



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

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

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, December 10, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): I beg to present the petition of the Salvation Army Grace General Hospital Incorporated, praying for the passing of an act to amend The Salvation Army Grace General Hospital Incorporation Act.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask leave of the House for unanimous consent to drop my name from the Order Paper.

Mr. Speaker: I have been advised by the honourable member for Burrows that he would like his name stricken under Reading and Receiving Petitions. As all honourable members are aware, we need unanimous consent to do it. Is there leave of the House to withdraw the name of the honourable member for Burrows under Reading and Receiving Petitions? Agreed? It is agreed. The name will be withdrawn.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): I would like to table the 1990-91 Annual Report of the Milk Prices Review Commission and the 1990-91 Annual Report of the Farm Lands Ownership Board.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the 1990-91 Annual Report for the Department of Environment.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Report of the Office of the Provincial Auditor on the Special Audit of the Taxation Division-Department of Finance.

Speaker's Statement

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to direct the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us this afternoon the six interns. 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, two interns have been assigned to each of the three caucuses. Their term of employment is 12 months.

During their term, interns perform a variety of research and other tasks for private members, as distinct from ministers. They participate in a series of academic seminars on the political process in Manitoba and are required to prepare an in-depth research paper on some aspect of the Manitoba politics.

Successful applicants for the program are chosen on the basis of their academic excellence and potential, personal qualities such as maturity, responsibility, judgment, tact and discretion, a demonstrated interest in and knowledge of either parliamentary government or Manitoba government and politics, and evidence of the skills needed to assist an MLA in the performance of his or her duties.

My purpose today is to announce the names of the six young people who have been selected to serve as Manitoba's 1991-92 legislative interns. They commenced their assignment at the beginning of September. Working with the government caucus are: Ms. Trina Scribner of Brandon University and Ms. Rhonda Zimmerman of Brandon University. Working with the caucus of the official opposition will be Ms. Tamsin Collings of the University of Manitoba and Mr. Glen Holmes of the University of Winnipeg. Working with the caucus of the second opposition party will be Miss Leanne Matthes of the University of Manitoba and Ms. Michelle Driedger of the University of Winnipeg.

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

* (1335)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Repap Manitoba Inc. Employment Statistics

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on March 11, 1989, almost three years

ago, the Premier and Mr. George Petty, chairman of the board of Repap corporation announced what they said would be a \$1 billion boost to the Manitoba economy with the divestiture agreement for Manfor to Repap for an area of about one-sixth of the province's total area. They also commented at the time that there would be hundreds of jobs in addition to the existing work force on top of the investment. We know that the expansion cannot go forward because of the obvious licensing provisions of The Environment Act.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is: Are there more or less people working there today than when the Premier made the announcement? Secondly, the situation with Repap, can the Premier inform Manitobans of the financial situation with the corporation that he signed the agreement with?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will begin by saying that I do not have the exact job figures on Repap at the present time. I do know this, that last time Repap, when it was in public ownership under Manfor and was being operated under the former New Democratic government, with the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) as its minister, when it went through the last downturn in the '80s, we lost \$32 million of taxpayers' money during one year alone under that kind of operation. So I do know this.

At the same time, they cut their employment levels down by hundreds of people in their operations. I do know this, that under the current downturn in the economy and indeed in the world market for pulp and paper, Repap is sustaining losses, there is no question, and has reduced its employment in accordance with that. At least in this case, those major, major costs are not being borne by the taxpayer of Manitoba.

Chlorine Bleaching

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Premier should know that, at the time of the divestiture, the shares of Repap were trading at \$12 a share. They are now down to \$4.35. I am surprised the Premier did not answer that in his answer to us in this Chamber. Surely that is an issue of importance to the government.

We are hundreds short in terms of jobs, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the only place where we see improvement in this industry is in the areas where corporations have gone into the new technology and have gone to chlorine-free production of the product.

In fact, the three plants in Europe and the one new plant in Canada that is now producing the product without chlorine bleach, as proposed in the Repap expansion, are selling their products at over \$20 a ton more.

Surely if the government is concerned about both the environment and concerned about the economy and the jobs in The Pas, in the North and in Manitoba, will the Premier renegotiate with Repap to have the new technology introduced in northern Manitoba rather than staying with the old technology?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, we have very openly said that one of the great advantages of being involved with Repap is that they are one of the people in the world, one of the few who have new technology that involves a replacement for chlorine bleach. Their Alcell technology is a world leader.

We have said very openly during the course of all of our discussions publicly that there is a very high probability that Repap will indeed be able to totally substitute for chlorine by the time they get to the end of their changes and their investments in that plant. They are working on that new technology. They are perfecting the technology, and they are world leaders.

As soon as that technology is available for implementation, it will be used so that we do not have to have chlorine in the process whatsoever. That is one of the objectives that we have had since Day One.

* (1340)

Mr. Doer: All of us on this side who have read the contract will find there is no wording in the contract that gives Manitobans the right to have the chlorine-free technology that is now available as the Premier indicates.

Given the fact the government signed away one-sixth of Manitoba's territory, and given the fact that the new technology is available, and given the fact the government is giving \$90 million in financial support in terms of highway development as part of the agreement, would the Premier now commit to renegotiate the agreement with Repap so that we could have the new chlorine-free technology, as the Premier has indicated, and have it in writing in the agreement as a guarantee for the one-sixth territory that we signed away to the Repap corporation?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the former government, in the ownership of Manfor, had that one-sixth of Manitoba territory, absolutely, had that one-sixth of Manitoba territory committed to then Manfor. The rights that Manfor had were then transferred to Repap, adding savings to the taxpayer. I have already indicated that, were that corporation in public ownership as it had been under the NDP, we could well have been losing \$25 million and \$30 million a year as the NDP did when they operated it in similar circumstances with the member for Fin Flon (Mr. Storie) at the helm of that corporation.

The fact of the matter is that the Alcell technology is not yet a proven commercial technology, and when and if it is, Mr. Speaker, Repap have assured us that they are very willing to consider that in the application of the process in Manfor in The Pas.

Multicultural Resource Centre Closure

Ms. Marianne CerlIII (Radlsson): Mr. Speaker, today is International Human Rights Day. Unfortunately, this government has a multicultural policy which they are choosing to ignore, although they like to wave it around in the House. The way that they are choosing to ignore this policy is by eliminating services that ensure teachers and other people have access to cross-cultural material and resources, and they are instead creating the Multicultural Secretariat which is an office of political influence, control and patronage.

My question is for the Minister responsible for Multiculturalism. Is she aware that the Multicultural Resource Centre has been dismantled? Can she explain how this is in keeping with the government's multicultural policy?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for Multiculturalism): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that we are a government that introduced the first multicultural policy in the province of Manitoba. In fact, the throne speech indicated that we would have the first multicultural act for the province of Manitoba introduced in this session of the Legislature. So I am pleased that we are moving in that direction.

Mr. Speaker, we have just in the last couple of weeks announced a new Bridging Cultures program that will have an antiracism component to it. It is a program that was introduced through the Immigration Branch of my department, and that will

take one more step in the direction of attempting to have communities work together.

There will be initiatives that are ongoing that will be announced during this session that will work towards harmony and unity in this province.

Ms. CerlIII: Mr. Speaker, the minister did not answer the question.

Will the minister urge her colleagues and her government to reinstate the staff and the board at the Multicultural Resource Centre which have been fired? Will she ensure that this centre is reinstated?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat confused with the questioning. Maybe if a little more detail could be provided on the Multicultural Resource Centre from the member opposite, I could provide a little more clarity in my answer.

Education Resources

Ms. Marianne CerlIII (Radlsson): Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain to the House how this government plans to ensure that teachers and other community leaders have access to multicultural resource material and cross-cultural education material, since they have eliminated this service from the Department of Education library?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for Multiculturalism): Mr. Speaker, I know there is a lot of information within the Department of Education on multiculturalism, and that information is not going to disappear overnight. The information that is there and available will still be available, and as we develop more information, that information will be made available to teachers and to the public.

* (1345)

Misleading Advertising Consumer Protection

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, I was recently contacted by a woman who incidentally is a constituent of the minister's, who responded to an ad in the newspaper reading: Money, money, money, yes, earn money by stuffing envelopes.

She then sent \$1 in and got back another glowing indication of thousands that could be earned for another \$15.95. She sent that in and got a document

entitled: The Plan. That plan explained to her how she could go about placing the same ad as she had responded to. Mr. Speaker, I want to table a copy of those documents that I have referred to.

When this woman contacted the minister, both her MLA and the responsible minister, she was told that there was no law prohibiting this practice.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is: Why was she given this advice on the very day that the minister was holding a press conference announcing the new Business Practices Act when this practice is clearly not only in contravention of that—

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

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Clearly, in speaking to that particular constituent, as both the member for St. James and I have done, it was with considerable regret that I indicated to her that previous legislation could not address that but that the new Business Practices Act which is now being proclaimed would enable her to take action. I encouraged the individual to contact the Consumers' Bureau to discuss the issue in depth. I hope that provides the member with the answer he was seeking.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, for the same minister, as indicated earlier, this woman did contact the department. She did not indicate she contacted the minister. Why was she not advised that this was in fact in breach of the competition act, which has been in place for years, when this document, which I assume the minister has if she has spoken to the woman, claims earnings of \$35,000 a week from these unsuspecting citizens of this province?

Mrs. McIntosh: No, I do not have the document which was provided to the member for St. James. What I did do, as I said a moment ago, was encouraged this particular individual to contact the Consumers' Bureau to talk about the things that were available currently and will become available effective the 1st of January for which she could take action, which would include discussions about the competition act and any other particular issue that she may care to enlarge upon with those experts over at the Consumers' Bureau.

Misleading Advertising Consumer Protection

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, for the Minister of Justice, on the same issue: Will the Minister of Justice—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I am reviewing the list of rules that you have cast before us with respect to how we should conduct ourselves in Question Period, and I note No. 3(a), "A supplementary question must be asked to obtain clarification of the answer or answers provided by the minister to whom the original question was directed."

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Yes, Mr. Speaker, it was very clear that questions in the same area could be asked, but questions in different areas could not be asked. If ministers are going to pass questions from minister to minister as they have been doing for the past three days, then presumably opposition members have the same rights.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, our rules on supplementary questions say they must be asked to obtain clarification of the answer or answers provided by the minister to whom the original question was directed. We concur with that rule and believe it should be followed. Thank you.

* (1350)

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, I would like to thank all honourable members for their advice.

As has been indicated by the honourable government House leader, as he did refer to in his opening remarks, these were simply guidelines. Beauchesne's Citation 420, the Speaker has stated, "Of course, the Chair will allow a question to be put to a certain Minister; but it cannot insist that that Minister rather than another should answer it." Also, 414, "Although there may be no debate on an answer, further questions, as may be necessary for the elucidation of the answers that have been given, within due limits, may be addressed to a Minister."

* * *

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, for clarification, I intend to direct the question to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General on the same issue.

