. We did not necessarily make our whole political careers out of talking about the deficit. You did, and I do not see the action there.

Madam Speaker, the bill contains some other interesting provisions to it. One of them has to do with the cabinet ministers' salaries if they do not make their targets, and I think they think that is going to be quite an incentive for the cabinet ministers to get in line and do their job behind this. Only time will tell how many of those cabinet ministers will fall victim to the restrictions that they put on.

Another provision has to do with having referendums for major tax increases. I guess our observation there, Madam Speaker, has to do with the fact that this particular bill will provide for referendum on tax increases, but there are other ways that this government has raised tax. This government has in the past and will continue to offload on other levels of government, on the civic levels of government. It passed through an increase in the property tax credits by removing a piece of it a couple of years ago.

Now these are not direct tax increases, but these are tax increases just in another name. They have expanded the PST into areas that it has not been covered. They have had revenue grabs in the past, and they will continue, which will be outside the purview of this legislation that they are talking about.

So you see that this thing was concocted by a favourite group of pollsters somewhere, who have guts and good polling results on this. In the backrooms they have come up with this concoction. They can see that it has produced some results in other jurisdictions, and they are going ahead with it. We will not be fooled by these attempts, and we will point out the negative aspects of this bill.

Madam Speaker, I wanted to deal with a couple of other examples of mismanagement and bungling in this government because this government has prided itself, and I believe columnists have made reference to the fact, that it has not lost any ministers yet and that it has been relatively scandal free. I will grant it that. They have been a pretty disciplined lot over there on that side of it. [interjection] My colleague says, boring, not exciting. They are not an exciting bunch, and that is fine.

* (1510)

There are many examples starting to come to light now of government mismanagement and government bungling. I will tell you that one such whole area is the Finance department and their collection or lack of collection of their accounts, that is, other taxes, exactly. Business people out on the street have some respect for and are quite, I should not say, terrified when it comes to Revenue Canada. When Revenue Canada comes a calling, they start writing cheques. The arthritis clears up pretty quick when Revenue Canada calls.

When a Manitoba tax department comes trying to collect its sales tax, the arthritis sets in again, and those cheques do not get written. There does not seem to be the same respect, I guess, for the provincial tax department as there is for Revenue Canada. They seem unable, they seem unwilling in some cases to collect these overdue accounts.

I notice that every year they come out with a list of long overdue accounts that they have been unable to collect. I have asked before and I wonder why they allow them to get to the state they are in. Why does an account get to be \$100,000 in arrears? I mean, one would think that if people are awake over there, if the Finance minister was awake, they would be on top of these things as soon as the company starts being delinquent in its filings. We see incident after incident where the numbers get very high before the department gets involved, and clearly what is happening is the businesses are paying other people, but they are not paying the Finance department.

Let me also tell you why this is such a serious issue or more serious than maybe just a normal nonpayment

of a bill would be. This money is essentially trust money. This is money that Manitobans have paid, have gone to the restaurant or the bar or wherever they have gone, country club, you name it, and they have paid 7 percent PST. This money belongs to the taxpayers of Manitoba. It is really trust money, and what these businesses are doing is misappropriating. They are taking this money and they are using it for some other purpose. They are using it for some other purpose, or it is outright theft—that is what it is. How else would you explain it?

There has to be some thought put in by the Finance department into a being a little tougher on these overdue accounts, and unless and until that is done, I think the lack of respect or the respect for the Finance department and their collection people is going to deteriorate. I think there is a morale problem there now; I think there has been for several years, but I think it is going to deteriorate. It is going to get worse, and, as people find out that other people are not paying their bills, I think that it is going to mushroom. So, clearly, this government has to get its house in order in that area.

You know, perhaps their Finance minister is finding that he is involved in too many things. I mean, he has been—the Premier (Mr. Filmon), whenever he has a hot potato in his hand, he is smart enough to juggle it over to one or the other people that are prepared to carry the bomb. Currently, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) has been carrying a bag full of bombs for the Premier. You know, the Premier wades into the Jets issue, and things get a little hot, so then he throws it over to the Minister of Finance. You know, if it does not go off, fine, the Minister of Finance will survive. If the bomb goes off, well, we can always replace the Minister of Finance. So the Premier is smart enough to do that.

The Minister of Finance, you know, he is running around trying to save the Jets. He is running around with the Lotteries revenue and trying to kind of keep that hidden from the public long enough so he can get it back into the mix just before the election. So, while the Minister of Finance is fiddling away doing his work, his department is not collecting the money. You know, the first myth of Tory fiscal management is that

it exists, because it does not. It does not when the chips are down and when you look at it.

Now, coupled with the mismanagement—[interjection] Well, in the government's press release that it sent out on this legislation on June 14, it talked about a deficit-free government. That is what the government is talking about, and we are talking about—[interjection] No, they are talking about a deficit-free government and paying off the debt over 30 years. So that is the road that we followed so far. We are talking 30 years. I do not think there will be too many people, other than the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) and the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), still here in 30 years to see this burning of the mortgage.

Now, Madam Speaker, I know you are very interested in hearing about the problem that this government has, and I admit this is a problem that all the provincial governments have. I think that part of it is being solved now with the federal government, but the province, when it gets into competition for businesses—[interjection] Yes, it cannot win. The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) says it cannot win. The member for Lakeside knows this very well too, that businesses know they can go cap in hand from one province to the other, play one province off against another, getting tax breaks and other incentives put in. When you do that, of course, you dilute your revenue base and create more problems down the line.

That problem is partially now solved with the federal government or the provinces getting together and agreeing that they would stop the practice of poaching, where they would go in and basically buy jobs from one area and move them to another.

Madam Speaker, it still does not solve the problem of the incentives. It still does not solve the problem with incentives. You still have the bidding wars going on between the provinces to attract these businesses. So all they have managed to resolve at this point in time is the poaching problem, but the other problem is still very much alive.

As long as we are in this battle for offering incentives to get businesses to locate here and we are

up competing against another jurisdiction that is prepared to give them even more freebies, then that compounds our problem.

So we are going to have a lot of pain, no matter which way. No matter which government is in power over the next decade, it is going to have to deal with a lot of fiscal pain, and the public are going to make their judgments as to how the governments are dealing with that. From our point of view, we will not break the trust that we have with poorer people, with working people in the province. So when we are back in power—and it will happen. When we are back in power, you know, the car dealers of the province will have to rely on their own resources to get their training. McDonalds and other companies will have to have to pay for their own training, and we will still take care of the people who need it most.

Now, Madam Speaker, when I made reference to the selling off of Crown assets and said that that is what this government is going to do over the long haul, it is not a prediction that they are going to start doing this in another year or two. The fact of the matter is, they have already got into it. In 1994, they sold McKenzie Seeds, which was a money-making company, and they ended up putting the proceeds of that sale into general revenues. So there you have it.

They have already gone through the exercise on one occasion. They have already gone through the exercise of taking a money-making taxpayer-paid-for-and-owned corporation, and they managed to sell it off and take the money and put it into general revenues. So why would we not think for a moment that this will not be an ongoing strategy of this government? This is only the beginning. [interjection]

* (1520)

Well, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) wants to talk about the fiscal stabilization fund. When the member for Inkster has his 40 minutes, I am sure he will be making his comments about that.

Now, Madam Speaker, there have been some arguments made that in the last number of years we

have not had the abilities to invest in different things, and there is a certain amount of truth to that because of the reluctance, I guess, of all governments to get involved in borrowing even more money, but the government, in the interest of the people, will have to, in the future, involve itself in borrowing money whether it likes it or not.

If the time comes when the province has to develop another hydro project, we will have to do it. We will have to pay the costs and we will have to develop the project. What this legislation is in effect telling us is that we may have to forgo some of those opportunities in the future because of the perceived debt problem right now.

Madam Speaker, I think that my time is just about up, and I thank you very much for your time.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): I move to make a few comments on this very important bill that is before the Legislature, and I move to make these comments at this time primarily because of what I know will be the constant refrain from members opposite, particularly the members of the opposition.

Madam Speaker, for disinformation to succeed, and honourable members opposite are practising disinformation, there has to be a kernel of truth to begin with, and they cleverly used that truth, and the speaker for Elmwood just demonstrated that again.

It is, of course, true that a Conservative administration here in this Legislature brought in large deficit budgets. It is, of course, true that the federal Conservative government under Prime Minister Mulroney brought in large deficit budgets, but it is absolutely untrue that Conservative administrations in this province or indeed on the federal scene are responsible for the unmanageable debt that brings about the necessity of this kind of legislation and that is simply true.

You see, the attack obviously is to begin with that bit of disinformation and then to take that one truism that is in their statement and then distort, indeed even falsify and perversely present to the people an entirely erroneous picture.

Let me just refresh honourable members' memory of the huge and unmanageable problem that Canada faces, one that my Liberal friends in Ottawa now find tremendously difficult to cope with and deal with. You hear that in the kind of expressions from that veteran former Liberal cabinet minister Warren Allmand, who was unceremoniously removed from his responsibilities in that caucus but who still honestly wants to espouse the Liberal beliefs.

In '68-69, Madam Speaker, the federal government's budget, current account, was in balance. That is not to say that Canada did not have a debt coming through the war years and the Depression and things like that, but it was a manageable debt. I have no problem, either in private life as a modest farm operator or that business person that deals with credit wisely and responsibly, as long as it is a manageable debt. That was the situation that Canada's finances were in when the Pearson administration left office and Canada was ushered into the era of Trudeaumania.

Since 1970, Canada's current account was in deficit and growing. It really got out of control when he required the support of the New Democrats with Mr. Lewis in those minority years, '73 to '74 or '77, and for a period of time right up until and including the short nine-month Clark administration, but up until 1984, before the federal government could bring its current account into balance.

So it is quite true that the Mulroney government, once Canada had rolled up a hundred-billion-billion dollars of debt, that the carrying charges and the interest rates on those carrying charges kept adding to that horrendous debt; when members opposite attack this kind of legislation and say, well, Conservative governments have brought in large deficit budgets, that is quite true.

But it was Brian Mulroney's government that brought Canada's finance into order in terms of current account. Now, that is not solving Paul Martin's problem today, because the interest clock is ticking. The things that the federal government is now having to do are not being done easily or with any great enthusiasm on their part, but they have to do it because that interest clock is ticking. But to suggest that the

Conservatives nationally got us into that financially difficult situation is simply disinformation.

Madam Speaker, here in Manitoba, let me remind all members, the story is not much different. It is still inconceivable to me that one Premier, one administration, one Howard Pawley, of which the present Leader and some members are a part of, managed to borrow more money in five and a half, six short years than all 18 previous administrations since the inception of this province.

Prior to the Pawley administration, our provincial debt sat at about \$3.5 billion. [interjection] Well, we are talking manageable debt. In a short six years, Mr. Pawley did not borrow just as much as all other 18 administrations—I remind honourable members that there were some high spenders among those 18 premiers, including the first premier I had the privilege to serve, the Honourable Duff Roblin; Ed Schreyer was a pretty good spender.

We went through two wars, and we went through the Depression, and we established consolidated school districts. We established two additional universities in this province. We introduced medicare. We introduced hospital care, and all of that was accomplished maintaining a manageable debt for the Province of Manitoba of roughly \$3 billion.

Six short years later, after Howard Pawley, that one administration, we end up with a debt of over \$7 billion or \$8 billion, more than twice as much as all other 18.

That, Madam Speaker, is what makes it quite true, it is quite true when the honourable members of the opposition say that Clayton Manness brought in a big deficit budget. Yes, because by the time we came into office in '88 that clock was ticking on those \$7 billion to \$8 billion of debt, and we wrestled and were criticized for it.

I was in the Department of Natural Resources. The Department of Highways had to give up big chunks of money. The Department of Agriculture, all the working departments, as I like to call them, we tried to safeguard those essential services in Family Services, in Health and Education, but even they are now under

some extreme difficulties in part because of the fiscal reality that is being placed on us by our federal partner.

Again, Madam Speaker, the major component of the debt that my colleague, my former colleague, Clayton Manness had to bring in to this House was the 550 millions to 570 millions of dollars of interest on that accumulated debt, of which Duff Roblin, Walter Weir, Ed Schreyer, D.L. Campbell and all the rest of them had precious little to do with. So let me put that on the record.

* (1530)

Why is it that the opposition opposes this bill to the extent that they oppose it? You have to ask yourself that question, because I will tell you quite frankly there is a great deal about Bill 2 that offends me as a free, elected legislator, a great deal. I would like to think that I am elected in this House to make the kind of decisions that my constituents ask me to make from time to time, but I will explain. I will explain.

We have reached a point in our fiscal management in this country and in this province that, No. 1, the simple statement has to be made, because I am also elected as a Conservative legislator. I simply believe that the level of a taxation, the level that big government takes from our hard-working citizens has reached an absolute plateau. You see, deep down although they do not believe it—and they know, they are legislators and the honourable member says and he may well be correct, and I suspect they will be government some day—but, Madam Speaker, they are also smart enough to realize that in the foreseeable future that we are living in, the fiscal climate will be such that it will be very, very difficult for them to change and alter the course and the principles contained in Bill 2.

I believe it with conviction that taking 50, 60 percent of hard-earned income from the people of Manitoba is too much and it stifles economic growth. It stifles the very things that you prattle about, job security, security for our social services. You will like the idea of having to be competitive in a globalized economy. Well, maybe I do not like it either. It is much more comfortable if you have a nice little backyard economy and not have to worry about what

the big Americans are doing or what the Europeans are doing or, Heaven forbid, what the Japanese and the Koreans are doing, but that is not the real world.

If we want to sell our potatoes, if we want to sell our manufacturing produce, if our youngsters want jobs in this province, then we have to be competitive in the global world. Unless you are prepared to accept those truths, then you are just out to lunch. You are just out to lunch, and that means that we cannot saddle our businesses and our economic entrepreneurs with the levels of taxation that are wildly out of step with our major trading partners.

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

The word "harmonization" just shudders the socialist. They do not like the idea of harmonizing, least of all harmonizing with our American friends. They just do not like that at all. Why should we harmonize anything with our American friends? You do not have to like them, you do not have to love them, but if you want to trade with them and if you want the jobs in Canada, then you better be competitive with them.

The one thing governments can do is to recognize, and that is essentially what we recognize in Bill 2. That is why I support Bill 2 strongly, because I believe totally that the levels of taxation, 13 percent, 14 percent, in some provinces 15 and 18 percent on sales taxes—the GST and the provincial sales taxes, they are amounting to 16, 17, 18 percent in some provinces, 14 percent in our province. That is a max level. I am not troubled by saying that I am not going to try and raise those levels.

The levels of income tax are at max levels in my opinion, not that maybe there would not be a consensus among Manitobans or Canadians who would say, well, we value certain services, certainly some of our social services, at a higher level than other populations do in other lands. We might be willing, we might even form some consensus, and of course the bill provides it, although, let us not fool ourselves. I suspect that getting a referendum passed that says we are going to increase the provincial sales tax by two points, or

something like that, is going to have pretty rough sledding—or the personal income tax.

Let us assume, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that that consensus was found. Let us assume, under the leadership of the member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), sometime in the year 2043, when his party forms government, that consensus is capable and the clauses of this bill are still in effect and he can convince Manitobans that we should raise taxes, I say to him, that still would be a mistake, because it is not good enough simply for us to say that we can, independently of our trading partners, raise levels of taxation that then make it next to impossible for our economic entrepreneurs and our businesses to flourish.

Remember, in a province like Manitoba, and certainly that will be true for the foreseeable future, so much of what we do and so much of the wealth that we generate, that supports us in those programs that are important to us, are totally dependent on our ability to export into all the markets of the world. Whether that is in agri-food products, whether that is in manufacturing products or whether it is some of our specialized endeavours in medicine and in technology, telecommunications technology and so forth, it is of no avail unless we are in a competitive position.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us understand, when members oppose—and it is picked up by those who fail or simply do not want to acknowledge the seriousness of our financial situation—take exception to this bill and oppose it, let us understand and let us be wary of the deliberate disinformation, that is, that the approach that the opposition takes to this bill is precisely that, disinformation. They take a kernel of truth and then distort it in a very perverse way.

To suggest that Clayton Manness was responsible for the \$550 million, \$560 million of carrying charges is simply not true. For the first time since many of you sat in the Legislature—I had the privilege before of sitting in a Legislature where the current spending of the government was in balance.

When Walter Weir left office in 1969, there was a modest \$55-million surplus in the current account. So let us understand that tactic for what it is, and let us

strengthen our own resolve to move forward with this legislation. It is the kind of legislation that is benchmark legislation, one that all those who will be given the opportunity to support it, as well as those who have the opportunity no doubt will take it to oppose it, it will be remembered as one of the more significant pieces of legislation in their lifetime in this Chamber. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wonder if the honourable member would answer a question pertaining to his last speech.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there leave for the honourable member for Brandon East to ask the honourable Minister of Agriculture a question? Leave? Leave has been granted.

Point of Order

Mr. Enns: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, it is not a question of leave. If there is time permitting on my speaking time, it is for me to decide whether I will answer the question, not for the House, with all due respect.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The honourable member for Brandon East, if the minister is willing.

* * *

Mr. Leonard Evans: I thank the minister very much for agreeing to answer a question. I always enjoy listening to him, even though I may not agree with most of what he says.

I would like to ask very simply, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether this minister believes that his government or indeed any government cannot pay down the provincial debt without this legislation. Do you have to have this legislation to pay down the provincial debt?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not believe that this legislation is absolutely necessary to pay down the provincial debt. It is a matter of political will. This legislation expresses the political will of this administration in a very clear and precise manner.

You know, I would like to think that all of us who from time to time are entrusted with the stewardship of serving on Executive Council accept the will of this Chamber very seriously, and of course they better, because it is law, and that is what this bill does. But to answer the member from Brandon's question, no, it certainly can be done by discipline and political will. The bill in itself is not necessary to achieve that objective.

* (1540)

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to rise and join the debate on Bill 2, the so-called balanced budget legislation. I have spent some time reading a variety of articles and publications that are dealing with the proposals in this legislation, and I have come to view it as one of the most dangerous pieces of legislation we have had to deal with, particularly in my tenure here in the Legislature.

I think that this piece of legislation is much like the Free Trade Agreement. It has the same agenda, and it is equally as dangerous for our province as both the free trade agreements have been for Canada and Manitoba. It sounds appealing at first to talk about balancing the budget. I think all of us would want to strive for that to make sure that we are not spending more than we are bringing in, that we are not spending more than we are bringing in to meet the needs of Manitobans. But I would suggest that this legislation is not balanced in its support. I would suggest too that this government is not balanced, but that is a different issue.

It sounds appealing, but when you look at the fine print, when you look at what this legislation is doing, it really is a straitjacket. I think it is really a political gimmick. I think that this government has latched on to this legislation as a gimmick that is something they can wave around both pre-election and now. But I think it is going to come back to haunt them. One of the things that is a gimmick about it is, I think, it will give this government something to blame when they want to continue slashing programs and funding and charging user fees and continuing to make our taxation system more and more regressive and unfair.

I think that is part of what the gimmickry of this is, as this government has done on so many more occasions when they blame school division boards, when they blame municipalities, when they blame agencies that they create who then have to cut services because they have cut the funding to those bodies. They are going to use this piece of legislation saying, it is not us, it is the law. We have to do all of these things.

I think that they will do all of these things because of this legislation. They will be forced to cut programs and funding, charge user fees and service fees, and create a more unfair tax system. Those things are built into this legislation.

But, like the Free Trade Agreement, this legislation takes away the ability of democratically elected governments to act on behalf of citizens, to respond to needs in the community and to plan investments for our province and to have a role in planning and directing the economy. Those of us on this side of the House believe that government should function in that way. We believe in an activist government that has a role in being involved in the economy.

Those on the other hand, I would suggest, want to have this legislation because they want to reduce government's role in our community, in society, in the economy. They want to reduce the size of government, and this is just the kind of tactic that they need to do this, legislation that forces them to do that very thing.

One of the other things that is so amazing about this legislation is where it is coming from, where the push for this kind of legislation is coming from. It is coming from the far right in the country. I would say the far right in the country is represented by the Manitoba Taxpayers Association. I have read their most recent publication, their issue of their newspaper that we all receive in our mailboxes. I can guess where they get the financing to put out this kind of propaganda.

When you read what they are saying about this bill—they give a lot of accolades to the bill—you have to really question the thinking. These are the same people who just had an article in the Free Press, a letter to the editor in the Free Press that said that poverty in

Manitoba is being caused in part by high taxes, rigid labour markets, whatever that means, and the public education system.

I want to see if this government agrees with that since these are the people who are supporting this and are pushing the government to bring in this kind of legislation, if they agree with their analysis on what is causing poverty in this province and in this country, that it is our public education system. This is the same government that has just increased funding for private schools by a hundred dollars per child at the same time they are cutting and freezing the funding for public schools. So it makes us think that they do agree with this analysis on why we have poverty. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) has just agreed that he thinks that taxation is contributing to poverty in this province, and that is the kind of analysis they are dealing with.

What I find really ironic, though, is that the same author for this letter to the editor was the same person who was an adviser to Mr. Grant Devine, the former Premier of Saskatchewan, who has to be one of the deficit and debt kings of this country. How can we believe this government? They do not and have not shown that they can walk the walk when they talk about balanced budgets. This government has no record on managing the finances of this province responsibly year after year—until now—of racking up some of the biggest deficit budgets.

In '92-93, Premier Filmon and his cabinet broke the record in Manitoba by ringing up a \$742-million deficit that year, and we are supposed to believe that they can responsibly manage the finance with this legislation. I do not think so. I do not think that is the case. The same time this is the government that has irresponsibly cut programs for education like the Access program which proved to save money in the long run because it got disadvantaged Manitobans off the welfare rolls through education programs and into the job market at an unprecedented success rate like no other education program for those populations ever before in this province. It was New Democrat governments that brought in those programs that proved to be so successful, and that show that education is an investment and can prove to be a very good cost-effective investment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in keeping with the idea that this government has not shown itself to be responsible fiscal managers, we just have to look at the Jets fiasco. Where was their concern about cost when they were willing to sign an operating agreement to finance the operating losses of the Winnipeg Jets? Where was their big concern for Manitobans' pocketbooks? What are we at now in terms of the millions of dollars? It is somewhere at least \$40 million that we have covered in tax dollars of a professional hockey team that pays its hockey players over \$2 million a year in some cases. Where was their big concern then?

It was very political decision making, and it is the same thing with this legislation, the same thing when during the effort to save face after the election on the Jets' broken promises that they were willing to dig us deeper into the Jets' hole by agreeing to spend \$5 million to buy the team. These are examples that show this government has not been responsible in dealing with the public finances of the Province of Manitoba.

Then, also, just before the election, when they tried to cook the books and bring in their pre-election budget, they had no balanced budget. We had agency after agency, including the Provincial Auditor, say that it was really a \$98-million deficit in that pre-election budget, and now we are expected to believe then that this legislation is going to be the panacea. Maybe this is the legislation that this government needs, that they will take a slash-and-burn approach, because they have not been able to do a responsible job without it. As the question just asked by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) has proven, it is a gimmick, because the government should not have to have legislation to balance the books in Manitoba, so we have to ask ourselves why is this government doing this? It is a political gimmick.