Mr. Speaker: For clarification purposes, I will allow the honourable member to put his question. I cannot ascertain as to indeed the Minister of Justice or indeed another minister will answer the question.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, for the Minister of Justice in the same area.

Will the minister investigate why, when this woman contacted the City of Winnipeg Police Fraud Department, she was given the same advice she was from the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh) according to her and told that this misleading advertising was not legally wrong? Will the minister make sure that the Fraud Department is aware of the competition act, which has been in place for years, which prohibits misleading advertising and indeed The Business Practices Act, which prohibits the same type of activities to protect Manitobans from this type of fraudulent activity?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, the honourable member knows from past experience that, when he has raised issues with me and there has been merit to those issues, I have taken them forward to the appropriate authorities. If he wants to share with me the information that he wants me to share with Winnipeg Police, I will be more than happy to do so.

The Pines Project Funding Reallocation

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Last year, Manitobans rejected back-room deals like Meech Lake. Yesterday, the Minister of Housing was forced to concede that the back-room deal known as Rotary Pines would not work either.

Will the minister now reallocate the money intended for Rotary Pines to nonprofit housing and thereby create much-needed construction jobs, especially in Winnipeg where the unemployment rate is 10.7 percent?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, the Seniors RentalStart program, as the member full well knows, was cancelled April 1, 1991, so any funding left from that program will terminate. I can also advise, we have allocated all

of the available units from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation for 1991 already.

Seniors RentalStart Applications

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Can the Minister of Housing tell us if all the applicants to Seniors RentalStart were encouraged to apply to the private, nonprofit program? What is the status of their applications? If the decisions have already been made, could the minister announce to the House who received the unit allocation for this year?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, with respect to the nonprofit program, I can advise the House—not just at the moment, but I will undertake to advise the House of those people who have been allocated in 1991 and nonprofit units at a subsequent time.

Nonprofit Housing Government Strategy

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Can the minister tell the House, since there seems to be some confusion amongst the applicants, what the government priority is? Is the priority seniors housing or family housing? What proportion would be in the city of Winnipeg and what in the rest of Manitoba?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): There are any number of programs that deal with housing for a variety of Manitobans throughout the province. We have the rural and Native program. We have a nonprofit program. We have seniors. We have family. We have a wide variety of programs, all of which have unit allocations put against them.

Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to table that information.

Urban Hospital Council Public Participation

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): I have a question for the Premier.

Last year the Premier said no to the process we underwent with Meech Lake. In fact, in last year's Speech from the Throne, the Premier committed himself to saying no to the old style of elite accommodation and closed-door politics, yet this government's Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has established an Urban Hospital Council which has an elite membership, closed-door discussions and

unrealistic time lines, has heard no public input and simply is being used by this government to justify cuts and service reductions. Ours is a public health care system, Mr. Speaker, not the domain of one individual, the Minister of Health.

Would the Premier have his Minister of Health open up his health care review process of 44 working groups to ensure the broadest possible input from health care professionals, consumers and Manitobans in general?

* (1355)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, firstly, the discussion of health care is one of the matters that takes place in the open, very publicly, throughout the course of each and every day of each and every year. It takes place in this House whenever we are in session. It is a matter of discussion in Question Period almost daily. It is a matter of discussion in our throne speech debates. It is a matter of discussion in our budget debates. It is a matter of discussion in the Estimates review. It is a very, very public discussion.

I might say that there are times in which committees are struck, committees of people who are members of certain groups. I know that the member opposite participated in the committee called cabinet. That was a closed-door committee, I might say, that met every week. I know she participated in other cabinet committees on a closed-door basis, closed to the public in discussions. I know when she meets in caucus, it is closed to the public.

She knows when there are people who get together to discuss things, who happen to be members of certain groups, they meet in consultation to discuss information. This group, as I understand it, is the CEOs of the urban hospitals. They meet as a group discussing potential policy, but when there is any information that comes from that group that is a matter for potential public policy, it will be a matter of debate publicly in this Chamber, it will be revealed publicly and she will have an opportunity to criticize it or to be able to endorse it or to be able to support it—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Report Request

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, the only thing open about this—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for St. Johns, put your question, please.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Would the Premier, in the spirit of his most recent throne speech, which pledged this government to work together to build a stronger Manitoba, would he have his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) table all 16 working group reports of the Urban Hospital Council received by his Minister of Health and for which implementation plans are underway?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I would not suggest that people start dealing with reports that have not been adopted by the government, that have not been accepted by the government, that have not been even presented to the government when they are the product of discussions by third party groups. We have many third party groups in society which come up with proposals to government. Those proposals are not matters for public debate by government until government at least acknowledges or endorses or supports those or suggests that they are worthy of public policy consideration.

None of that has happened with respect to the Urban Council, and the 16 reports that she suggests are being worked upon, Mr. Speaker. When any matters are going to be the subject of public policy discussion and potential decision, then indeed that will be a very public matter. We are not at that stage by any stretch of the imagination.

Health Care System Reform Revenue-raising Proposals

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Let me then get to first party groups, the deputy minister of health. Would the Premier indicate whether or not plans outlined today such as pizza sales and hairstyling are the far-reaching, novel health care reforms as promised in the throne speech and how they will help those who are lined up in emergency rooms and are on long waiting lists for necessary surgery?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): No, Mr. Speaker.

Multicultural Secretariat Hiring Policy

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, from Education to Culture and Heritage. When this government took office as a majority in September of 1990, one of the first things they did in an attempt

to manipulate the multicultural community was established a Multicultural Secretariat's office in which a Tory candidate was appointed. The first action he did was he hired a policy analyst who happened to be a campaign worker.

I have now been informed the Minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Question, please—(interjection)—

Mr. Lamoureux: The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) should wait for the question.

Mr. Speaker, then the government created an outreach office, and we commended the government for creating an outreach office. In fact, the minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member, kindly put your question now, please.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the question to the minister is that I have been informed that Mr. Langtry was on the selection committee. Did Mr. Langtry abstain from the selection committee when the successful candidate who happens to be a worker for Mr. Langtry's election—

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

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Speaker, we have had an open competition process where over 300 people from the community applied for the multicultural outreach offices. Twenty-six of those people were interviewed, were on the short list and were interviewed by a Civil Service board comprised of three members. All of the interviewees were asked the same questions and the successful candidate was a member of the Filipino community who has been very actively involved in that community and in many of the organizations.

I guess I would ask the question, does the member for Inkster have any indication to believe that this person would be unqualified or not deserving of the job?

* (1400)

Mr. Lamoureux: The question is, was Mr. Langtry on the selection committee and if he was on—

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

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, obviously the member for Inkster does not understand the Civil Service process. In fact, when there is a board

struck through the Civil Service Commission to interview people who apply for jobs, the manager usually of the unit is one of the people on that selection committee. That is part of the process, and there are three people—normally could be three or four people—who are on that selection committee and that is the process that is followed. It is the process that was followed in this instance.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, why does the minister persist to believe that it is not wrong for Mr. Langtry, who was the candidate and on the selection committee, for not abstaining himself from a committee in which a worker of his is applying for a position?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, people are not on a selection committee to abstain from making a decision. Mr. Langtry is the manager of the Multicultural Secretariat. This person will be reporting through him to government and that is the normal process that is followed.

I guess I might ask the question again of the member for Inkster, is he in fact saying that this person is not qualified?

Core Area Agreement Replacement

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, for two years now we have watched the federal and provincial Tory governments refuse to deal with the urgent issue of the renewal of Winnipeg's inner city. Mayor Norrie last week indicates that he expects to sign a Memorandum of Understanding within 30 days and that a new agreement will be in place by April 1.

Can the Minister of Urban Affairs confirm that this is also his understanding of the timing and process of the new tri-level agreement?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful that will occur.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, I have been hearing that line now for nearly two years.

Projects

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Will the minister confirm that, as the mayor believes, this new Core Area Agreement will include a focus on Main Street, a long-awaited aboriginal strategy and an inner city foundation?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): I suspect the member for Wolseley ought to ask the mayor those questions.

We have had ongoing discussions for some period of time. I am extremely confident that we will see a successful agreement within the time frame mentioned. Hopefully, as many of the problems that face the inner city as possible can be addressed under that agreement.

Inner City Foundation

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister to clarify the fate of the last Inner City Foundation, that \$1 million which was promised by the three levels of government to be of long-term assistance to the people of the inner city and which has simply disappeared.

As the minister responsible to this House for the Core Area Agreement, will he explain precisely where that \$1 million has gone?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, while the Inner City Foundation was proposed in the original guidelines for the agreement, no project authorization was ever completed with respect to the Inner City Foundation, so it never really actually took place.

What happened was the allocation made for the Inner City Foundation was in fact reallocated along with funding from a variety of other programs in order to meet the current cash commitments required by the Core Area Initiative.

Conawapa Dam Project Postponement

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister who is still responsible for Manitoba Hydro.

Let me say, when his resignation finally comes into effect, we will miss this minister. We will miss his candour, his forthrightness and, most of all, his sense of humour. -(interjection)- Mr. Speaker, I never said that he was not candid, and I am going to look for a little bit of candour right now, if I could.

The minister sold his cabinet colleagues on the wisdom of building the Conawapa dam because Manitobans would need the power by the year 2000. Latest projections by Manitoba Hydro show that we will not need the power for at least a decade beyond that and perhaps later. Is it the minister's view now

and the position of the government that there ought to be a delay to the Conawapa dam?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Hydro Act): Mr. Speaker, that sounded like an obituary. I would like the member for Crescentwood to understand I will be around for a while yet.

When Manitoba Hydro does its projections on the power requirements in the future, they do not have the benefit and the luxury of hindsight. In 1989 when a decision had to be taken as to the power requirements and what would have to be done for the year 2000, the best projection Manitoba Hydro had was that the year 2000—or 1999 I believe at the time—there would be a requirement for additional generation.

The decision had to be taken whether to go ahead with Wuskwatim which would give us about 350 megawatts or go ahead with Conawapa which would give us 1,350 megawatts. If we went with Conawapa, which was the preferred option because of the lesser environmental damage and the lesser cost per megawatt, we would first have to sell on a fixed term some 1,000 megawatts.

A deal was struck with Ontario Hydro to sell 1,000 megawatts, and the remaining 350,000 megawatts would be kept for Manitoba Hydro's own use.

As we sit here today, Mr. Speaker, it is quite possible, if the most recent projections are true, that had it not been for the Ontario sale, Manitoba Hydro would not require additional generation until the year 2009.

However, as we sit here today, we do have an Ontario Hydro sale which we cannot get out of. We do have to provide them with 1,000 megawatts starting the year 2000, and because of that, we cannot get out of building Conawapa.

Expenditures—Ontario Hydro

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): We also, on this side of the House, hope that the minister will be around for a long, long time.