* (1550)

It is a political gimmick just like it was a gimmick when they inherited in '88-89 the surplus of \$58 million. Rather than applying that money to the debt, they created the Fiscal Stabilization Fund, and they put the money in the Fiscal Stabilization Fund so that they could again save face and not have to show that indeed the NDP had gone a long way, it had gone through that

curve in the economy, had weathered the recession and now was able to bring in a surplus budget.

With this legislation the government is giving up on being able to balance its revenue with the needs of the community. We are no longer going to have the government able to invest into the province of Manitoba. One of the most dangerous things about the legislation is the way that it links operating and capital borrowing and investment, and this is one of the things that is the most disconcerting.

I want to quote from Premier Duff Roblin, celebrating the—

An Honourable Member: Some of the Premiers become popular about 40 years after.

Ms. Cerilli: Yes, it is amazing—these red Tories. He said he realized that if Manitoba was going to grow, it would have to borrow. Roblin once asked: Who can say what the monetary cost is of not building a road, a school or a hospital? That is the quote, and, of course, the legacy of Mr. Roblin around Winnipeg is the floodway, or some refer to it as Duff's ditch.

This is the kind of long-term vision and investment we have had in this province from a provincial government interested in co-operating with the City of Winnipeg and municipalities to create something that is going to be in the long run an advantage.

The same kind of vision and approach is needed now when we want to address the problem of the combined sewer system for parts of Winnipeg. We need the same kind of vision, but with this legislation we would not be able to borrow the money to have the long-term investment so we are no longer polluting the Red River by dumping raw sewage in there when we have heavy rains and flooding in the city of Winnipeg.

Similarly, we cannot have the borrowing to deal with the problems with the aqueduct in the city of Winnipeg, which is in dire need of repair, and we will not have the long-term planning to provide that kind of investment into the things that benefit all of our community. I would say that is one of the things that the government has a role in, to provide that kind of

infrastructure that is going to meet the needs of the public in the province.

Now, all of this kind of borrowing will have to be done within a balanced-budget year, so this legislation requires not a cyclical allowance for fluctuations in the economy but the requirement that the budget will have to be balanced each year.

None of us in our families, unless you are independently wealthy, functions this way. Businesses that start do not function this way. How many of us have not had to borrow to buy a house or buy a car or go to university? Most of us, certainly most of the people that I represent in the constituency of Radisson, are of the means that we have to incur a debt to have all of those things. I do not think it is an option for any of us to live on the street while we are saving money to pay cash for a home. That does not make any sense, just like it does not even make financial sense to rent for the period of time to save enough money to pay cash for a home. We take out a mortgage. It actually is better financially to take out a mortgage in our economy. It does not make sense to continue to rent until you can have the full amount to pay for a home.

So we have to realize that this government is not dealing in reality when they are trying to say that we should be balancing, especially on the capital investment side of the province, but it is a gimmick, as I have said, by governments that really do not believe in governments in the first place. It is another justification for them to privatize public services, just like they did with McKenzie Seeds.

Now, they have taken criticism from the Provincial Auditor, the Dominion Bond Rating agency, the Canada West Foundation, for this approach which again was a pre-election budget gimmick to sell off McKenzie Seeds—and I think they did it with a couple of other Crown corporations, the Manitoba Development Corporation—and to keep that money aside and then count the revenue a year or so later in the pre-election budget. Now we can I think be sure that this government has the same plans for, first on their list, the Manitoba Telephone System, the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, Manitoba Hydro.

We have had the mayor of the City of Winnipeg recommend this for Winnipeg Hydro. I think she is of the same political ilk as the members opposite, and they do not seem to understand that our Crown corporations are of value to the entire community. We own that. We own them, and they are a tremendous investment, and over the long term if those are privatized we will lose billions of dollars. These assets are worth far more to the community functioning and operating than they ever would be as a budget line one year in a balanced budget for the province of Manitoba. It is exactly what we see happening with this privatization of CN. We are not going to get nearly what that is worth to our community, especially since they are having us pay off some of that debt before they even privatize it.

One of the most deceptive gimmicks of this bill, though, is in the provision for referendum requirements. It sounds good for people to have a vote on their major tax increases, but the loopholes in this referendum provision are quite large. It would allow the continued hidden or obfuscated tax increases that this government has been undertaking. For example, in 1993 when they increased the property tax credit, the tax grab that they took where it meant a \$75 reduction for Manitobans, when they broadened the scope of the provincial sales tax to items that some people think should not have a sales tax on them—sales tax has been one of the most regressive forms of taxation—and also when they increased the fuel tax, all of these things broadening the scope of the provincial sales tax—continuing to reduce property tax credits for families—and these things, all of them, are exempt from having a referendum.

In 1993, the combination of all of these tax increases by the provincial Conservative government amounted to about \$400 for a family of four in Manitoba. So what this government is doing is stacking the debt against having more fair taxation in our province, because the other thing that they are allowing with this provision in the legislation is that as long as the total revenue in the tax system of Manitoba does not increase they can continue to change our taxes and from collecting taxation for businesses and corporations and passing it off onto citizens and families, which is what I would say is causing or contributing to some of the problems we are having

where individual families have taken more than their fair share of the tax burden, and we have had governments, Conservative and Liberal governments, give more and more tax breaks to wealthy corporations and individuals.

* (1600)

So that kind of tax policy is to some extent made law by this bill because you do not have to have a referendum. People are not allowed to vote when you are going to increase their taxes that way. I find that quite disturbing, and it is going to be a big problem for this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 4 p.m., as previously agreed it is now time for private members' hour. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) will have 20 minutes. As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett).

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 5—Midwifery Implementation Council

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for River Heights (Mr. Radcliffe)

WHEREAS Manitoba was amongst the first provinces to recognize midwifery as a self-regulated autonomous profession; and

WHEREAS a Midwifery Implementation Council will be appointed to serve as a temporary governing body; and

WHEREAS the council will work on implementing recommendations of the Working Group Report on Midwifery; and

WHEREAS midwifery care for pregnant women will enhance the range of birthing services available in Manitoba.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba support the government and the Minister of Health for providing women with new childbirth alternatives and services.

Motion presented.

Mr. McAlpine: Let me preface my remarks by saying that midwives are internationally acknowledged as experts in normal pregnancy in childbirth. Until recently, Canada was the only industrialized nation in which maternity services do not include midwifery care. Manitoba is the fourth province to announce that it will regulate midwifery. Ontario regulated midwifery in January 1994; British Columbia and Alberta have announced their intention to regulate midwifery.

The history in Manitoba, the Manitoba Working Group on Midwifery undertook an extensive review of childbirths, literature of provincial and national and international reports on midwifery. The Manitoba Working Group report included 44 recommendations. The report was released by the Minister of Health on May 5, 1994.

I look on this as a real victory for the future mothers of Manitoba. The minister announced that midwifery would be an insured service for Manitoba women and that it would be an autonomous profession with its own legislation and governing body.

One of the most important elements of this resolution is the phrase, and I quote, providing women with new childbirth alternatives and services. As a government, we have taken great strides in establishing and enhancing community-based health care services. This move away from the institutionalized health care system has many benefits. Two of those benefits are that it helps address the burden of increasing costs in the institutional system and it also moves services closer to home.

With midwifery, there is another important element. The addition of midwifery care for pregnant women gives them an alternative to the more institutionalized childbirth process. Internationally, midwives are recognized and acknowledged as experts in normal

pregnancy and childbirth, that is to say, without major medical complications to the mother or to the child.

Canada is also the last of the industrialized nations to include midwifery in maternity services. That reflects the change in thinking and a realization of what most of the world has known for centuries. Midwives can serve a valuable role in the childbirth process.

The Minister of Health established the Midwifery Implementation Council in 1994, as I mentioned, when the government announced that midwifery would become an insured service in Manitoba. That council was faced with the task of making recommendations to government to assist in finding the best ways to implement midwifery. This committee has included experts from the field, other health care professionals and members of the public to develop an excellent model on midwifery in Manitoba.

I think it is important for us to understand the philosophy of this committee, and I will use their own words. I quote: Midwifery care is based on the respect for pregnancy as a state of health and childbirth as a normal physiological process. The midwife provides holistic, woman-centred care in all stages of pregnancy and childbirth. Above all else, midwifery care emphasizes informed decision making as a shared responsibility between the pregnant woman and her caregivers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the introduction of regulated midwifery will add to the range of the birthing services available to childbearing women. That is a tremendous philosophy and a clear statement of the vision behind the establishment of midwifery in Manitoba. I know that many women feel they are not in control of their own pregnancy. Many expectant mothers find the hospital system daunting and impersonal. Some doctors effectively leave the woman out of the decision-making process.

Clearly, in the mainstream medical community, the use of many procedures once deemed necessary has now been abandoned or significantly scaled down. We can look at reduction in the length of a woman's stay in hospital after giving birth as an example.

In other cases, advanced technology may be used for tests or procedures that are not necessarily medical but are used because of the discretion of the doctor. Many hospitals are now embracing a more natural experience in the childbirth process. The Victoria Hospital, as an example, and in my own constituency of Sturgeon Creek, the Grace Hospital are excellent examples of the advance of the birthing room concept.

The woman is made comfortable in a setting that is not unlike a bedroom in your own home except for the physicians, nurses and medical technology at your fingertips. Even with the positive changes in the mainstream medical system, some women feel that the doctor is still the master and not the servant.

We must always remember that what we are talking about is a natural process. What could be more natural than the birth of a child? It is a matter of choice, and if a woman feels more comfortable with a midwife, she should be able to make that choice.

* (1610)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my only experience as an individual bearing witness to a birth was my own, and as a member of a family of 16, the youngest of 16 children, I did not have the opportunity of seeing other childbirths with my own children or in my own family. But I was born in a farmhouse in Saskatchewan without the aid of a medical doctor, with just older sisters to assist in the birth. That was some many years ago, and I think that we have gotten away from that practice, and I think that it is time that we revisited that. So I am encouraged by what we see in this legislation.

Researcher, writer and doctor Dr. Dean Black, wrote that in terms of childbirth, many artificial practices are used when they are not necessarily needed. He writes, quote: More artificial practices have been introduced that have changed labour from a physiological event into a very complicated medical procedure in which all kinds of drugs and maneuvers are done.

I would also like to point out that the research on obstetrics has often been inconclusive. A 1989 report on obstetrics intervention in the United States by the

comptroller general concluded that research literature was inconclusive in determining the benefits versus the risks of certain obstetric practices used during labour and delivery. It also said that there was no way to resolve the question of how often or whether to use the practices effectively, preventively or routinely.

I would like to share some of the thoughts of Dr. Robert S. Mendelsohn, a noted writer in the medical field. Dr. Mendelsohn—and these are his words; they are not mine—says it is important to take the responsibility for your own health and the health of your family; that involves making a commitment to the family as a unit of health.

My approach to this topic is not an attack on the medical doctors in their profession. The medical doctors in the birthing rooms, it is not an attack on them. These people who are attending these births in birthing rooms are loving and caring individuals. It is the approach and the practice that I take exception to and question in many cases.

Dr. Mendelsohn also quotes, and I quote from some of his—and these again are his words: My criticism is directed toward the institution of medicine, he says, the religion of medicine. I go on to quote that the maternal death rate from cesarean sections is still six times that of vaginal deliveries.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, he goes on to say that meanwhile prolonged labour has been redefined. The duration of labour taken as an indication of need for a cesarean section has dropped progressively from 72 hours, which was generally accepted when I began my medical practice.