My supplementary question to him, though, is: As Ontario Hydro spends money to prepare to receive the power from Conawapa, the exposure to Manitoba Hydro—

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

Mr. Carr: Can the minister tell the House how much has been spent to date by Ontario Hydro preparing to receive power from Conawapa?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Hydro Act): I, of course, do not know how much Ontario Hydro has spent for which Manitoba Hydro might be responsible in the event that Manitoba Hydro could not deliver, but I have to remind the member for Crescentwood that the only condition under which we may get out of the agreement with Ontario Hydro is if we do not get an environmental licence that we cannot unilaterally opt out of that agreement.

We have an agreement for which we might be sued for specific performance if we do not deliver, and I do not think we can get out of that agreement unilaterally.

* (1410)

Expenditures—Manitoba Hydro

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, how much will Manitoba Hydro have spent on the Conawapa project by the date in which Manitoba Hydro will have finished its environmental assessment?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Hydro Act): I do not have those numbers in front of me, but my guess is that it is—no, it is not a guess. It is approximately \$100 million.

Assinibola Downs Winter Harness Racing

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): My question is for the Minister of Industry and Trade. Last August, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) said that he would lobby the cabinet to save the winter harness racing season. Can the Minister of Industry and Trade tell this House whether in fact we will have a harness racing season this winter?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Back in August of this year, the private owner of the Assiniboia Downs announced that there would be no winter harness racing taking place at Assiniboia Downs.

Mr. Cliff Evans: Can this minister indicate then how many jobs will disappear in Winnipeg and rural Manitoba because of this government's inability to negotiate an agreement?

Mr. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what the honourable member is getting at, but in terms of

following this issue, and it is a very complicated issue, we had a meeting yesterday for some five hours with representatives from the horse racing associations, the harness racing, the thoroughbreds, the breeders, and representatives from Alberta, the president of the Canadian harness racing association and so on to try and address a long-term solution. It is a privately owned racetrack, I would like to remind the members across the way, and the owner of that particular facility indicated that he was losing some \$500,000 during winter harness racing.

It is his business, his decision. He made a business decision that he is unable to continue in winter harness racing, and suggested that the only way that it could be carried on is if the government is prepared to put in some \$500,000 from general revenue, I might add, Mr. Speaker, because we currently collect some \$5.2 million in pari-mutuel tax from horse racing in Manitoba. That full \$5.2 million goes back to horse racing, unlike occurred in previous years with previous governments. The full \$5.2 million is returned to horse racing in this province.

Status

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, what guarantees does this minister have then that we will not lose future harness racing nor thoroughbred racing in Manitoba, costing us more jobs because of simulcasting from the United States, where some of the revenues will be returned to the United States?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, once again I have to remind the honourable members across the way that this track is currently owned by a private owner, not unlike private businesses, not unlike all kinds of facilities here in our province. He has made a business decision in terms of winter harness racing. We are attempting to work with him and members of the industry to address the long-term health of horse racing here in Manitoba. It is an important industry, and jobs are important. We have also made a commitment to attempt to maintain the Great Western Circuit, unlike, I might add, the government of the day back in 1987. I have a copy of the correspondence of the minister then responsible for the Horse Racing Commission suggesting that they were looking at removing the Great Western Circuit from rural Manitoba, Mr.

Speaker. So talk about hypocrisy coming from across the way.

Retail Trade Sector Employment Statistics

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): For the Minister of Finance: The employment in the retail sector in Manitoba is down by 9 percent. In other words, Mr. Speaker, we lost 8,000 jobs in that sector in November of this year compared to November of last year. That is double the Canadian average decline, the second worst in Canada; whereas in Saskatchewan, retail trade employment declined by only a half of 1 percent and ranks four out of 10. Why is Manitoba doing so badly in the retail trade sector?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge the fact that there has been a drop in the employment area within the retail sector, but I would also ask the member to acknowledge the fact that, within the manufacturing area, within the wealth-creation sectors of our economy, we have had even some growth over the last month's year-to-date, and indeed it is within the wealth-creation area that ultimately the employment levels within the retail sector come from. That has been the whole approach from this government since we have been here. It is to try to set a foundation by which the wealth generators, those within the manufacturing sector, can provide employment to more people so that indeed the retail system can take root and expand.

That is the whole approach, different than the NDP at a different age, when they wished to borrow money to throw into the retail sector for a short period of time in the belief that that would generate wealth, Mr. Speaker. That system does not work.

Goods and Services Tax Harmonization

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Finance now guarantee to the House and the people of Manitoba that this government will not harmonize the provincial sales tax with the GST and thereby not impose any further sales tax burdens on the Manitoba consumers?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I have said in the closing of the last session—the Premier has indicated as early as September or October, again reiterated, and I will reiterate again—that the government absolutely has

no intention to harmonize the provincial sales tax and the federal GST over certainly the next budget and indeed, I would say, years beyond that.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I thank the minister for that answer, Mr. Speaker.

Economic Growth Employment Creation Strategy

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Will this government consider now finally or implement an anti-recession program, such as providing jobs for welfare recipients, given the fact that most of our economic indicators, most of them, show a continuation of the economic recession?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Well, Mr. Speaker, I am intrigued by the reference that the member just made. He seems to be saying, given the fact that our welfare rolls are expanding and we are committing several additional millions of dollars, that he now believes that those who are employable, who are drawing social assistance, indeed should be expected to work. If that is the position now, and I take that position seriously, I am intrigued—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Manness:—and I would be prepared to enter into a dialogue on that issue—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Manness: I am prepared to meet with the member after Question Period to discuss that issue, Mr. Speaker, and I say that in all sincerity.

If what the member though is saying is that we should indeed borrow yet hundreds of millions of dollars, like indeed we are paying the interest on now, the old Jobs Fund, a dollar which has not been paid back yet, and indeed borrow again significant amounts of money for short-term employment, I would say to him, that is deferred taxation, that represents a crippling to the manufacturing, indeed the retail trade sector, the emphasis on which he placed his first question. That is self-defeating, and that cannot be done.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to moving on to Orders of the Day, I would like to draw the attention of all members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon

from the Calvin Christian School thirty Grade 9 students. They are under the direction of John Buikema. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson).

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

Nonpolitical Statements

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, may I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

Some Honourable Members: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave? It is agreed.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a statement today to commemorate International Human Rights Day. I had the opportunity this morning to attend the conference at the Union Centre put on by the Community Legal Education Association. It is a wonderful conference looking at human rights and equality issues for a variety of Manitobans.

Yesterday, I was also able to go to the opening of the new Coalition for Human Equity Association which was also announced yesterday to commemorate Human Rights Day.

* (1420)

I would like to take the opportunity to mention the number of organizations that already are part of the Coalition for Human Equality: the Canadian Human Rights Coalition, the City of Winnipeg Community Race Relations Committee, the Department of Education, Bureau de l'Education Française, the International Centre for Students, The League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada, Manitoba Association for Rights and Liberties, the Manitoba Coalition of Organizations Against Apartheid, the Manitoba Ethnocultural Youth Committee, the Manitoba Federation of Labour, the Manitoba Intercultural Council, The National Film Board of Canada, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Popular Theatre Alliance of Manitoba, the Thompson Citizenship Council, the United Nations Association of Canada, Winnipeg Branch, as well as Victor Mager School, the West-Man Multicultural Council, the Winnipeg Boys and Girls Club.

Mr. Speaker, these are the kinds of organizations that work every day to ensure that community members and community groups are empowered. I would just like to say that to me that is what human rights is all about, because unfortunately in our society all things are not equal. Until all things are equal, human rights are not about treating everybody the same, but they are about ensuring that those marginalized groups and individuals are able to determine their own destiny and work for their equality. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Leave? It is agreed.

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): I, too, would like to commemorate International Human Rights Day. It is an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, for us as Canadians to reflect on the tremendous advances we have made as a society in the protection of human rights. We can all remember back to the days when the Charter of Rights was being debated by all political parties and by individuals right across the country.

We knew, and we would entrench a Charter of Rights and Freedoms as the fundamental law of Canada, that there were no losers; there were only winners. I cannot lose rights as an individual if you have rights as one, Mr. Speaker, and the best way to defend and protect collective rights in a society is to make sure that every citizen, every individual, is treated equally under the law, and what we did in 1982 was take a giant step forward to hold our head high as a nation, to say that any individual, regardless of where they live or from where they come, have equal rights as citizens under the law.

Today, International Human Rights Day, is a day for us as Canadians to rejoice on that tremendous accomplishment and to be forever vigilant to protect all of our rights as citizens.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Leave? It is agreed.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues. I join with other honourable members today in calling attention to December 10 being Human Rights Day. Indeed I had the privilege earlier today to attend a candle-lighting ceremony to observe and help us observe Human Rights Day and Human Rights Day activities. The lighting of that

candle is symbolic of those things which have gone on before, the progress that we have made and also symbolic of the fact that there remains much to do in terms of protecting the individual rights and liberties of people in our country.

I just join with all of those who share in my concern and the concern of my colleagues in this House about human rights and to remind everyone that the moment we stop being vigilant about human rights, the moment we start going in the other direction, and that is in the direction of losing our human rights. So I make those comments and join with my colleagues in observing Human Rights Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: Adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer).

For an Address to His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor in answer to His Speech at the opening of the session.

And the Proposed Motion of the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) in an amendment thereto as follows:

THAT the motion be amended by adding to it the following words:

But this House regrets that:

1. since assuming office, after September 1990, this government has been both arrogant and extreme in its disregard for the people of Manitoba;
2. this government's inaction, in particular in our key transportation sector, will lead to further economic tragedy, adding even more families to the rolls of those Manitobans who are unemployed or on welfare;
3. this government's inaction has been especially harmful in northern Manitoba where we are now experiencing unprecedented levels of joblessness;
4. this government has taken no initiative to guarantee farmers receive the real cost of production and, instead, has supported inadequate farm programs which continue to force family farmers off their land and is standing aside as the federal government abandons the Port of Churchill;

5. this government is allowing the essential health, education and social services Manitobans cherish to erode steadily through financial neglect and shortsighted and uncoordinated policy approaches;
6. this government, despite its words to the contrary, has failed to implement the vital recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry;
7. this government's environmental strategy is based on public relations and lacks a vision for the long-term stewardship of our natural resources;
8. this government continues to support the Mulroney Free Trade Agreement and remains silent on the proposed North American Trade Deal with Mexico.

And that this government has thereby lost the trust and confidence of the people of Manitoba.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it is a delight yet once again to join in the debate on the Speech from the Throne. It is an honour that each and every one of us has that we serve in this Legislative Assembly, and that was brought home to me very forcefully by a number of individuals on Saturday who came to the Assembly to not only celebrate the Christmas spirit but to join with their legislators.

So many of them said to me what a beautiful building it was, what a beautiful atmosphere this was and how did I feel when I walked into the building each and every day. I said, well, I still walk in with a sense of awe that I work within such a wonderfully constructed building. More importantly, I am in awe of our democratic process that gives us the opportunity to represent our constituents and to speak as I am speaking today in a free democracy.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech delivered in this Chamber last Thursday, unfortunately, reflects a complete vacuum of ideas and showed the total lack of vision of this government. It, sadly, contained nothing new and gave Manitobans no reason to hope for their future. The Premier and his government have adopted the do-nothing model, and even though they have commissioned in excess, according to our records, of 120 studies, the accompanying action or implementation plans are virtually nonexistent.

It is for this reason that my caucus and I are prepared to share with the government and the

official opposition our plans for the future of Manitoba. We are pleased that they have picked up our ideas in the past, such as the reduction of the size of City Council and rural revitalization through municipal bonds. Perhaps they can follow through on a few more after today.

The Liberal Party, Mr. Speaker, has been, since the days of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the party of reform, not to be confused with the party that simply calls itself that. It is the Liberal Party which is dedicated to the individual and the needs of individuals. We have not been co-opted by special interest groups, whether those special interest groups are business or labour, because to be so co-opted would not give us the freedom to speak out on the injustices which occur daily in our society. Righting these wrongs and creating a society of opportunities for individuals are among our goals, and to accomplish this requires a sound economy, jobs and respect and consideration for individuals.

Mr. Speaker, despite the occasional reports of the end of the recession, most of us living in Manitoba feel the same gloom that we have been feeling for some time. Job losses and layoffs have touched many Manitobans either directly or indirectly. All of us have felt the crunch of our wallets by the double whammy of GST and recession, and yet this is the very time when we are called upon to force ourselves to look out at the society around us and to look to help those who have been victimized by circumstances beyond their control.

It is not that we should not examine the fundamental cause of our malaise, but we must not allow the debate over the cause to prevent our action.

Mr. Speaker, we can argue at length about the causes of the recession. I think it is obviously clear that one thing is not the cause. We do not have a recession in Manitoba because of a lack of First Ministers' conferences on the economy. The First Ministers of this country, they should be reminded, are not the leading economic experts in the land, and certainly the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province and his Conservative cousin counting down his days in the Prime Minister's office are proof of that.

If the Premier had so much to say on the national stage of a First Ministers' conference, why could he not have anything to say in the Speech from the Throne? Since the Premier and his government are

void of new ideas to lift this province out of the recession, all he will bring to such a conference, it would appear, is an enthusiasm for a good photo opportunity and a chance to look like he is doing something.

We already know that interest rates are too high, that the dollar is too high and that the Mulroney government's rollback of federal transfers to the provinces are gutting much of what this country is most proud of.

* (1430)

What a Liberal Premier would be doing is working in Manitoba with Manitobans. We need a Manitoba strategy to train our people for new challenges and to put them to work. Our resolution calling for work force revitalization recommends as a start that we establish a system to track industry. This information would be used to predict which businesses face a shortage of qualified workers.

We would also identify those facing closures and layoffs. Our labour adjustment strategy would take these into account. We need a plan agreed upon among equal partners in labour, business, government and education, and we needed it yesterday.

We cannot ride out this recession doing nothing more than complaining about the obvious failures of the federal government. We need to get to work right here in Manitoba. We have the will, the skill and the people to do it.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Premier in his Speech from the Throne took some pleasure in talking about the wonderful activities that surrounded Grey Cup week. Well yes, indeed, they were wonderful activities, and they were the result of people from all walks of life working together to make it happen.

I am sure that Art Mauro did not ask them for their political party membership. All he wanted was people concerned about working together to make Manitoba do something very, very special.

One of the first priorities for action in this province must be health care. As a result of several recent leaks, we have seen the future of health care envisaged by the Conservative Party, and it is shocking.

Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson) wishes to conduct a conversation, could she do it elsewhere?

As a result of several recent leaks, we have seen the agenda. That agenda includes introducing user fees, some up front and some through the back door via extra taxation. It also includes some presently insured services being declared a luxury and hitting them with a luxury fee, and some services may be deinsured altogether, while others are to be capped.

The Conservative plan is to send more people out of the province for expensive services that will be terminated at home, a clear admission that the government expects and accepts that our neighbours will be able to provide what we cannot. Manitobans will have to rely on other provinces or states to prop up our health care system.

Our hospitals are on the block. We have seen the proposal to shut down one of them, and we have seen the proposals to close emergency wards, particularly that of Misericordia, while at the same time we know that the St. Boniface emergency room is overcrowded.

The government of this province is also considering an implementation plan for the marketing of Manitoba health care services in the United States, a plan which threatens to put the needs of fee-paying foreigners ahead of Manitobans. This is a depressing picture indeed, Mr. Speaker.

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

Now, I know that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), chirping in his seat, will repeat again and again that the plans I refer to are only the subject of consultations of the Urban Hospital Council and not the recommendations or policy. Well, even if the minister repeats his lines a thousand times, he will not dispel the truth of the matter. The truth is that these items have been on the agenda for months. The Deputy Minister of Health is the Chair of the Urban Hospital Council. The government has designed and oversees this consultation process, and, indeed, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) boasts about it at every opportunity.

The truth of the matter is this: If the government believed that the plans I listed are objectionable, it could very easily remove them from the agenda, but the government has not done that. It will not clear the air, so we can only conclude that these dangerous plans are indeed part of the Conservative agenda for health care.

The Liberal Party is working for a more forward-looking and a more constructive vision of health care in Manitoba. We are acutely aware that we do not have the money to maintain the current course indefinitely. We need a different approach that encompasses a new philosophy for efficiency of delivery of health care, and we need specific concrete measures to improve the way the vast system works on the ground.

We believe the key is to put the needs of the individual Manitoban at the forefront, Mr. Acting Speaker. People must come first.

The Liberal Party believes that the concept of community-based health care is the cornerstone around which we can build a secure foundation for the medicare system for the coming decades.

By putting facilities closer to the people who need them and making them more accessible we can treat many illnesses sooner before they become more serious and require more costly treatment. A community-based approach will allow us to construct an all-encompassing framework for wellness and illness prevention in our society rather than a system that can only respond to serious illness with expensive and complex treatments.

We must make technology work for us more efficiently. The most expensive -(interjection)-

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The most expensive and advanced facilities can be more centralized and therefore made more affordable, but that must go along with a community-based philosophy which will ensure that technology is indeed working for people rather than perpetuating a system in which people are subordinated to the needs of technology. The Conservative government talks a great deal about community-based care, but its actions undermine its rhetoric. The Conservative agenda is to wind down the health care system, to hack it and to slash it until the bottom line is reduced to match up with the quickly disappearing transfer of funds from the Mulroney government in Ottawa.

The Liberal agenda is a creative search for new approaches and ideas that put people first and which look ahead to a better health care system in coming years. Mr. Acting Speaker, the Liberal agenda also includes some specific actions that must be taken immediately in order to start a

realignment that will refocus the system on the needs of real people rather than exclusively on the bottom line. The Liberal Health critic, the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), has introduced several private members' bills and we are hoping for all-party support.

Mr. Speaker, the health care directives act is the product of extensive consultation and discussion led by the Manitoba Law Reform Commission. This bill will give effect to every Manitoban's right to self-determination as a patient within the health care system. It will enact the living wills concept and thus allow anyone to decide for himself or herself what sorts of treatment are unacceptable and allow the individual to refuse unwanted treatment. We are seeing an increasing number of cases across the continent in which individuals are attempting to assert control over their own lives and bodies in their final days, but are thwarted by entrenched and outdated attitudes and interests. These attitudes and interests are what we Liberals want to reform in the health care system so that people will come first.

In 1980, in May, I was called to Halifax because my father had had a major stroke. This was his second, his earlier one being ten years before. When I arrived at the hospital directly from the airport, he was lying there with his body gradually filling with fluids, attached to a number of machines. I said my goodbye and went to visit my mother, who said to me, Sharon, go back to the hospital and do what you have to do. Knowing that she and my father had consulted with each other, I did go back to the hospital and, working with the doctors, I asked them to disconnect the machinery. Little was I to know that some seven months later I would be called upon to do exactly the same thing for my mother.

I was lucky, Mr. Acting Speaker, because I knew what my parents wanted done. We had spoken about it as a family. I spoke about it again this summer with my own daughters. At 19 and 22, one does not think one should talk about those kinds of issues with one's daughters because they are obviously going to outlive you. But, with the death of Maria Lang in August at the age of 26, a close personal family friend, we realized that is not necessarily the case. Within a week prior to her death, we had had an incident in which Jennie had been thrown from a horse, and for a period of five hours they thought she had broken her neck. We wondered if we were going to be called upon to

make the same decision with respect to our own child.

* (1440)

The living wills concept, I think, is one which is long overdue. It is something that, by the way, can be enlarged to not only discuss the issues of final treatment when one is handicapped beyond measure, but it can also, I think, leave messages for those who are still living. In thinking about this with my own family, one of the issues I discussed was the fact that if I became incapacitated with something like Alzheimer's disease, I would want my husband to feel free to divorce me and to marry someone else. My daughters were quite shocked when I suggested that I would want him to do this, but I said no, anyone who is that good at being a husband should indeed continue to be a husband and if not to me then to someone else.

Those are the kinds of things that we can envisage within a living wills concept, where we can in fact tell those how we feel about our last hours, days, months and weeks on this life.

The second private members' bill is The Patient Records Access and Confidentiality Act. This bill will settle a long-standing dispute that has left patients on the losing end. Hospitals and doctors often treat medical records of individuals as the concern of everyone but the patient. If we are to treat the patient as the primary concern of the entire system, and indeed, the reason why the system even exists is for the patient, then we must end this absurd injustice and guarantee that patients have access to their medical records. We must also guarantee that the content of those records cannot be disclosed without the patient's permission.

Our bill will accomplish these things, Mr. Acting Speaker, and we hope that all of our honourable colleagues in this House will support it.

Each of these Liberal initiatives is another step toward putting people first in our health care system. We in the Liberal Party are realistic about shrinking resources. We are also optimistic that Manitoba is capable of preserving quality health care for all Manitobans.

As we all know, research and development and science and technology are keys to the future. A working group to include representatives from universities, government, labour and business would be established by a Liberal government to implement a plan for investment in the environment,

health, sciences, manufacturing, computing technology and agriculture.

The long-term benefits of jobs created would produce many other economic spinoffs. Longstanding misconceptions about an unfriendly business climate must be dispelled. Manitoba has a solid work force and a body of laws that protect both labour and management. However, lack of awareness and misunderstanding of laws and regulations that govern business can form barriers to investment and in fact barriers to job creation.

The Liberal Finance critic, the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), is therefore introducing a resolution calling for a review of proposed legislation and regulations for economic impacts. These would be reported to the Legislative Assembly for consideration of their desirability.

A good education is the foundation for a prosperous future for our children and for a prosperous economy. It is vital for the well being of all citizens of Manitoba to be guaranteed that our children and our young people prepare themselves to make contributions through education to the society in which they live. Liberals believe that all children have a right to a good education. A Liberal government would ensure that standards are upheld and schools are held accountable for their expenditure of government funds.

We have long called on the government to review school division boundaries, a process which seems to be in limbo these days. We also called upon them to revise the funding formula to ensure equity. I must say that the recent formula does not ensure that equity.