Dr. Mendelsohn is not a young man. He died a few short years ago as an elderly gentleman. He says that from the 72 hours that was the custom when he started, that was generally accepted when he began his medical practice, it dropped to 48 hours, then 24 hours, 12 hours, and now, if the doctor is eager enough, even two hours will do.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, he goes on to say that we as a society must put the responsibility back in the hands of

the people—the women and the people who are making the decisions and involve them in this decision process.

He goes on to say that obstetricians cite the possibility that the perineum may tear as their excuse to perform an episiotomy. This operation is the slashing of the perineum and to widen the opening of the vagina so that it will be easier for the baby to emerge. The operation has become so routine that it is performed on about 85 percent of the first-time mothers today. Its value must be questioned, however, when you observe that it is rarely performed in countries where natural birth is favoured. In Holland, as an example, the operation is performed on less than 8 percent of mothers, and in England it is used on only about one out of seven. American doctors use a litany of explanations to rationalize doing the episiotomy. He goes on to explain the number of reasons and the explanations as to why they do.

This resolution, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think warrants serious consideration in terms of the legislation that the Minister of Health is hoping to bring forward, but in taking Dr. Mendelsohn's remarks to the fullest, taking on the responsibility for your own health and the health of your family constitutes a political act as long as modern medicine uses political power to execute its attack on the individuals and the family's right to self-determined health.

Our very active commitment to the family as the unit of health and to the community as the collection of families is political because it resists the notion that the individual is the unit of health as well as of society. Our new medicine cuts across all political and ideological lines and touches the core of every person's relationship with life. How long and how well will I live? The new medicine too takes on some of the trappings of a religion.

In closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would reference the fact that the words that I have quoted are not the words of this member but the words of medical doctor Dr. Robert Mendelsohn.

In closing I would just quote: Taking on the responsibility of your own health and the health of your

family constitutes a political act as long as modern medicine uses political power to execute its attack.

This resolution supports those who wish to experience natural childbirth, but at the same time with a practice that is self-regulated and suited to the needs of childbearing women.

Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne): Mr. Deputy Speaker, before addressing the resolution I would like to thank the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek for both the political education and the anatomy lesson. Secondly, I would like to express my pleasure at finding that the women of Manitoba actually have a champion in the upper benches of the Tory Party. We had not expected so. We are grateful, and I acknowledge that.

As the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek alluded to the report on midwifery which was released on May 5, 1994, the long-awaited report on midwifery, I might add, and before returning to talk both about that report as it connects to the resolution, I would like to say that I, along with my caucus members, certainly support choices for pregnant women during pregnancy, during delivery and certainly during postnatal care.

We know that the women of Manitoba need choices. They need to be in a position to determine whether they want to deliver their children in hospital, at home. They want to be in a position to determine whether they want an uninterfered labour or whether they want a highly technological birth. They need to be in a position to determine whether they wish to have their partners present with them during the labour and delivery, whether they wish to have their partners assisting with the labour and the birthing processes.

(Mr. Peter Dyck, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

I know and I believe the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek made reference to the special birthing rooms that are available in some of our hospitals, and the members of my caucus certainly support the need for those birthing rooms. We know that they give women choices that women did not have 20 years ago.

* (1620)

The members of my caucus, along with myself, also think that it is important in an age of high tech to move towards something more natural, something more basic, something which is more cognizant of the needs of women and their babies. We think that birth needs to be a more humane process than it has been in the recent past. We want to return to the kinds of birthing practices that our mothers in some cases and our grandmothers in others were able to have. We believe that midwifery is an important advancement, and we believe it is a choice that the women in Manitoba should definitely have.

Now I want to make the point that every woman in Manitoba should have the right to be assured that at the birth of her child she can have the care provider of her choice. For some women birthing is an extremely stressful event, and it is important to know that women can have the care provider who has been with her during the course of her pregnancy.

Women also need to know that the delivery services will be insured, that the delivery services will be paid for by Manitoba Health. Health insurance in this instance, I think, is extremely important, but I make the point. One of the honourable members opposite mentioned the father. I heartily endorse the presence of fathers in delivery rooms. I think that fathers can be great advantages, especially to delivering women—[interjection] Yes, when they come to.

I want to make the point that those of us who have been denied birthing choices in the past really understand the importance of midwifery and really understand the importance of having choice in childbirth.

Now I want to turn to the specific resolution before us, and in doing so I want to begin with the final clause which, and here I presume that the new childbirth alternatives and services are referring to the services of midwives.

I want to begin with this clause because this clause makes it sound as if there are droves of midwives available in Manitoba providing services to pregnant women. But this is simply not the case. I spent some time this morning speaking with a member of the

Midwifery Implementation Council, and she was very forthcoming and gave me some clear information. She told me that they at the Midwifery Implementation Council have no real idea of how many midwives are practising in the province of Manitoba.

Indeed, she said they have no idea of where some of these midwives are practising. Now, I know there are some midwives practising the art of midwifery in the Health Sciences Centre. The estimate from the Midwifery Implementation Council is that there are probably something like 30 midwives practising.

One of the reasons why the council does not know how many midwives are practising is simply because midwifery remains technically illegal. Technically speaking, it is illegal to practice midwifery in the province of Manitoba. Indeed midwives can still be charged with, and here I quote: practising medicine without a licence.

One of the other implications of this is that women are frightened to disclose whether or not they are practising midwifery, fearing that they may possibly be charged. This would be the case not only with women who are midwives but also with mothers whose children are delivered by midwives.

I understand that this is particularly an issue in aboriginal communities, more remote communities, where women are delivered and no one is quite sure who did the delivery or how it came about. This is not in all instances, but there is a fear on the part of midwives to disclose their profession.

It seems to me, I might add, ironic in view of the minister's report which recognized or presumed to recognize midwifery as a self-regulated autonomous profession, that midwifery outside hospitals in Manitoba is illegal.

The point that I want to make here is that I cannot really support the resolution. As far as I am concerned, the resolution is illogical. It does not reflect the reality of current services.

Here let me turn to the resolution itself and begin with the second WHEREAS clause, that is with the

Midwifery Implementation Council as a temporary governing body.

It may be a temporary governing body, though it was news to the members of the group to which I spoke. They did not know that they were a temporary governing body. They feel that they need some very clear indications from the government regarding the kind of support that they as an implementation committee can expect.

For example, despite the 1994 report and despite the resolution before the House today, the women from the Implementation Council tell me that there is no real action plan. It seems to me then that what we have in the resolution, what we had in the minister's report, was the word, but indeed we had no flesh or no spirit to play with the metaphor we heard in the House yesterday.

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

Furthermore, members of this committee fear that nothing will ever happen. They are not at all convinced that the minister's report will indeed ever be implemented. They believe that what the Midwifery Implementation committee requires is an action plan. They believe that the action plan should include legislation and they believe that perhaps the government should start by defining and legalizing midwifery.

In times of restraint, the members of the Midwifery Implementation committee also wonder how accessibility will be ensured. Again, they are very anxious, as I am, that women in remote communities, whether these be rural communities or northern communities, have the same access to midwives as women in urban communities.

Furthermore, the council wants guarantees of insured services and perhaps most important, they insist that preparations and programs for the training and licensing of midwives are absolutely essential.

Now to visit the first WHEREAS clause in the resolution, and I think that the member for Sturgeon

Creek (Mr. McAlpine) has already made clear that Manitoba was the fourth province to recognize midwifery as a self-regulated autonomous profession.

The problem with the second WHEREAS clause is that there is no evidence in Manitoba as to what constitutes a midwife. For example, does Manitoba intend to follow the example of Ontario, Alberta and B.C. and opt for direct entry into midwifery, or does Manitoba intend to follow the nurse midwifery model which links midwifery with nursing and restricts midwifery to those who already have a background in nursing? Which one?

This is an important and vital decision because it will determine whether midwifery will be a multientry program and therefore open to a variety of persons or whether there will be restrictions put in place which will mean the dominance of a medical model in the world of midwifery. My understanding is that the implementation council does not favour the medical model.

The questions that I have raised here remain unanswered. The state of midwifery in Manitoba is uncertain. The future of midwifery in Manitoba is uncertain. Clearly some actions need to be taken; some decisions need to be made.

In conclusion, I want to say that while nearly all women in Manitoba, I am sure, would welcome fully trained, licensed and practising midwives, the motion as it stands is actually premature. It addresses circumstances, in fact, a whole raft of circumstances, which are simply not yet with us. Consequently, I cannot support the resolution. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

* (1630)

Mr. Mike Radcliffe (River Heights): Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is my pleasure this afternoon to rise and speak in support of this resolution.

I would point out to the honourable member for Osborne (Ms. McGifford) that if she had had the opportunity to read a news release that was issued from this government on December 16, 1994, it set out very

specifically that there was a 12-member midwifery implementation council to be chaired by a prominent member of our medical community which would serve until a permanent regulatory body was established.

Further, if the honourable member had done her due diligence and read the report in question to which she made reference, it is very specific in that report that this is in fact a temporary regulatory body to implement the parameters of this topic. So I think in fact what one should do is consider the appropriate merits of this program that this government is introducing.

I would suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in fact what has happened here is that this Conservative government has been listening to the people of Manitoba. This government has been listening to the Council on the Status of Women who have been crying out that they need alternatives for one of the fundamental functions and developments of the human race.

This government has been listening to its constituents and has leapt into the breach, so to speak, in this topic and providing an alternative that will answer many of the fundamental needs of our society.

One of the problems that I am sure many women face who live in our more remote areas of the country is that they do not have ready access to obstetrical services. I am told that women in the North, women in remote areas of our province, when they are approaching their confinement, in fact, that expression takes on a literal meaning and that they are flown out of their communities and they are sent to a medical centre where individuals who are foreign to them are administering care. They are people who are not in harmony with their culture. They are not often people who perhaps can even communicate, and these caregivers, while they are well meaning, often add to the trauma of the whole birth process.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can give some personal reflections on this topic, that, in fact, when my two sons were born, I had the opportunity and the distinct honour and pleasure to attend in the birthing room. My wife and I both respected and welcomed this alternative service, and I would hope that I was able to provide

some solace to my wife. I certainly felt an immediate bonding when both my sons were born. I was there at the moment of conception, and I pride myself that I was there at the moment of delivery. [interjection] I am told on good report. [interjection] There you go.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I feel that for the continuity of care it is essential to the whole process that people who are in harmony with the birthing mother be allowed to attend, and it is proposed with the midwifery process that the midwife would attend upon the expectant mother long before the delivery, that there would be the opportunity to give the expectant mother advice on nutrition, advice on deportment and behaviour through the pregnancy, which in our days, as we know, is essential to the birth of a happy and a healthy population. Our papers are filled with unfortunate statistics of fetal alcohol syndrome, of neglected babies, of malnutrition, and this is an opportunity that we have as responsible lawgivers to afford an opportunity to our population that they receive the essential information in order to birth happy, healthy people.

One of the unfortunate shortcomings of our current obstetric service is that often young people, adolescent teenagers who find themselves pregnant, do not often consult with obstetrical services until well on into the gestation period. This could be for many different reasons. They might be fearful of the opprobrium that might be levelled against them from a judgmental society. It is suggested and hoped with the midwife program that in fact there would be a bridging.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is proposed with this resolution and implicit in this resolution that this temporary council will develop the enabling legislation and the amendments to the related provincial acts to implement this program, this program which is going to be so vital to our future population and to birthing mothers. The legislation in question would affect and impact The Medical Act, The Pharmaceutical Act, The Hospitals Act, The Health Services Insurance Act, The Blood Test Act and The Narcotic Control Act. It is envisaged that this program will be something that will be integrated with our present services.