They speak, Mr. Acting Speaker, about taking from the rich and giving to the poor as if there were in fact some rich school divisions out there. The reality was that they took from the poor and they gave to the poorer. At the same time, they offloaded further their responsibilities to the municipal tax base.

It is not enough that we keep a quality of educational system, we must ensure that our children remain in school, and 30 percent of our senior high school students are dropping out. It is an unfortunate fact. It is also very true that in addition to those who drop out many find themselves unable to attend post-secondary institutions, particularly as a result of the cutbacks to our community colleges.

We have a student loan program, but student loans in dollar values have not changed since 1984. Students today are getting 60 percent in real dollars of what students received in 1984. It is shamefully inadequate. In addition, many students are now finding themselves unable to pay back student loans once they graduate from institutions, because they cannot find a job. -(interjection)- Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, the government is laughing on the other side of the House I think because some of them did find jobs and still refuse to pay back the student loans.

What we are talking about is the fact that because of very high unemployment statistics at the present time there are many young people graduating from post-secondary educational institutions who, in fact, are not able to find work. Yet within six months they are asked to pay back their student loan. It is very difficult to pay back a student loan when one has not found employment. That is why the Liberal member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) will be introducing a resolution to consider an income contingent student loan repayment program. This would allow for loans to be repaid via income tax once the recipient is earning a reasonable income.

These are fairer payment terms for students and indeed for taxpayers, because there is probably a better guarantee that those who can pay will pay. It will also make it easier for the student to pay, unfortunately, the greater percentage of their education cost, which is now being demanded by this government, and it will make the system more fair.

Educating our youth is only one step to creating a better quality of life for Manitobans. The revitalization of Winnipeg's inner city is another. The Liberal Party would encourage such an initiative. Progress has been made, but unfortunately the job is not yet complete. We must work to renew the Core Area Agreement and extend training programs and educational opportunities in particular. That is the genuine need.

I noted in the Speech from the Throne that was the focus of the government. They finally said they would put their emphasis on training. Mr. Acting Speaker, the city has been prepared at this point in time to put their money on the line. We have not been able to get this government yet to indicate their money is on the line.

Single mothers and disabled Manitobans would not, unfortunately, agree they have made much progress. They must have their hope and some opportunities returned to them. Taking away their educational opportunities, in the case of both the disabled and single parent mothers on welfare, is not the way to do it.

The Liberal Party recognizes it is not only the core that must be improved. The food banks of this province have never been so necessary. Why, in our affluent society, should women and children be forced to line up for handouts from food banks? In a just and responsive society no one should be asked to beg for their food. Yet that is what thousands of Manitobans must do.

* (1450)

Is it not time for a guaranteed annual income in this country, which would allow all citizens to live in dignity, an initiative that would remove bureaucratic duplication and waste while at the same time assuring a decent standard of living for all? If the federal government will not do it, and it is clear they will not, then should we not do it in the province of Manitoba? One province alone provided the impetus for a national medicare program. Manitoba piloted Mincome. Is it not time to put it back into effect now?

We should begin by harmonizing our social assistance programs with other social services to reduce inefficiency and duplication, a recommendation of the authors of the Mincome study. Choices of where our limited dollars are to be spent surely must reflect our values as human beings. Realistically, what is the point of the 30-inch super television set in a classroom when the child watching the video did not have breakfast before he or she went to school because there was no food in the home? Do we need to have the most sophisticated electronic sewing machines in home economic classes when we know that children do not have such things in their homes, or should we have a more realistic view, one which says that we teach long-term and not short-term skills, recognizing that the technology will become more sophisticated every month.

There is no way we can keep up with the technology. The more important thing is to teach principles, values and processes which can be applied and adapted to a changing world. Are we content to watch generation after generation live on

and perpetuate the welfare cycle or are we to demand reform and ensure that this cycle is broken by the provision of training and a help into the job market?

When will we as a province no longer force women to live on welfare because they do better on welfare than they will if they enter the work force? Surely, it is not reform-minded to ask a woman to deny her children funding while she takes employment, and yet that is what we do. Would we not be further ahead as a province to top her salary and allow her to take the employment opportunity so that she is earning more money working than she had on welfare and at the same time has her dignity restored? This is Liberal reform, reform that restores dignity, restores incentive and encourages participation of all persons, not just the political elite. This is the kind of reform a Liberal government would have addressed in a Speech from the Throne, unlike the current idea-free government Speech from the Throne last week.

There are other destructive cycles which must be broken. Although domestic violence has been an ongoing problem, only recently has it been subject to government intervention. The escalation of violence against women and children is one of the great tragedies of our time.

A Liberal government would act swiftly and decisively to stem this disturbing tide of violence. With the Pedlar report in hand we should proceed immediately to implement a number of its recommendations, most particularly those aimed at getting to the root of the problem, societal attitudes. One of the most important is a recommendation that the issue of domestic violence be added to school curricula from kindergarten to Grade 12.

I commend the member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) on the government benches for her recognition and therefore her resolution on the need for academic programs on domestic violence. Tragically, she does not have the ear of the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), it would appear.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

It is important for children to be taught that domestic violence, indeed, any violence is not acceptable in our society. Also, community advocacy response teams which would provide support and assistance to women and their children immediately after the police have responded to a call should be established. It is recommended that

the teams be run under the direction of a women's shelter. More educational and counselling programs for men who are abusive must be established. While programs do exist, Mr. Speaker, the waiting lists are long. Jail sentences alone will not rehabilitate the abuser.

While women and their children must be kept safe in the short term, long-term safety will only be secured by changing the attitudes and actions of the abuser. It is not only in the social fields that our reform attitudes must dictate our behaviour. As politicians, we must be prepared to reform the system in which we operate.

Mr. Speaker, we all know it becomes increasingly unpopular as the economic woes drag on, for politicians to talk about the Constitution. Manitobans are quite understandably concerned about their jobs and the economic security of their families, and so are we. Therefore, when we talk about the Constitution, it is not in pursuit of popularity. We do not talk about national unity and the Constitution because we think that is what voters want to hear. Other parties can base their strategy solely on what voters want to hear, but we will not.

We talk about the Constitution because it is a problem that must be solved once and for all. Even though its impact on people's daily lives are difficult to detect, its impact is real enough. We cannot have good government with a bad Constitution. Our children will not thank us if we leave them to correct our current problems of national unity and constitutional turmoil. It is our obligation to solve them now.

We Liberals have longstanding convictions about national unity and the Constitution, and our first conviction, Mr. Speaker, is that the Constitution belongs to all Canadians. One of the central problems of the last 10 years is that although no one would argue that the Constitution belongs to all of us, and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms made that even more clear, we still have an amending formula which empowers government leaders and their majorities in the Legislatures and the Parliament and no one else in the amending formula. The Constitution belongs to the First Ministers.

* (1500)

A Liberal government would have sought to correct that, and that is why the Liberal constitutional affairs critic the honourable member for

Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) has put before the House a private members' bill and a resolution calling for a constitutional referendum that would be necessary to ratify any proposals for change that the First Ministers produce. Such a referendum will not strip political leaders of their responsibility, but it will ensure that they exercise their amending powers responsibly. It will confirm that the Constitution ultimately belongs to the people.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in order to give the people back their Constitution, this province must press for a national referendum to be incorporated as part of the constitutional amending formula or, at the very least, hold a referendum in Manitoba before any amendment is passed. If our First Ministers will not trust the judgment of the people on their own Constitution, they are in no position to be trusted themselves.

We are prepared to extend our reform to our own operations. Should a constitutional package be presented to us in the Manitoba Legislature, our caucus will have a free vote. The Constitution of our nation must be judged by each and every one of us on its own merits and not controlled by so-called party discipline. This is, however, not the only political reform that must take place. Much of the silliness of this Chamber should disappear. The rules of the House much be changed. The Liberal government would have actively pursued such reform. Partisanship has gone too far, and we all too often look like children fighting over our toys. Moreover, the public has never been more cynical about its politicians and our political systems.

Where have the honest politicians gone, the public asks? What has happened to the time-honoured traditions of public service and the greater good? Well, we know that those principles are alive and well in all three political parties, but it is time to make the government responsive to the people it serves through reform.

Our party has been calling for these reforms in the House, and our ethics critic is proposing that government appointments be ratified by an all-party committee. This would not remove all patronage but it would, we believe, ensure that only qualified individuals were appointed to boards and commissions, because their appointments would be vetted through the Legislature.

We introduced this resolution in the last session, and it did not surprise us that both the Conservatives

and the NDP jeered at the proposal. It was disappointing because it is the continued, blatant pandering of the Tories and the NDP that give Manitobans the right to question the motives behind government actions.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, was a case in point. The Tories justified the inappropriateness of their actions by pointing to all the sins of the NDP. Two wrongs have never made a right. It is time for political parties of all stripes to clean up their acts and, therefore, we will continue to press for the reform of these activities.

The member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) will also be introducing a bill to prevent municipal and city counsellors from exploiting their positions for personal gain. Reform is also needed in our attitudes towards new Canadians. Well, Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the utterance from the members sitting in the Chamber are filled with the same kind of political cynicism that you see on the street every single day. Unless members of this Chamber are prepared to change it, then we will continue to have that cynicism.

Reform is also needed in our attitudes towards new Canadians. Mr. Speaker, I am very uneasy with the feelings being expressed by many about multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is what we are in Canada. Canada is a wonderful mosaic of all the colours, shapes and sizes of a human family. We worship in many different ways. We hold many different cultural values, but above all we are Canadians and we are Manitobans. As Liberals, we would direct multicultural dollars into a better understanding of ourselves through programs that focus on racism and its debilitating effects.

We must rid ourselves of the stereotyping of new and old Canadians. The day that any individual takes their Oath of Allegiance to our nation is the day that person becomes a Canadian, with no hyphens or prefixes attached. That Canadian shares with all of us the rights and responsibilities of our Canadian fabric, no more, no less than the rest of us.

To encourage those of us with the richness of culture, to share with our friends and neighbours is not a weakness. It is, to the contrary, the great strength of our province and our nation.

Let us not hide behind those who would speak of dollars wasted. A Liberal government would be bold and progressive and demand that greater

understanding and compatibility are the goals we have for multiculturalism. We need to protect vulnerable individuals from being victimized by others who would take advantage of their desire to become Manitobans and Canadians, specifically unscrupulous immigration consultants.

We were witness to a scandal in the last session which not only implicated some deceitful individuals, but also placed the government in disrepute. This government did nothing to protect the immigrants and indeed seemed more intent on protecting itself. They have given us no indication that they will do anything to prevent it from recurring.

That is why the Liberal MLA from Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) will be introducing an immigration consultant registry act. This registry would protect against fraud and corruption.

The Liberal Party also supports English as a Second Language programs, especially so that immigrants will have all of the opportunities available to make them productive citizens of Manitoba. We deeply regret there are fewer students now than there used to be. We encourage the continued existence of their culture, but we also know they have to have the necessary tools, and one of the most fundamental ones is the ability to speak the language of the workplace.