It is envisioned that the midwife will have admission privileges to the hospitals. She will be able

to, or he for that matter—I am sure that we in these gender-sensitive days would entertain the aspect even of male midwives—but, nonetheless, the midwife would be able to prescribe narcotics if they are appropriate for the case in question.

As my esteemed associate the member for Osborne (Ms. McGifford) indicated and queried, she is concerned about whether there will be appropriate education, whether there will be appropriate regulation and licensing for this profession. In fact, that is implicit in the study and the work that is before this committee and that is implicit in the resolution that has been advanced to this Chamber today and the direction and mandate which has been issued from the Department of Health.

This midwife program will develop the mandate and the limits for the society, the profession. They will develop the standards for this profession, the guidelines for the training programs. The committee will invite proposals from all the stakeholders in the community in order to gain a wide view of the topic, to gain a sensitive view of the topic so that in fact this is implementing the needs. This is going to be a program that is needs driven and consumer driven. This is sensitive to the individuals who are so vitally involved in this process, namely our mothers.

* (1640)

It also conforms with another initiative which has been launched by our Department of Health in the recent past, which is, rather than resorting to large, impersonal institutions, our Department of Health is going to be viewing our whole health-giving process from that actual perspective, that this is in fact a healthy step in our development, this is a normal step in our development. These women are not sick, and so therefore they ought not to be committed to institutions with technological intervention. This is a natural and holistic development in our growth, and therefore the Department of Health in these days of escalating costs, exploding costs, have researched alternatives for delivering health and health care to our communities.

One of the initiatives that has been proposed by this government in its wisdom is that there should be as

much care given in the home and in the natural environment of the population as possible. Number one, that is more effective and more far-reaching; No. 2, it is certainly cost-effective. So this is harmonious with the present growth of our health care system, and philosophically it is far more harmonious to what should be a jubilant expression of our development.

There will be an extensive consultative process to ensure that there will be representation from all the individuals, all the interest groups, who would be concerned about this activity. One of the most important things of course is that the midwifery program will be integrated into our health care system so that in fact if there is an abnormal or a high-risk pregnancy develop that there will be an opportunity for the midwife to refer the client to an obstetrician for further care. This is not something that is stand alone but is rather something that is an additional choice, an additional aid to our mothers in our community.

Midwifery will be a collaborative process as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and when I say "collaborative," it will be collaborative with the consumer, with the consumer's family. The mother herself will have the opportunity to interact with the caregiver, and this makes for a far more supportive environment for the delivery of the child. It reassures the individual woman involved that this is not a process that is being imposed upon her, but rather she is participating in it. She is empowered and she is in control of many of the processes that are enveloping her life.

This is so essential because I can speak not from personal experience but from vicarious observation that this is an experience in a woman's life where the forces of nature do take over and control her life. So therefore we as government ought to make sure that there is as much control invested in the woman as possible in order to ensure that this be a positive experience.

Therefore, I would wish to re-emphasize that the midwifery program is a system of care which ensures that the decision making will be a shared responsibility, that the pregnant woman will be involved with her caregiver, that she will drive the system as far as emotionally, intellectually, physically possible, and it

is something that I would commend to this honourable Chamber that should be supported and heartily endorsed. [interjection] I am sorry, conception? Well, you must conceive that this is in fact a positive policy that our government is advancing, and I thank you very much for the opportunity of being able to address a few humble remarks to this topic.

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I too am interested in speaking on this legislation, interested in hearing some of the comments made from the mover of the legislation, the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine). I appreciate hearing some of the comments that he made.

You certainly do not have to convince those of us on this side of the House to support midwifery. In our platform from the last election, as part of our commitments in neighbourhood health organizations, the development of community-based health care, we had a commitment to include midwifery as part of that kind of a delivery system for health care. I think also we could talk about how we have a belief that women's health issues such as this are a fundamental part in women's search for equality in our society.

I have to say that although the members across were trying to, it seems, like convince us to support midwifery when what they have to do is convince us that the government is actually taking action on the report by the working group and midwifery and that the implementation committee is actually doing what it set up to do. I am afraid they have not convinced me of that. The comments on the other side of the House did not convince me that the government has any time lines set in place.

I have the recommendations from the working group in front of me and they are very specific. They want to see programs developed to deal with the education of midwives. I have not heard anything from the government that they have put either the structures in place to develop curriculum, to develop a system in health education institutions to do that.

I have not heard any deadlines for when we can expect that kind of training to be provided. I have not heard them comment on progress on regulations or

legislation that would be required and for ensuring that midwifery is truly going to become an option.

I have also learned some interesting things from listening to the discussion here today because it seems from the news release that was issued by this government May 5, '94, where the Minister of Health said that he was now going to be ensuring that midwifery would be an insured service in Manitoba which I think those of us on this side of the House we would certainly support that. It seems that there is some confusion that it is still illegal to perform this. So do we have some kind of contradiction here where we have an insured health service that is currently illegal and is in fact available for women to have this kind of support for birthing covered under medicare?

It is interesting, when I was reading the terms of reference or the parameters that were given to the working group, the last one is that they would recommend, if possible, a method of implementation which does not result in ongoing additional costs in the health care system. I would hazard to say that if we had functioning operating midwives, particularly for women who would choose not to have their children born in a hospital, it would save money.

I know of women who want to make that choice. I have read some of the comments from doctors and health care practitioners that they would oppose that, that there is concern. I think there is concern among the general public, too, for women having the option of birthing at home.

I think, if that is going to be the case, that we are providing choice, it could actually be a savings in that. What may be costly is the education part of the training for midwives. That may be an additional expense, but I think that if we are going to provide a full range of options it would not be an expense.

So I was saying that while there may be some good intentions with this resolution that the member for Sturgeon Creek has brought forward, I am not convinced that we can support the resolution because I have not seen any evidence that there has been real progress, as the resolution says, on providing women with new childbirth alternatives and services.

I have some statistics here that suggest that under some international formula midwives should not have a caseload of more than 60 births a year. If that is the case, then Manitoba would need 241 midwives. I can ascertain from what the member for Osborne (Ms. McGifford) has said that some people may not even—there may not even be a clear understanding of how many there currently are practising and where they are.

* (1650)

So it seems like there are still a lot of questions unanswered in this area, and perhaps this could be a call on the government that they have to give more attention. We have heard often that this government has created some hundred-odd number of committees working through the Department of Health, and we often are waiting for them to issue reports. Often when they do issue reports they are not acted upon expeditiously.

So I am wondering if that is what has happened with this here. The ministers of Health that we have had, both Mr. Orchard and Mr. McCrae, have wanted to make it appear that they are dealing with this issue, which has been a concern in the health community, in the women's community and the general public perhaps as well, but they have not actually gone forward and acted on recommendations and the action plan that is in place.

I am wondering if the cabinet actually has approved the recommendations that were put forward from the working group on midwifery. If that is what the implementation committee is taking forward, what is the government's policy on some of the specifics dealing with this issue? Have they accepted everything that is in the report here?

I am concerned that some of the recommendations that focus on what I would call the bureaucracy of creating midwifery as a true option for women are going to affect the very reason that women would choose this as an option for giving birth. They would often, I think, choose this because they do not want to be caught up in a very impersonal, bureaucratic, sterile kind of approach to childbirth, and they want

something that is more human and more personal involving the friends and family that they are close to.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

If the system that is being proposed here is going to affect that, is going to overbureaucratize midwifery, when I read some of the approaches that are being suggested, that is a concern that I have, and I am wondering how the government is going to deal with that to ensure that this option does not just become subsumed in the very bureaucratic and medicalized model that we have practised in health care in this province.

Women that choose midwifery are trying to get away from that. They understand that health care has been overmedicalized, and they do not see childbirth as a medical emergency. They want to have it be an important part of their life that is very much something to be shared with their family, and, as I said, I am concerned that could be lost.

I think we have to realize that we do have to have some balance, that there is some responsibility in a health care system to protect the public and to protect newly born children, but at the same time I do not want to see us lose the very reason that people chose midwifery by creating an overly bureaucratic, a very much more medicalized approach in midwifery.

I guess one of the other issues that we have to deal with is that there seems to be more of a willingness to provide midwifery as an option for rural and remote areas. It is interesting when I read this because there seems to be the perception that there is a difference between native women in urban centres as opposed to remote and rural centres or northern centres.

Maybe there is now, but I think we are missing the point if we try to think that this is being done because there is a cultural difference and not simply because there is a difference in the standard and quality and accessibility of health services in the North. We know that in the North there is much less opportunity for people to have access to health services no matter what they are, and midwifery and child birth would be one of those.

I think we are deluding ourselves if we think that we are doing this for reasons other than the fact that it is going to be more difficult financially and otherwise to provide services in the North. So it seems like people are saying, well, we will allow northerners and people in remote communities to have access and have this option and those women in Winnipeg will not.

Before our culture was here, the white culture was here, aboriginal people were having children without medical assistance for thousands of years. It would be interesting, I think, for us to learn from those practices. I think aboriginal people in the North have been horribly disserved by the current system of forcing pregnant women to leave their communities and leave their families and have to spend extended periods of time in a hospital, a very impersonal, sterile atmosphere.

It is interesting because I caught a bit of a program on television recently that showed the procedure and circumstances for giving birth in hospitals in eastern Europe. It was quite horrifying the system that is used there, where the mother is separated from her child, and the child was bound and wrapped and put in a row with numerous other children.

It is weeks before the mother and child are brought together again, and then the child is very elaborately wrapped and presented to the father and the mother in a way that suggests this was a gift that the hospital is giving to the family rather than the fact that this was a gift that the hospital is giving to the family rather than the fact that this was the child that the parents had just created.

I guess in conclusion I just want to raise some of the questions that need to be answered by this government. The first one is, why is it taking so long for action to be taken on this? It was first initiated in 1991. The report from the working group was made in February '93. They made a big deal of the policy direction and the decision to proceed, but it seems since then we have not heard much other than this resolution here today.

Presently, midwifery really is not a viable option for women in Manitoba, and that is why we are having problems supporting the resolution even though, as

myself and the member for Osborne (Ms. McGifford) have said, we certainly do support increased services in midwifery.

The other questions that are outstanding is, who will be the midwives? Registered nurses or lay people? How are we going to deal with those that are already practising especially if they are women from other cultures like native aboriginal people in the North, and how are these people—

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

* (1700)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I can speak to this particular resolution.

Midwifery is in fact something that the Liberal Party has been very supportive of. In fact I can recall, I believe it was in the 1990 provincial election, when the then-leader Sharon Carstairs suggested that what we needed to do is move in a much faster fashion towards legalizing midwifery.

Here we have a provincial government that has now been in power for in excess of seven years and from our perspective has not even come close or far enough on this particular issue.

You know, when we talk about—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

When this matter is again before the House the honourable member for Inkster will have 14 minutes remaining.

As previously agreed, we will now proceed to do the second resolution in private member's hour.

Res. 6—Infrastructure

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), that

WHEREAS the Canada Infrastructure Works Program represents an outstanding example of what federal, provincial and municipal co-operation can achieve; and

WHEREAS Manitoba was one of the first provinces to sign an Infrastructure Works Agreement with the federal government, and the Manitoba-federal agreement has served as a model and framework for other communities and provinces across the country; and

WHEREAS Manitoba communities have been active and aggressive partners in developing infrastructure strategies; and

WHEREAS the provincial government has consulted extensively with local communities to identify and prioritize local needs; and

WHEREAS the Canada Infrastructure Works Program has facilitated Manitoba's economic recovery through the creation of short- and long-term employment via investment in local communities; and

WHEREAS the Canada Infrastructure Works Program has enabled the enhancement of Manitoba communities' physical infrastructure; and

WHEREAS the Canada Infrastructure Works Program will create an estimated 3,320 (direct onsite and offsite) jobs, 370 infrastructure projects, for a total investment of \$188.3 million injected into Manitoba's economy.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba support the government for its proactive role in securing employment for Manitobans through the necessary upgrading of infrastructure via the Canada Infrastructure Works Program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly urge the federal government to expand the scope and extent of the Canada Infrastructure Works Program in order to maximize the generation of employment for Manitobans.