Other citizens of Manitoba have also been isolated. An incalculable disservice has been done to the aboriginal peoples of this nation. Let us work together with our aboriginal community to find ways to make them truly a part of our nation and not just grim statistics.

Everyone knows of the living conditions of these citizens. No one is proud of their plight. Until now Canadians have lacked the political will to change the direction. I believe we must work together to succeed in doing that. It is incumbent upon all political parties to take up their cause. We must start by ensuring their inherent right to self-government in our Constitution. Nothing else will do.

Like all Canadians, no matter where they live, that right must be subject to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, because first and foremost, no matter where we live, no matter what language is our mother tongue, we must first and foremost be Canadians. We must ensure that projects that flood their lands and devastate their land base do not proceed without assessment before dollars are spent on construction.

Megaprojects like Conawapa must be shown to be of benefit to all before they proceed. Political agendas all, unfortunately, in the past have been the basis for Hydro decisions. We must not make this next Hydro decision based on the political fortunes of any political party. Mr. Speaker, the government says the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report is not gathering dust. We just have to wait a little longer. That is what the minister said, but unfortunately, on the other hand, he tells us that some of AJI's recommendations can be implemented right away. Well, right away has passed, and right now we are still waiting for even a hint of action.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, what a Liberal government would have done. Indeed, there are AJI recommendations which could have been implemented right away, and we would have gone beyond that obvious observation to take action. A Liberal government would have implemented the most basic recommendation on the very same day that the report was released. On that day, we would have appointed an aboriginal justice commission and charged it with the mandate of advising, assisting and scrutinizing the government with respect to the implementation of the AJI.

This was a particularly wise recommendation and would have assured the public that the AJI would be an ongoing influence and would make a lasting contribution to good government and just treatment of aboriginals in society. It would have helped to bring in a new era of co-operation and openness among the peoples of this province and replace the air of suspicion which sadly still hangs around the present government.

The Liberal Party has introduced a resolution that will urge the government to do this. Unfortunately, the slogan "better late than never" is the most we can expect from the Conservative government. Another AJI recommendation, which a Liberal government would have seized upon immediately, is for a freeze on the disposal of all Crown land in this province until major outstanding land claims are settled. Until these steps are taken, the aboriginal community cannot be faulted for its suspicion about the sincerity of the government of Manitoba and its desire to bring justice to the aboriginal people.

Mr. Speaker, a Liberal government would have made it clear long ago that there will be no natural resource mega projects without meaningful agreements or treaties with all aboriginal peoples, because they need an iron-clad guarantee, and as

Liberals, and I believe Manitobans, we are prepared to at last give it to them.

There are other areas in which we would have acted immediately, Mr. Speaker, and such actions would have made an important step toward a lasting justice. The opportunity for immediate action has now passed. Of course, it is true that many of the AJI recommendations demand more time and more serious debate, but the Conservative government, because of its slowness to act on the issues it has admitted could be dealt with speedily, has so far failed to dispel the air of suspicion.

* (1510)

Seniors, too, Mr. Speaker, are a valued resource within our community. They possess the wisdom of experience. Unfortunately, many do not give seniors the respect that they deserve. In many circumstances, seniors are the target of abuse from family members and friends. Again, one of their backbenchers on the government side has recommended this and recognized it in a resolution, but nothing in the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, my party strongly opposes abuse of any kind toward any human being. We must support our elderly community and must ensure that they can spend their years without worry and without fear. While we see no action by the government to support seniors we will be introducing both an elder abuse resolution and a Pharmacare resolution, because many of our seniors face financial difficulties. A Pharmacare card system would allow them to pay only their deductible while eliminating the administrative delays in having to apply for the reimbursement to which they are entitled. We would prefer had these things been in the Speech from the Throne because then they would not be resolutions. They would be bills, and action would be taken to ensure an enhanced quality of life for our senior citizens.

Mr. Speaker, Manitobans and Canadians, and indeed most citizens of the world, have come to recognize the importance of protecting our environment. It is government's role to channel the public goodwill to positive action. The production and consumption of energy are responsible for many of the world's environmental problems. We would have liked to have seen an announcement in the Speech from the Throne that showed this government taking action, taking the lead in its own operations in reducing the consumption of energy.

Energy efficiency audits should be conducted on all government buildings. We know that. Energy efficient lighting should be installed and energy efficient motors should replace many of the industrial motors currently in place in most office buildings. Countless studies have clearly demonstrated that projects like these pay for themselves in energy savings, meaning that the environment wins and the taxpayer wins because less of their money is being spent.

The Liberal Party is also promoting changes to The Environment Act which do not require digging deeper into taxpayers' pockets. Legislation protecting environmental whistle-blowers is being introduced by the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards). It will protect employees who report on environmental infractions of the companies they work for. Such legislation will encourage employees to come forward, but more importantly, it will encourage companies to be better citizens as they will know there is a greater chance of their legal activities coming to the attention of the authorities. Once again, we will introduce beverage container legislation which we hope the government will finally take seriously.

The economic future of rural Manitoba lies with the residents of rural Manitoba. They are the people who understand the needs and the strengths of their communities. Government must be in a position to assist not direct rural Manitoba. We congratulate the government on the implementation of the Rural Development Bond Program. We even congratulate the minister in putting into place the safeguards that we recommended - (interjection) - and that is exactly, Mr. Minister of Health, what the minister did.

Another way for government to help these communities help themselves is to improve the communication and technological infrastructure of rural Manitoba. Instead of asking rural communities to come to the government for service, government should be taking the services to rural Manitoba.

We need to look at upgrading our distance education programs so rural Manitobans can get the training in their communities to benefit those communities. Some action has been taken in this area, but much more needs to be done.

If people are forced to leave their communities for education and training, we know there is a lower probability of their return. We also know many will not choose to leave and therefore will be denied the

opportunity. That is why the critic for Rural Development, the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), will be introducing a resolution to accomplish that. Unfortunately, if it was a Liberal government yet once again we would see legislation in this area.

The challenge facing government and the challenge that we must all take up is the revitalization of the farm economy. Government policy has been concentrated on short term survival. The economic and climatic conditions have necessitated this survival mentality. We have not put sufficient resources into the long term development and sustainability of agriculture.

A Liberal government would have liked to have seen or would have introduced, if we had been government, programs which would upgrade soil conservation programs and put less emphasis on water drainage and much more on water storage. Research into new crops and new farming methods must be emphasized. Most important, we would devise economic support programs that do not distort the markets or the farmers' decision on what crops they grow.

These are achievable goals and one we should be all working toward, because if I became aware of nothing else at the GATT meeting in Ottawa at the concerned farmers meeting and the briefing we received, it was that even if GATT negotiations are successful there will be no genuine relief for 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, in the prayer of St. Francis, it states: ". . . where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy." That Manitobans need a vision of hope, light and joy for the future is clear. What is equally clear is that this government has given up on finding it.

What my caucus and I propose are some measures which we hope the government will adapt, use, exploit if they will, steal. We cannot support a government that refuses to act. We cannot support a government that wallows in inaction. We cannot support a government that has absolutely no ideas. Above all, we cannot support a government that has no hope.

Therefore, I move, seconded by the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr), that the motion to amend the Speech from the Throne be amended by adding, thereto, the following words:

And this House further regrets that:

1. this government's inaction in providing a sound economic climate and employment opportunities is resulting in unprecedented levels of Manitobans joining the unemployment and welfare rolls;
2. this government has failed to proceed in good faith to settle land claims as was recommended in the aboriginal justice report;
3. this government is doing nothing to stop the erosion of our education system and is offloading the tax burden for education onto the property taxpayer;
4. this government is eroding our health services by focusing on cutbacks rather than on reforms like community health care, day surgery and preventative health measures;
5. this government is eroding our social services by ignoring community concerns and by unilaterally changing funding formulas and delivery mechanisms without consulting members of the community; and
6. this government's environmental strategy has been long on rhetoric and short on concrete measures like ensuring that existing regulations are being followed.

Therefore, this government has lost the confidence of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member's subamendment is in order.

* (1520)

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, like many of my colleagues or all the members in the House, it is once again a pleasure to participate in the Throne Speech Debate. I was checking to see how many times I have had the privilege of doing it, and it is either 16 or 17 times. I think this is the 17th time in a little over 14 years. I guess part of it is because we had an election last September and we are already into our third session, so you cannot always go by the amount of years you have been here.

I have to indicate, Mr. Speaker, from the first time on when I rose to speak in this House on the throne speech and I read this speech, very nervous and hyped up, that even to this day a certain amount of hype gets created every time you have the

opportunity to get up here and debate. Even when we have the openings, I enjoy the pomp and prestige that goes with the opening of a session. I like the gun salutes that we have, the role of the Lieutenant-Governor. It creates a certain amount of pride in those of us who participate in terms of participating in that kind of a function. I think it bodes well that we have this kind of performance with the time that we open the session.

Mr. Speaker, over the years that a person has participated in this building and in this process, great speeches have been made in this House, some not so great. However, I want to indicate that I found it very enjoyable, the mover's speech this year. I think he delivered a very good speech. Everybody has their own way of rating these, of course, and certainly the seconder as well. I would want to compliment him, the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) who carries dual responsibilities in our caucus as caucus chair as well as caucus whip.

I note with interest every time we start a new session that we have new pages participating, and I sometimes wonder when they start off in this process, Mr. Speaker, exactly what kind of thoughts they must have as they see the process developing here and wonder what kinds of characters are running this province. As they get to know the process, as we all have had to do over a period of time, I think it probably will be an enjoyable experience. Most of the pages that I have talked with after they have served their term have found it an enlightening and, in many cases, a worthwhile experience.

I want to indicate that it is always—the process that we go through never really gets stale because nothing ever remains the same. Sometimes—the other thing that I think about—the more we talk of changing things, the more they stay the same, although there are some changes that take place over a period of time.

For example, the thing I noticed in terms of changing, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that—I looked on the Order Paper yesterday and I looked on the Order Paper today, and we have 70 private members' resolutions on the Order Paper. It is mind-boggling compared to what we used to have. We used to have a handful of resolutions on there—and the bills, the amount of bills, private members' bills, that are coming forward. Just by the ones that were indicated by the Liberal Leader, you would think that

they were government. They have more bills on the Order Paper than the government has.

I have no difficulty with the Liberal Leader's enunciating the things they would do and the things we should do. I mean, that is the normal process, but to take and fill up the Order Paper with endless bills, I think that takes away from the importance of the bills that maybe should be given consideration. When you have 30 or 40 private members' bills on there, all the members of this House know the operations and know that many of them will not be touched. It will give the members who present them one chance that they can bring forward an issue and try and make some politics out of it, but as far as the potential for passing of these bills, it is very, very minute.

I have to say that I was one of the fortunate ones who passed a private members' bill in this House, and it was with the concurrence of all parties involved. The government of the day, whoever it is—and I was in opposition at that time—unless you have the support of the government to bring these bills forward and pass them, they get one shot at it and hardly ever see the light of day again, but there are really not that many changes that have taken place.