Motion presented.

Mr. Helwer: Madam Speaker, it is a real pleasure to be able to introduce this resolution to the Legislature and a real opportunity for me to speak about the benefits of this program that have been derived in Manitoba, in all of Manitoba and especially in my constituency.

In our first WHEREAS, we talk about the Canada-Manitoba—how the Infrastructure Works Program represents an outstanding example of what federal, provincial and municipal co-operation can achieve. The high degree of federal, provincial and municipal co-operation was characterized by the implementation of the \$204.8 million. The works program is best exemplified by the program's early and quick start in Manitoba.

For example, on January 4, 1994, Manitoba was among the first provinces to sign the master federal-provincial Infrastructure Works Agreement, and with that, Manitoba's first infrastructure announcement was by far the largest first announcement compared to any other province. The announcement had 133 projects worth \$132 million, over half of the whole Manitoba program funds.

Only one other province announced projects before Manitoba, and that was Nova Scotia, which was a much smaller announcement and a much smaller number of projects, actually 11 projects totalling \$38 million.

Also, we talk about where Manitoba was one of the first to sign the agreement, because being first out of the gate has allowed the evolution of a made-in-Manitoba program. An example of that is one that is regionally sensitive as opposed to a program superimposed from a national perspective, not always responsive to the local situation. Manitoba's assessment and approval process, which ensured local governments were involved in making decisions, served as a role model for all other provinces. Manitoba was also the first to provide project application forms to all municipalities and to consult regularly with the representatives of local governments on approved projects.

We talk about the active and aggressive partners in developing these infrastructure strategies, and the project submissions from local governments and other proponents outstripped expectations. By the application deadline of June 10, 1994, over 800 applications had been received, requesting some \$1 billion. The total requests were for over a billion dollars that had been submitted to the Manitoba Infrastructure Works secretariat. An application deadline was set to ensure that funds were allocated early and that construction was given an immediate green light. Also, the deadline allowed all projects to be reviewed on an equal footing for receiving funding.

We also talk about how the provincial government has consulted extensively with local communities and to identify and prioritize the local needs. Meeting the needs and priorities of local governments is a basic principle embodied in the master federal-provincial agreement. With the agreement signing on January 14, 1994, a special committee, the Provincial Local Consultative Committee on infrastructure or the PLCC, as it was called or is more commonly known, was struck to assist in reviewing and approving these project proposals. The first meeting was held within a month. For administrative convenience, members of this PLCC split into two communities: one was for rural areas; the other one for the city of Winnipeg.

* (1710)

The six-member committee dealing with projects outside Winnipeg includes the presidents and vice-presidents of the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities and also the Union of Manitoba Municipalities. People on this committee were Mayor Art Dyck of Altona and Thompson City Councillor, Stella Locker, representing the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities, whereas Jack Nichol, reeve of Springfield, and Larry Walker of Miniota represented the Union of Manitoba Municipalities. They were guided by the agreement's general criteria, which were that the two committees reviewed the submissions and recommended projects for approval. They also developed additional criteria as time went on.

I talk about how this affected Manitoba recovery in the resolution. In the first year, as an example, the

program had a significant economic impact on communities across the province. In just nine months of the program, Manitoba's minister responsible for infrastructure, the Honourable Eric Stefanson, and his federal counterpart allocated more than 90 percent of the \$204.8 million of the program to 377 projects throughout Manitoba. Some 3,500 jobs in direct and spin-off employment have been created by these projects; 65 projects have been completed; and by the end of this construction season it is expected that the majority of projects should be complete.

The variety of projects across Manitoba reflects the broad and practical definition of infrastructure agreed upon by the province and the federal government. The flexible approach also allowed the program to support projects offering strong economic benefits, whether they be realized through educational, cultural, recreational or other lifestyle enhancements, plus traditional infrastructure improvements like expanding and upgrading water and sewer systems, rebuilding roads and bridges, raising standards of local infrastructure and improving the general quality of life.

In addition, the improvements can also help smaller communities attract and sustain further economic development. The arts and cultural projects are also reflective of the types of projects supported through a flexible approach to infrastructure. While these projects make up a small portion, only about 5 percent of overall infrastructure funding, they will impact the economy through increased tourist traffic and spending and a larger cultural base.

We talked also about the enhancement of Manitoba's communities for the physical infrastructure, and we talked about how infrastructure enhanced the Manitoba communities through a variety of ways. Water and sewers is one of them; projects to provide clean water and reliable sewage systems are creating over 1,000 jobs actually and benefiting more than 100 communities in Manitoba.

For example, some of the projects in my constituency, sewer and water treatment plants or a treatment plant in the R.M. of Gimli and a storm sewer in the town of Gimli, a sewer and water project for the village of Teulon, a sewer extension—this is just one

example of the many projects and programs that help the different communities in my constituency and many communities throughout Manitoba.

Also, road projects are underway in many communities. In my constituency, the town of Stonewall had a very large road program that was one of my largest projects. I believe the town of Stonewall's was \$468,000; their infrastructure program for streets and roads certainly helped improve that community with the sidewalks, proper drainage and certainly did a lot to improve the streets in that community and in many communities throughout Manitoba, as I have said.

The arts, also roads and bridges, we talked about sidewalks. The Town of Winnipeg Beach put the new sidewalk on their main street, the new removable bricks that made it very attractive and certainly improved the looks of that main street. Just a great number of projects were of that type.

When we talked about community facilities, some \$11.5 million has been spent in improvements in 63 recreation and community centres throughout the province and this will provide better sports and sports facilities and enhance the quality of life overall in many communities.

One of my communities to take advantage of this program were the addition and the improvements to the rec centre in the town of Gimli, and there they have a very nice rec centre with a curling rink and the arena together plus a hall in the centre. It is a very nice facility. We did some improvements to the curling rink section to help make it more usable for many events in the community.

In announcing the resolution, this private members' resolution provides an opportunity for me to update the members with some of the statistics also that are available on the program. As of May of this year, some 377 projects have been announced, creating some 3,560 jobs and investing some \$192 million in the Manitoba economy. So it is very, very significant to the whole province and very, very helpful.

The way this was split up, the City of Winnipeg got 30 percent of the projects or about \$60 million and the

rural about 30 percent, about \$60 million, and then there were other strategic programs that took about 40 percent. So the way it was split up I think it worked very well and was very fair to everyone, fair to the communities all around Manitoba and it worked very well.

Also, we talked about how the Canada-Manitoba infrastructure assigns the lead responsibilities program so we could get delivery to the province of Manitoba. The federal government also cites Manitoba as a role model for the rest of the country when they are referring to an effective and speedy program implementation and consultation with local governments. Manitoba's overall objective has been to obtain maximum economic impact from this whole infrastructure program and to generate as many jobs as possible while building an economic base that will serve the province for many years to come. This balance is being achieved, as well as the fair balance between the traditional infrastructure projects and the strategic new initiatives. So with the help of the provincial local consultative committee, a fair balance has also been struck in the distribution of the funds among urban, rural and also the North.

The expectations and demand have far exceeded the available dollars. For years, provincial premiers, as well as all the municipalities, have been calling for an infrastructure program like this, and in particular since 1988 the premiers have led the call for a national infrastructure program to renew the roads, the highway transport facilities, water and sewer infrastructure and other forms of traditional infrastructure. So, in January of '94, Manitoba was at the forefront in getting the current program underway and in Manitoba projects—

* (1720)

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

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be able to speak on this resolution, because the issue of infrastructure is extremely important to many Manitobans, particularly many residents of my own constituency, the eight communities in the Thompson constituency.

I want to say from the beginning that I am somewhat surprised that once again the government has been putting a resolution that really does not contribute that much to debate. I would suggest to the member that if we want to have debate on infrastructure, that is fine, but if the member wants to congratulate himself or any other part of the government, then he should bring in a resolution at his caucus meeting, debate it there, discuss it there, pass it there. They can vote on it unanimously and then allow us the opportunity in private members' hour to discuss the issue, free of that kind of political window dressing that we are seeing. We saw it yesterday.

I have looked through the resolutions, and as I said yesterday, I am wondering if there is not a computer program that has been developed by the Conservative caucus. You might want to call it private member puffery, Madam Speaker, the pat-your-back-on-the—Most computer programs, if you notice, will have pointers. You know, Windows has hands that you use that select programs. Well, here they could pat themselves on the back. You know, they could have little icons representing each one of them, and they could go and they could set it up so they pat each one of themselves on the back individually. It may be very gratifying for those members if they do that, but this is private members' hour. In fact because of the way we have arranged the schedule, it is actually now two hours of Private Members' Business, and you know, let us deal with those concerns.

I would like to hear from the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) what he thinks about infrastructure for his own communities. I think that would be appropriate rather than talking about that, and I know what he talked about.

I would also like to hear the member for Gimli perhaps talk about some of the draining of funds that has gone from his community as well, some by the way which has gone to infrastructure, but his community of Gimli is one on a per capita basis that is probably losing more money through VLTs than any other community in this province, and it is reported. That, Madam Speaker, I think raises the obvious question whether that money should perhaps be returned to the community of Gimli in the form of infrastructure

programming, because Gimli is right up there with Thompson, The Pas, Swan River, Dauphin. I do not know how it got mixed in with those communities, those NDP-represented communities, but Gimli is right in there.

I respect the member for Gimli. I have known him for many numbers of years, and I would suggest that perhaps this might be an opportunity to raise that. Because one of the key issues I think when we are dealing with the money that is being put into the rural and northern communities and put here in the city of Winnipeg, that is one side of the ledger. The other side of the ledger, as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) knows only too well—

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Have you ever been to Gimli?

Mr. Ashton: Have I ever been to Gimli? Yes, I have been to Gimli, for the Finance minister, and I am sure you could probably even hear the money being sucked out of the community of Gimli. I think it is appropriate for the Minister of Finance, who is in charge of two of the levers in terms of sucking the money out of Gimli and has his own roots in that community. Because here we have a situation in which the money is being drained out of that community, going straight into the coffers of the Minister of Finance and he is also the Minister responsible for Lotteries. In fact, Madam Speaker, at the rate we are going in terms of growth, it will not be too many more years where Lotteries and Finance will be the same thing, because that basically is the dependence we have developed in terms of that.

So in fact I find it interesting that the Minister of Finance seems to be asking—yesterday he asked me where I was coming from, and of course, it is Thompson. Now he is asking me whether I have been in Gimli. You know, I appreciate the sort of geography of the Minister of Finance, but he should look at a map too, and he should look at those plus and minus figures because—

An Honourable Member: Is crime still going down?

Mr. Ashton: Yes, indeed, crime. I am trying to figure out where the government actually stands on its

Lotteries commission. This is I think the only government anywhere that could actually put out a report that has that claim, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) that I believe the resolution is on infrastructure, not on lotteries, and it should be relevant to the resolution being debated.

Point of Order

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, you will note that, of course, the infrastructure funding from the provincial government does come from lotteries, so I believe it is pertinent to the debate.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Leader of the official opposition indeed does have a point of order, and I thank him for his advice.