I listened with interest when the Leader of the Liberals (Mrs. Carstairs) lectured members here in terms of their conduct in the House. At times, I think we probably all should look to ourselves and say maybe our conduct should be improved to some degree, but you know, the perception of the public in terms of how they view us as politicians, we have brought that on ourselves together with the media. The fact that, in my view, from the time that we brought television into the Legislature, things started going downhill a little bit.

That is basically what the general public sees, is the performance during Question Period. Very seldom after Question Period do you have the media around. They pick and choose what they want to write about after that, but all the attention is based on the 40 minutes of Question Period, and I think it leaves a wrong impression out there because then we all have a tendency to try and be actors. I think it takes away from some of the prestige that I think this position as an MLA serving in this House really deserves.

I noted with interest the Liberal Leader's comments about all the things she would have done,

that they would implement immediately were they government. I can understand that, Mr. Speaker, having sat in opposition for six and a half years. It is easy. It is easy to take and criticize and shoot from the hip and say this is what we would do immediately, were we there. Unfortunately, I cannot really see the day, with all due respect to the Liberal Party, that they would be in government and be able to implement all those things they say now they would implement immediately if they were government.

Mr. Speaker, that is the process in this House. We all have our roles to play, and we do that as capably as we can.

I just want to make a little further reference about some of the debates that have taken place in this House, and there have been some great ones. I can recall people like Sid Green. I even enjoyed the speeches of Russ Doern who had a different style. Everybody has their own style in this House when they speak, and there are some that I like to listen to more than others. You also had a person like Sterling Lyon who was a dynamic speaker. You might not agree with what he said, but he was a dynamic speaker. I did not happen to agree with a lot of the philosophy that Sid Green spoke, but I thought he was a great speaker.

* (1530)

My colleague and the dean of the House, Harry Enns—and we still have that privilege of listening to some of his great orations that he makes in this House and he has made some dandies. If anybody ever wants to check through the records of his speeches of my colleague from Lakeside—

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): No, do not.

Mr. Driedger: He cautions not to, but there were some great ones—and many others. I am not belittling anybody whom I do not mention by name, but there have been great speeches and great debates in here.

I always made reference, and I speak again about Sid Green who was very capable at the time when I came in as a backbencher. I always said he could speak for 40 minutes about the head of a pin, and you would listen attentively through the whole process of his speech. When it was over, you did not rightly know what he had said, but you would really enjoy his speech. But he was a good speaker. It is not everybody's gift to be that.

Like I say, we all basically develop our own style and, surprisingly, in the little over a year since we had the election—you know, this is the Third Session—we have gotten to know each other, members of the opposition, government members. You start developing certain attitudes for each other—some positive, some not so positive, but I mean that is part of the process. Each time we have an election there are a bunch of new faces in the Chamber, and we learn to know each other a little better. In some cases, we learn to like each other a little better, not always either.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have a few more comments I want to make on the throne speech. I would like to spend the balance of my time basically talking about my portfolio and the Department of Transportation.

When we talk about the throne speech—and I have listened to quite a few and the way we all debate on it—by and large it is supposed to be a blueprint for the government of the action. There are a lot of fluffy things in there, generalities; the details come more in terms of the budget which comes down later.

This is the third one actually since '88, but this is No. 5, I believe, the throne speech that we have. In the first Speeches from the Throne that this government brought forward, we basically realized that we were in a recession, going into recession. We talked of controlled spending, keep trying to provide the services that were needed by the general public, but we, by and large, talked about the harder times, holding the line.

This particular throne speech is basically changing the attitude that we have as government, and, as our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has indicated, we are changing in terms of—we built the base, we now want to look forward to trying to have economic development and create jobs. That, to me, is the crux of the whole issue—jobs. Everybody needs to have a job or would like to have a job, I believe. Unfortunately, that is not necessarily the case.

Mr. Speaker, we have talked so much. There has been so much talk about doom and gloom, especially in this Chamber here, and you have to sort of start thinking how bad is it in this country. I had the privilege of listening to my federal colleague Jake Epp on Saturday speaking to a seniors group of 340 in the little community of Mitchell; he had just opened up a seniors centre out there. He actually

spoke along the lines that I have spoken from time to time, indicating let us look back a little bit, let us look back 20 years, let us look back 30 years, 35, 40 years and see what has happened in this province and in this country over that period of time.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) makes reference to some personal experience that he has had and the health aspect of it and to a family. I do not like to really do that, but I can recall when I was a youngster and my grandfather retired from the farm. At that time you did not have a big retirement package and invariably you had relatively big families, as was part of the Mennonite tradition I think. You know, there were big families and ultimately some of the family took over the farm, but by and large there was never a big money transaction so that the parents could retire comfortably financially. So invariably the family got involved in looking after their parents to some degree, and they lived in a house—whatever they could afford at that time and needed some assistance to be able to look after themselves. You know, I can think back that far, which maybe makes me pretty old but I do not feel that old.

What I am trying to illustrate is, there was no pension plan at that time. There was no proper hospitalization at that time. There was no senior's housing at that time, and people lived as best they could at that time, and the quality of life was not that bad. The expectations of people were not that high, but the quality of life was not that bad. I can recall with fondness growing up, and I know that we were not affluent. There were seven of us in our family. We were relatively poor. We made do with what was there and, I think, enjoyed a relatively good lifestyle. Expectations have changed so much over the years. At that time even the welfare system was very, very marginal.

So when we talk of doom and gloom at a time that this recession that we have just come through—and I hope we are starting to swing out of it. People say it was as bad as the 30s. Uh-uh, not so. I mean, there is no person—by and large we have programs; we have welfare programs; we have hospitalization programs; we have housing for seniors; we have good programs. They are costing us a pile of money. All of us who basically work pay a lot of taxes to try and provide those programs, but do not ever say things were as bad as they were in the recession because we have a standard of living that is envied by the world. When we talk of doom and gloom all

you have to do is read the papers in terms of what is happening in other countries, and I am not referring to Russia alone. I am referring to many of the other countries, the despair, the unrest, the tragedies that are happening there. We are fortunate.

I would like to think we are the most fortunate people in the world compared even to the Americans. You know, we have things that I think stand very positive in our stead and we should talk about those things. Why do we not talk about a positive attitude? We have come through some tough times. Let us talk about the good things that are happening.

Let us continue to strive, and this is part of the program that the government has put forward. Let us develop economic programs that will take and allow people to have jobs. I happen to have—one of my daughters is unemployed. I know the tragedy of unemployment. I know the tragedy of single parents. It is not simple. It is tough, but we have to create that environment. I have very often said this and I think I have even said this in the House, if I had a million dollars, would I put it on the line to try and make more money, or would I just put it in the bank and just live off the interest? In order for people to invest money that they have, you have to create the environment so that they have a chance for a return. I have no problem with the profit theory, and, if you do not offer individuals, investors a chance to make money, why would they invest? If people do not invest, you do not have jobs. That is what it is all about.

I just want to indicate that by and large we have come through some tough times. The farmers are in a terrible plight. We realize that. To the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), I want to indicate that the programs that we have directed towards the agricultural community—there are still people out there that are good farmers, have had chances, third-, fourth-generation farms that are not in the dire stress that some are. It is the younger farmers by and large that have the stress factor on them.

In some cases it is a matter of management, and we have to accept that and deal with that as well, as we do in the business community. Not everybody is a good business person. It is a very competitive world out there, and if you cannot compete properly and be a good manager, you might go broke. And this is what happened when things get tough. We have always said agriculture was the main thrust of this province, and once agriculture suffers, the ripple

effect goes right through the whole society, and that is what has happened.

I am hoping that the GATT agreements—the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) indicated even if the GATT agreements are successful it will be ten years before it turns around; I happen to think that it will not take that long. But what I basically would like to bring forward is that for all of us, I think, it is incumbent on us to try and talk on a positive scale because we need to have a positive attitude. If the positive attitude does not come out of this building and from us as leaders, where is it going to come from? Where is the enthusiasm going to generate from?

Mr. Speaker, the economic recession that we had—by and large I am still hoping that we have hit bottom, and just because we have hit bottom and started turning it around does not mean there are not going to be more people going broke. There are still going to be farmers who are going to be going broke. There is pain out there, but I would like to think that things are going to start getting better and move ahead.

The economic recession that hit affected all parts, not just Manitoba. It has affected Canada, it has also affected everybody on a national scale, but even look at the Americans. Look at what happened to Bush's popularity that right after the war was at 90 percent popularity, but because of the economic conditions in the States as well, he is down to what—forty something? So I am just saying that it is not just this province, it is not just this country, it is much broader than that.

That kind of impact has also affected the transportation industry which comes under my jurisdiction. I listened with interest when the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) spoke and berated the government and was critical of what was happening in the transportation industry in the province. There is some merit to the comments that he made, and I want to indicate that there is difficulty in the transportation sector. There is. We have been subjected to deregulation in the trucking industry; we have trouble in the trucking industry through deregulation.

* (1540)

We have a federal minister—and I want to be more specific about that because in Question Period it is very hard to deal with some of the questions that come in terms of how you deal with a broader

problem. There is not time to do that, so I enjoy the time that I have in order to expand a little bit on this. The federal minister, whom I happened to meet last week, Wednesday, indicated that he had given a mandate to CNR to be cost efficient, and that made me very nervous.

I also met with the chairman of the CN Board, Mr. Smith, and by the time my conversation with him was ended, I did not have a comfortable feeling at all.

I raised the issues with him, and I will indicate to members here that the issues that I raised with him were nickel and diming—I should not call it nickel and diming because it has much more impact than that, but how they gradually delete certain aspects of the operations at CN here in Manitoba. It is not unnecessarily a transference of jobs, there has been some of that, but what they do now, in my view, is they take and cut out a certain portion of the project of CN's operations, delete it, and then gradually maybe rebuild it in Edmonton. I raised that with him. I have raised these concerns with him. I raised the concerns, and I want to spend some time on Churchill as well.

I have to indicate that we consider ourselves, and I think everybody agrees, as a transportation centre. We export transportation services, whether it is trucking or whatever it is, trucking especially. I mean, I have always indicated that trucking or transportation is to Manitoba what oil is to Alberta, what potash is to Saskatchewan. We are an exporter of transportation services.

This whole recession has affected that too. We have had trucking outfits going broke. I have major concerns in that regard. However, I mean this just does not happen here, this is a wide-spread thing, so if the criticism comes towards the Minister of Transportation in Manitoba, that he is not turning things around, it is not quite that simple.

I want to indicate to members some of the concerns that are coming forward. I have met with the Wheat Board. I have met with the Grains Commission. I have met with the federal minister. I have met with the chairman of CN. I have also had Shirley Martin out, who happened to co-chair the Council of Ministers' Meeting that we sponsored here in September.

I have to indicate that I think Mrs. Martin is a very intelligent minister. I have some comfort, because when we co-chaired, the federal minister could not

make it, and Shirley Martin, who is the Minister of State for Transport, responsible for grain movement, herself and myself co-chaired that meeting.