* * *

Mr. Ashton: Madam Speaker, as I was indicating, my concern with this whole agenda basically is to make sure there is some fairness and equity, not only in terms of what is put into the community but what is also taken out. I think that is what we should look at, because rural and northern communities in particular have been drained of funds.

Here we have the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) getting up congratulating the government in terms of infrastructure, but I ask the question in terms of Gimli itself, because it is one of the communities that is being drained. Thompson is being drained, \$2.4 million. I believe Gimli is about \$750,000. The Pas is in excess of \$1 million. Flin Flon is in excess of \$1 million. That is one side of the ledger, and that money, the little that gets back to northern communities, outside of some of the grants that take place in terms of lotteries, is through the infrastructure program.

So I am making the argument that we need more emphasis on rural and northern infrastructure and some of the real needs in the city, not the money that has

been spent or was going to be spent on the Kenaston underpass or the money that has been sent from lotteries to the Winnipeg Jets. The Winnipeg Jets, what kind of infrastructure is that? An infrastructure of debt for this province. This is of no benefit whatsoever, and these are the priorities of this government. This government is willing to put money into such things as the Winnipeg Jets rather than the infrastructure needs of this province.

In fact, when I look at the city of Winnipeg, the condition of Winnipeg streets and I look at the sewer and water problems in many areas of this city, and of course, coincidentally it seems that many of those constituencies are—

An Honourable Member: The same people who used to run the City of Winnipeg.

Mr. Ashton: In fact, yes, it is the same ones that used to run the City of Winnipeg, but unfortunately it seems some of the areas of the city of Winnipeg that have those needs just happen to be represented by NDP members. I do not know if there is any connection there, but some of us perhaps wonder on this side.

I want to suggest that the government, instead of bringing in these pat-yourself-on-the-back resolutions, go back to the drawing board and recognize the need for some real infrastructure development. The original allocation for infrastructure was inadequate. It has been watered down, stretched out over a period of time that has been increased so it is even more inadequate than when it started.

I can list off numerous areas, and I did this in 1993 right at the beginning of the process so that the government could not turn around and say, well, there was no input from members opposite. I will tell you what I suggested at the time:

The improvement of existing roads, particularly roads such as Highways 391 and 281, and that is a focus that could be expanded upon the infrastructure we have currently.

A Northern Development Agreement, for example, could be set up, a Rural Development Agreement,

construction of roads, the communities with no all-weather road access. I have four of them in my constituency, no roads period.

Extension of sewer and water to communities that have partial or no sewer and water. There are communities in northern Manitoba that do not have sewer and water, and this would include both reserves and Northern Affairs communities.

It could also include upgrading in communities such as Thompson where, by the way, money was allocated, but it is still not enough to finish the project, which is something the city of Thompson has made a request to the provincial and federal governments to do.

Upgrading of the bayline and the port of Churchill. You know, the port of Churchill, its future is at stake. It has just had the second worst year in its history. We have to deal with those.

I talked about other infrastructure because I think you have to include health care, education, recreation. For example, there is a great need for recreation in northern Manitoba and some of the other services provided. I think our child care system is part of our infrastructure as well. So I made those suggestions, as did many other Manitobans; rural Manitobans made suggestions, many people in the city of Winnipeg.

What I want to suggest to the government and to the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) and other members on the government side is that much more needs to be done. I would suggest, and I say this as a northerner, I think that the very basis of our infrastructure is being threatened. Just add up the last number of years, Madam Speaker. I think anyone who looks at the record will see what has happened.

The federal government has cut back in terms of rail maintenance. The federal government has cut back in terms of the use of the Port of Churchill. Now that is part of our transportation infrastructure. They have cut back in terms of airports. The flight control tower in Thompson, for example, has been closed down. We had questions earlier today from our Highways and Transportation critic. They have cut back in that area as well.

The provincial government has cut back in terms of roads. They decreased the amount spent on northern highways to an historic low last year. It has resulted in the kinds of poor highway conditions that we have seen, that have threatened the safety of many northern Manitobans when they have to travel roads. It is not just northern Manitoba. I am sure the member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) can talk about that as well from his community, all the many needs.

*(1730)

I think if you look at it, Madam Speaker, this government, in conjunction with the federal government, is threatening the very basis of the fabric of this country in terms of economic development and in terms of services. You know, Canada—it was interesting the World Bank came out and said that we are the second richest country in the world. If you look at the underlying reasons they look at, a lot of it is the assets. You know it is two things, above and beyond the mines and the mineral wealth we have, the oil, the petroleum, it is basically the human capital and the capital that is invested in terms of infrastructure. It is interesting that infrastructure is primarily publicly owned, a public investment.

So I suggest to you that if we continue in the same way that we are now, and if we continue to fail to reinvest in infrastructure—and the levels of reinvestment in infrastructure have dropped significantly as a percent of GDP from the 1960s; I think it is about one-third of what it used to be—we are not even going to replace the level of infrastructure we currently have. Name me one business out there in the private sector that could continue to operate for 20 or 30 or 40 years without investing in infrastructure. There is not one. Well, there may be a few that rely on making money in other ways.

But I will tell you Inco has to invest and reinvest in its infrastructure. It has done it constantly. Inco and the government of Manitoba were in the same situation. You have to invest in infrastructure. The bottom line to my mind is we should be investing more in infrastructure. We should have specific programs for infrastructure development such as a northern development agreement. We need a Parklands

development agreement; I know as well it is an area of concern on our side. There are many areas. We need a Winnipeg development agreement that does not just deal with the priorities of the Premier and a few people sitting around a cabinet table. It needs to deal with the people's priorities, fixing roads and sewers and water systems in this province.

I would suggest to you, Madam Speaker, that if we do that, we can ensure, as we head into the next century, that we can have appropriate economic development in Manitoba. I would suggest to you in return that if we continue to disinvest in terms of infrastructure, we are going to have major problems with economic development in this province. I can tell you that from personal experience of northern Manitoba because the disinvestment is starting in the North, and it will impact on economic development.

The time to stop it is now; the time to invest in our province is now. That is why this resolution, instead of patting the government on the back, should be pointing to the inadequacies of the infrastructure program and the need to do better next time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): Madam Speaker, I am more than pleased to stand and talk on infrastructure for Manitoba, especially from a rural Manitoban perspective. We see, especially in the Parklands area, a very rapid decline in the population of our area, the very rapid decline in the number of small family farms that are so dependent on a good, effective, efficient infrastructure program.

Madam Speaker, in 1993 I had the honour of representing the NDP in a federal election in which we approached Canadians with a strategy for a full-employment economy. In that strategy, we outlined an infrastructure program, a national infrastructure program that we were to—[interjection] Yes, about seven seats ahead of some of the parties.

What we decided to do was approach the Canadian people with an infrastructure program that would accomplish a number of things. Number one, it would create employment. It would encourage co-operation amongst governments, it would improve the

infrastructure, it would assist areas whose tax base was low, and it would also be designed to help out areas where there are high levels of unemployment.

This program, photocopied by the party that eventually won the federal election, was put into place some time later and I believe that, put in the hands of fair-minded people who believe in co-operation, would have been a good program. Unfortunately, that did not occur.

There is nothing fair about the way this infrastructure program has worked out over the last short period of time. There is nothing co-operative about it. The government can talk all it likes about extensive consultations. The truth is, it did not occur, unless the government thinks that co-operation means five guys getting together to rob a bank. That is the kind of co-operation that I see happening here.

Co-operation flies out the window when you have politicians in my area of the province scrambling, trying to outdo each other, competing with each other to get the headline in the front of the Dauphin Herald when the announcements are made for the Parklands recreation complex, one provincial politician outmanoeuvring a federal politician with news conferences simply to get the headline on the front page. That is what this infrastructure program has boiled down to.

Let us talk about the jobs that have been created in Manitoba and the cost of these jobs to Manitobans. You would think that for \$1 million a provincial government in co-operation with the federal and municipal levels could create more than 14 jobs, but that is how it has worked out. For every 14 jobs we create we spend a million bucks.

The member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) made a number of good points in the speech that he just gave to the House, and I commend the member for Gimli for speaking on this topic. He mentioned there were two committees that were put in place, rural and urban, and if I remember correctly there was a third one that was put in place as well, and they split up the \$204 million that was available for Manitoba, \$60 million for the rural committee, \$60 million for the urban and \$84 million into something called strategic initiatives.

Now, what exactly does that mean? The biggest chunk of the Manitoba money was going into strategic initiatives, and we do not know what it is. Where is the accountability when it comes to taking taxpayers' money and doling it out into projects? Who is the strategic initiatives committee responsible to? Who do they answer to? Where did the money go? If you took a good look at where the money has been going, it does not play out evenly across the province.

For example, if you looked at the figures and you looked at them honestly, you would see that northern Manitoba is not coming up to its fair share of Manitoba's total of the infrastructure program. [interjection] Yes, exactly. The member for River Heights (Mr. Radcliffe) just pointed out to me the reason. They do not have any Conservative members in that area. That is very crass, very patronage-based kind of politics that we have become used to with this government.

Let us take a look at some of the other fiascos that have taken place. The Kenaston underpass is a very good example of the kind of manipulation that has gone on in terms of Manitoba and this infrastructure program. What ever happened to the \$20 million that did not go through and be spent on the Kenaston underpass? Was that money taken and spread out over the projects that were not given enough to get started? Were there other projects that were put in place of the Kenaston underpass or did that money just kind of float back into the pockets of each of the levels of government? Who knows? Where is the accountability?

I want to take a look at some other specific examples. I want to mention the Arborg water infrastructure project, a project that was halted because the federal government would not fund Phase 2 because it said that there were higher than projected costs. Where is the fairness when it comes to giving out money and just having politicians look for the headlines in each of these smaller communities in the lead up to a provincial election?

It is fine if you hand out some money for some of these projects hoping that you are not giving enough to encourage the project to go ahead, hoping that the local

people will sit back and say, we cannot raise the rest of the money, we are going to can the project. That is not fair.

As a result of the federal government bailing out of the water infrastructure project at Arborg, the local community is now being forced to divide the project into two phases, the second phase into a whole bunch of smaller phases. Now, we know what happens when we start splitting up these projects into smaller phases. They end up costing us more money in the long run. That is not good economic management. Those types of situations are occurring across the province.

* (1740)

As a result, as well, the Arborg community itself are in a position where they have to assume a greater percentage of the costs, more costs than what they had bargained for in the first place, or they will see their dream of a water infrastructure project go down the tubes. So what it amounts to is that the federal and provincial levels of government are again offloading onto the local level simply so that federal and provincial politicians do not have to go around telling them that they have raised taxes. They can let the municipal people go out and tell them that they are going to raise taxes and whatever other kind of fundraising to pay for their infrastructure projects.

Let us look at the Selkirk water upgrade. The first phase of this project was to construct a storage container to hold reservoirs of water while Phase 2 was to build a well to fill the first container. The federal government again bailed out leaving the second phase and the entire project in jeopardy. Again, the pressure is then put on the local community to come up with the funds if they want their project. What happened to this grand goal of co-operation amongst the three levels of government that was talked about by the member for Gimli and his government throughout the whole debate over the infrastructure program? There is no co-operation there.

The last project that I would like to touch on for a brief moment is the Parkland Recreation Complex in Dauphin, of course, one of my favourite topics, no doubt. [interjection] Well, when it comes to pork

barrelling I take those comments from the opposition pretty seriously because they know more about pork barrelling than I will ever know, I am sure.

The Parkland Recreation Complex from Dauphin was a project that originally was to cost \$9.2 million. When they made their proposals, what they were told was that \$1.8 million was to be contributed to the Parkland Recreation Complex, \$600,000 from the feds, \$600,000 from the province and \$600,000 from the local community. When you look at how much money went into this program and you look at how much money was projected for it to begin with, you can see that \$1.8 million, or to be more exact, \$1.2 million from the top two levels of government was pretty much a spit in the ocean when you look at how much the whole project was going to cost.

Again, it is my belief that the federal and provincial levels of government had no intention of seeing this project go ahead, that all that would happen was that the people in Dauphin would be scared off at the amount of money that was left for the local community to raise in a town with not a great tax base and then have the government sit back, watch the plan go down, but you have already got your headline in the Dauphin Herald. That is what I think this whole infrastructure project has come down to.

The one thing I want to point out as well is that there was more money go into the fountain and all the cement being poured out at the back of the Legislature than there was in the whole Parkland Recreation Complex. More cement will be poured behind the Legislature here, more dollars go into the project just to the south of this building than there will be in all of the Dauphin Recreation Complex, a complex serving communities throughout the Parkland and beyond.

Now, I really have to question the priorities of this government and its priorities in handing out money in the infrastructure program when that kind of money can go into a fountain when we in the Parkland have to struggle to put together a facility of the magnitude of the Parkland Recreation Complex, something that is really going to be a use to the people of the Parkland in our quest to keep people in Dauphin and to keep people in the Parkland area.

Madam Speaker, just to wrap up, I want to repeat the lofty goals that this infrastructure program had from the beginning, which is of co-operation of three levels of government, creating employment and specifically in areas of our province where unemployment is high and where not a lot of attention has been paid over the last six years.

I would hope that the government in future announcements keeps in mind some of the advice that those of us in the opposition have given today, and I hope that we can see a much more efficient and fair operation of Manitoba's part of the Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure program. Thank you very much.

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Madam Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure to welcome you back again in your responsibilities as Speaker in keeping this House running in a most efficient manner.

It is also my pleasure to welcome the new Pages that we welcomed to this House and we certainly look forward to the pleasure of working with all of them during the continuation of this session and also the interns that have been appointed, and some of them are in the gallery today. We certainly look forward to working with all of them in the future and wish them well in their endeavours and hope that they take something from this building when they leave here and embark upon their future endeavours.

I want to congratulate the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) for bringing forward this resolution. I think it is not only a very, very timely resolution, it is a very pertinent resolution. It identifies a lack of responsibility that the previous Pawley administration simply failed to address, and that is, of course, the recognition that Manitobans must have proper highways, must have proper communications processes, must have proper energy sources and must have proper sewer and water disposal systems at their disposal in order to make their communities grow.

That is really what the resolution says. The resolution speaks very clearly to the need of supplying for Manitobans proper infrastructure in an affordable manner and that it be properly cost-shared between the three levels of governments and individual companies

as they progress and build and provide jobs in our province.

If the members opposite would have read the resolution and looked at the programs that have been developed and the projects that have been initiated over the last eight years of our government's mandate, they would have noted that we had not only embarked upon an agreement with the federal, provincial and municipal governments which is going to expend some \$204 million, but they would have noted that we had increased our highways budget from a mere \$70 million when the Howard Pawley administration left office to some \$105 million currently under a highways construction program.

They would have noted that MTS, in spite of Manitoba Telephone System under the Pawley administration moving into the Saudi Arabian market, we turned it around, brought it back from Saudi Arabia and had Manitoba Telephone System invest \$800 million to provide private-line service to all our communities in Manitoba.

* (1750)

That, Madam Speaker, is an indication of a government that has its priorities in order, knows where it is going and has a commitment to the business community, the people of the province of Manitoba in providing not only jobs, but providing the technology that will allow us to advance into the world market.

By supplying not only roads, railways, sewer, water, power and energy through natural gas expansion and those kinds of things, not only through that type of a process but in fact providing a sound economic base through fiscal management, proper budgeting and bringing our expenditures in line are we attracting industries from far and wide.

I think the announcement today made by McCain's industry to expand their operation in Portage is a clear indication as to how companies, corporations from outside look at Manitoba. If it had not been for the expansion and the taking care of the mess that had been created in Portage la Prairie under the Pawley administration in their sewer and water infrastructure—

we cleaned it up, we expanded it. It is now in a position where companies can actually come in and comfortably expand, their operation grow, provide jobs—better than 140 jobs will be provided by this new initiative—and do it without being afraid of having the environmental department come down on their backs the day after.

The announcement of a brand-new canola-crushing facility in Ste. Agathe is another indication that these companies are looking for a home that will give them the satisfaction and the comfort that there is a government in place that has the ability to keep their economics in line and provide services to their people at the same time.

If you look at further opportunities that I think will come forward, you can look at the pasta-processing plant in Altona that was announced just last week. It will get Manitoba into a brand new market, but it will further provide—this infrastructure program and other infrastructure programs that we have initiated—opportunities for other industries such as the bean industry which is becoming a major, major industry in southern Manitoba.

A new processing plant having been built at St. Joseph by the Parent brothers is now processing a shelf-ready product which will be exported mostly to Mexico, to India, to Latin America and very little of the product that they are going to process is going to be utilized in Manitoba. It will bring a very significant number of foreign dollars into Manitoba, and it will provide a significant number of jobs. I think that is just the tip of the iceberg of what we are going to see under the new Manitoba and under the new Manitoba law of industry.

I think that we as a government, when we took over and when we said that we must balance our budget and that we need to bring forward legislation to ensure that future governments will in fact follow the economic agenda that we have set for this province, when we brought that kind of legislation forward it was a clear indication to Manitobans that they would no longer be subjected to the ruthless mismanagement of our economy as had been done under the previous governments. That in itself allows us to encourage

people to invest in themselves. That is why we developed the bond program. That is why we developed the REDI program, and that is why industries or individuals are encouraged to build such plants as the bean processing plant in St. Joseph.

Madam Speaker, there are dramatic opportunities that are going to offer themselves in the future. We have an absolutely fantastic opportunity to expand the livestock processing industry in this province. I think by properly nurturing, by ensuring those industries that they will have proper roads to travel on, that they will have proper sewer and water facilities, that they will have proper energy sources and proper communication sources such as being provided under the joint efforts of a Canada-Manitoba infrastructure program and in joint effort with the municipalities, we are going to get there. We are going to provide jobs for our young people.

I think it is very significant that when you read the latest statistics that Saskatchewan actually had a decrease of about 1,000 people working over the last year where Manitoba had an increase of 15,000. It is clearly an indication as to where this government is going and how people, industries and others are looking at our government and our province. Clearly the people of Manitoba, whether they live in Dauphin or whether they live in Sprague or Vita, are going to be the beneficiaries.

We made a commitment to the Pembina Valley Water Co-op less than a year ago, a commitment that Manitoba would provide funding to put in place a water system in the Red River Valley. It was dependent on matching funds from the federal government. The communities within the Red River Valley were very, very interested in ensuring that they could guarantee proper water supplies to people that were interested in building businesses and industry.

It is imperative that we, as a government, continue to pressure Ottawa and that we support the efforts of the municipalities in the Red River Valley in their efforts to encourage Ottawa to make again that same kind of a commitment that we were able to come to under this infrastructure program, because that is where the essence of the new Manitoba lies, and the future of

our future generations, the employment opportunities of our future generations are going to be prevalent.

So regardless of the criticism that has been extended to the resolution by opposition members today, I think it clearly demonstrates that we should from time to time, periodically, examine where we have been, as the resolution did, and what direction we are going to take. Whether we would want to do that in a negative fashion or a positive fashion, I think, is a difference in philosophy between our government and the opposition benches.

I would suggest to you, Madam Speaker, that if the opposition members will keep doing what they are doing, and I encourage them to be as critical as they can of not only programs but other communities and point fingers where we have done things where they might not have benefited or they have benefited and others have not, but keep pointing fingers in other directions; we will be in government for many, many years to come.

So I encourage them to take the kind of tack that they are bringing to this House in this new part of the last session that we started in the spring. I encourage them to not change direction because the people of Manitoba are looking very clearly at who, which party should rule and govern and which policies they want to support and not support.

We just came through an election, and I think the election was very encouraging that the direction that we had taken over the last seven, eight years in coming to agreements with municipalities, in coming to agreements with federal governments, showing that we are in fact willing to partnership, take part in funding and provide the necessities of those communities in all of Manitoba.

I think those of us that sit in this Legislature, those of us who come to the city of Winnipeg every week to participate in the debates and the discussions and make

laws for our future Canadians will be the beneficiaries in the future of this kind of initiative that the member for Gimli has brought to this House for debate. So I congratulate the member.

I want to say to you, Madam Speaker, that if we do not deviate from our direction and if we ensure Manitobans that our budgets in the future will be balanced and that the expenditures that we will incur on their behalf will in fact bear benefits, then I would suspect that the opposition members will be in the opposition for a long, long time.

So I congratulate all the partners, the municipalities, the towns, the people, the federal government and the provincial government for putting this kind of program in place, and I hope that that kind of co-operation can prevail into the future.

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): I certainly appreciate the very few couple of minutes that the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) has provided this member in speaking to this resolution.

I listened for the last 55 minutes to, again, as one of my colleagues had indicated earlier, the amount of about 40 minutes of backslapping and cheering and waving the Conservative flag around like we are the do-all and the come-all of the infrastructure program, when in fact if you go out and talk to the people in rural Manitoba, in certain areas of rural Manitoba, you will hear them say that basically from the provincial side of it, the thinking from the province and from this government was backward.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) will have 14 minutes remaining.

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, September 19, 1995

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
		Water Supply—Selkirk Dewar; Driedger; Cummings	3073
Presenting Petitions		Gambling	
Federal Immigration Policies		Ashton; Stefanson; Vodrey	3073
Santos	3065	Highway Construction/Upgrading	
Tabling of Reports		Jennissen; Findlay	3075
Annual Reports: Manitoba Farm Mediation Board; Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation; Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, University of Manitoba		Flooding—Transcona Cerilli; Reimer	3075
Enns	3065	Speaker's Rulings Dacquay	3076
Annual Reports: Legal Aid Manitoba; Manitoba Law Reform Commission; Discriminatory Business Practices Act		Nonpolitical Statements	
Vodrey	3065	Peguis Central School C. Evans	3077
Ministerial Statements		Red Sucker Lake Robinson	3078
1995 R & D 100 Award		Tadoule Lake Jennissen	3078
Derkach	3065	Kildonan East Collegiate Cerilli	3078
C. Evans	3066	Legion Week Reid	3079
Speaker's Statement			
Manitoba Legislative Internship Program			
Dacquay	3066		
Oral Questions			
Health Sciences Centre			
Doer; Filmon; Chomiak	3066	ORDERS OF THE DAY	
Maintenance Enforcement Act		Debate on Second Readings	
Mackintosh; Vodrey; Cummings	3068	Bill 9, Wills Amendment Act	
Farm Loan Program		Mackintosh	3080
Wowchuk; Enns	3069	Lamoureux	3080
Photo Radar		Bill 11, Trustee Amendment Act	
Kowalski; Findlay	3070	Mackintosh	3081
Winnipeg Airport Authority		Lamoureux	3081
Sale; Downey; Findlay	3071	Bill 2, Balanced Budget, Debt Repayment and Taxpayer Protection and Consequential Amendments Act	
Lynn Lake Airport		Maloway	3082
Jennissen; Findlay	3072	Enns	3088
		Cerilli	3091

**Private Members' Business
Proposed Resolutions**

Res. 5, Midwifery Implementation

Council

McAlpine	3095
McGifford	3098
Radcliffe	3100
Cerilli	3102
Lamoureux	3105

Res. 6, Infrastructure

Helwer	3105
Ashton	3108
Struthers	3111
Penner	3114
C. Evans	3116