At that time, I extended an invitation to her to come out, and I would take her out to Churchill. Within two weeks, she responded, she came to Winnipeg, we flew out to Churchill, and we had a good tour. We had good meetings with the people outthere, and I broached it to her this way: if you are going to be involved in the decision making, come and see what it is all about. The one assurance I had when we came back, I think she was impressed. She indicated to me that she would make sure that we were dealing with straight figures, because everybody has been giving us figures from all over the map. The enemies of Churchill play it one way; other people play it a different way.

We have always said it is more cost efficient to ship grain through Churchill. It is if you would operate it on the basis of shipping enough to make the port viable. If you ship 600,000 tonnes through there, then the port is viable, then the rates are different, but when you ship 230 as happens this year and they prorate that across the cost, then the costs are not cost efficient.

I took the privilege of taking her down there, and I am hoping to set up a meeting, because there are further positive things that I think are coming forward in Churchill. It is my hope. We are in the process of trying to arrange a meeting with her to meet either here or in Ottawa. I want to take my colleague the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Downey), as well as the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson). The three of us want to sit down and meet with her, maybe even the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), who also plays a role.

We want to sit down and decide where are we going with Churchill. I want to raise this as a serious concern. I have suspicions the decisions which are going to be made in the next six months could affect Churchill very negatively.

I know that CN would like to get rid of the line; they would give it to us for \$1; they would like to just get rid of that line. I know that Ports Canada has operated this year with a \$2 million deficit, and that they are using that as a reason why they feel they cannot maybe open it up again. The federal minister has made not very comforting statements about

some of the things the way they are operating. All these things are creating problems.

I know that I am going to look for suggestions as well, but I certainly know that, together with my colleagues, we will make every effort to try and put the case forward on Churchill as strongly as we can. We have a problem; I sense we have a problem coming up.

The federal minister—and one comment made I think just three or four weeks ago—indicated that there would be a decision made on the future of Churchill before the next shipping season.

Mr. Speaker, the dilemma of Churchill did not happen overnight. It has been a gradual—and I have used the word—“strangulation” for many years, not just the three and a half years that I was minister. This demise already started long ago—what is it, 20 years ago when we had a population of 7,000 in Churchill. We are down to less than 1,000 now. There are major problems developing within the infrastructure in the community; ongoing funding is required for the complex, close to \$1 million, and the complex is not getting any newer.

We have major problems with Churchill, and we will do everything we can in terms of making sure that we keep Churchill going. I want to stress very strongly—I mean, the federal government would like to offload their responsibilities of Churchill onto us, and they have a responsibility there. In fact, when it was raised somebody said, why is Churchill so important to Manitoba? You almost get flabbergasted when somebody asks why it is so important.

It is part of a very national motherhood type of thing for us, besides economics—the only inland port. When we talked to the Wheat Board—and I want to talk about the Wheat Board a little bit as well. In my meeting with them, I indicated that by and large—and I wrote a letter to Gorbet on this matter indicating that if we are selling wheat to Russia and we are financing it, then the Wheat Board should be able to dictate where they pick it up.

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

I will be tabling in the House within the next week after my meeting with the Wheat Board people, the guidelines under which they operate so that everybody has an understanding. They maintain that they have constantly offered Churchill as an option and that the individual buyers in terms of

negotiating still have their preference of where they pick it up.

We have problems developing on the West Coast with the grain movement; we have ongoing—certain problems with the St. Lawrence Seaway. Churchill is a thing that—by and large if the Russians wanted to, they have the kind of equipment that they could probably pick up grain for eight months of the year.

Then I want to talk about CN a little bit. First of all, in connection with Churchill because the rail line, the rail itself, is a heavy duty rail. It could carry hopper cars. The indications are that the rail bed is not adequate for that kind of—for the hopper cars to be taken down. We have hauled hopper cars, and the manager of Churchill has written this and requested saying, why do you not send hopper cars down?

CN has indicated that they are not prepared to send hopper cars down because the line is not stable enough, because of the oscillating effect, that you would have derailments. The cost of rehabilitating the line—we are talking from CN's figures of well over \$100 million—to Saskatchewan, which has finally come onside. You know, the previous Minister of Transportation for Saskatchewan, Sherwin Peterson, turned out being very supportive of Churchill because most of the grain that goes through Churchill comes from the Saskatchewan catchment area. Our grain basically by and large goes all the way down to Thunder Bay.

* (1550)

There are so many pros and cons of the issue with Churchill that I almost feel like it is my Achilles' heel to some degree because it is such a frustrating experience. CN is doing everything they can, in my view, to not service that line anymore. Ports Canada, I have my doubts as to what their views are on the matter. We have all the private grain companies that do not care.

You have a federal government from whom we have tried to wrestle a long-term commitment and cannot get that, and I still cannot get it. It is frustrating because my feeling is, if the federal government or the federal minister would give some indication of a long-term commitment to Churchill, just in principle, that CN, Ports Canada, everybody else would start playing ball, but we cannot get that. Because we cannot get that, I have great fears that we are into a very crucial stage with Churchill. So the whole transportation industry is getting shook up and there

have been changes, and I say the recession probably has an impact on it.

There is some encouraging news that came out just over the weekend where the federal minister indicated some changes that will basically address the trucking industry, the rail industry and the airline industry in terms of depreciation rates and rebates on fuel. So I think this will help to take and enhance the transportation industry to some degree.

The one thing that I felt that the federal minister seemed to have a very good handle on was the air bilateral agreements on which we raised our concerns very strongly, that the interests of Canadian Airlines and our own should be a priority. We have one of our key people out there participating in the ongoing negotiations that take place, and we want to make sure that by the time this deal is cut, if there is a deal cut between Canada and the U.S. in the air bilateral agreements, that we are in a better position than we were last time these negotiations took place.

I will not go into too terribly much detail on that aspect of it, just to indicate there is no agreement cut yet. We have brought forward our concerns, and I think that they are operating on those lines, that we are trying to stay away from cabotage, which in my view should not be on the table, that by the time we have an agreement it should enhance circumstances for us in Winnipeg, in Manitoba because we are actually a hub.

I am going to come back to the fact that we are a transportation hub, you know, for actually almost North America, and that is why people like UPS, the air freight people, and others are starting to develop and come in here because it is just a natural to do it from here. We want to make sure that we enhance every opportunity for us in Manitoba and for all our people here in terms of employment and investment, and I think it is coming.

Maybe just to indicate the importance that this government places on economic development, the fact that our Premier (Mr. Filmon), in my view, has put his reputation on the line by making himself chairman of the Economic Development Committee that we have. That is taking a very positive step, because if the Premier himself does that, if it does not work, he is bound to face the consequences as all of us will, but we feel that confident that the time is right, that we have set the base.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has constantly said, we have developed a base to make it comfortable for people to come and invest here. I cannot help but give a shot to what is also helping us a little bit is the fact that we have a government in Ontario that has just made a mess of things out there and the people out there are not comfortable. The investors and the business community are very uncomfortable with what is happening in Ontario, in fact to the point Ontario has made such a dismal mess as government out there that Saskatchewan and B.C., also NDP governments, want to dissociate themselves from it. Is that not saying something? They do not want any part of it. They are a different type of government. They are a different type of NDP. Those are things that I think will stand us in good stead in Manitoba in terms of creating jobs.

I want to just touch a little further on the trucking issues. When the memorandum of understanding was signed by all provinces—at that time it was the NDP in government; the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) was the minister—we moved through that process in Manitoba. I supported the position that was taken by the then minister that we should take five years to deregulate, to allow the industry to sort itself out, and we have stuck to that plan to some degree. It is virtually over at this stage of the game, but the reason, we have always worked very closely with the trucking industry in Manitoba. We have a good relationship with them in terms of trying to address their concerns.

Other provinces did not fare that well and that is why when these trucking strikes took place—they took place in Ontario and basically B.C.—we had taken a much more positive position on their behalf. Ultimately, we also have to deal with the interprovincial truck regulations which are very sensitive to the rural area, and we want to make sure that we do it in such a way that it will not be a detriment to the rural communities.

I want to just make a few comments on the situation with CN by and large and the difficulty I envision. In my meetings, as I indicated before, I have not received a comfort level from the people whom I have dealt with that there are not going to be ongoing problems in the industry. The rationale they used to me, and I certainly am not going to be defensive of CN or anybody if it is going to cost jobs in Manitoba, they indicated they were pursuing

actively expanding their economic business, and a lot of that is into the States.

I want to caution them—unfortunately, my critic might not hear these comments, but hopefully he will read them—because the one thing that creates a lot of concern and consternation out there is the rumors that from time to time come forward, and that creates anxiety for the people who have jobs on the line. Again, at this time of year, and I have said this publicly, what a terrible thing to face if all of a sudden, two weeks before Christmas, you were notified that you might be laid off or your job is terminated. For young married people with families, it must be horrendous, and I cannot really envision what that would do to a person. It must be very desponding.

I empathize with that and have indicated before that we will, as government, do everything we can in terms of trying to retain every job we can in Manitoba. Whether our approach is acceptable to members of the opposition, that is a matter of debate, but I can tell you, the dedication—we will do everything at our disposal in terms of making that kind of a commitment to the people of Manitoba. That is why, with CN, I have some reservations. I have some reservations.

CN has indicated that they are going to be looking to expand their economic base and that this should enhance employment. Tongue-in-cheek again, you know, I want to just say that I hope—I really, sincerely wish them well because that should enhance employment situations.

They also indicated when there was talk of bypassing—I want to clarify the issue where the talk was about bypassing Thunder Bay because some grain and some products were moving into the States. In my conversation with the Wheat Board and with CN, it is off-board grain sales that go to the States. You have to get it there. Same thing with potash, these are sales that are going to the States. You have to get them down there. It is not a matter of bypassing Thunder Bay, because ultimately Thunder Bay is still the lifeline, the secondary lifeline, in terms of grain exports, because we are almost at the maximum at the West Coast right now.

When we talk of helping the farmers and sharing, I just want to impart this little comment as well. While the farmers were getting \$2-and-something a bushel of wheat, the lowest, and creating devastation in the province and across the western

provinces, the workers at the West Coast go on strike. The money that it has cost the agricultural community—over 40 ships were in the bay waiting, and we paid the penalties in every one of those for every day that they waited out there not being able to load.

When we talk of the members opposite who by and large work very closely with unions, where the unions basically dictate to them, when Romanow went down to Ottawa to plead on behalf of the farmers, he should have on the way back gone right down to the West Coast and pleaded with the union people to take and give consideration to the serious plight that the farmers are in and made them go back to work.

Part of the reason, if you ever want to get into the details of why they are striking, right now they work their regular hours and then they work overtime. If they would work seven-day shifts, 24 hours a day, eight-hour shifts, they would move the grain out of there. There would be more jobs created. That is not how it works, you see. They are the ones who want more money when the agricultural farmer is basically losing their shirt and going broke.

There should be a bit of common sense being used in this and balance these things off. When we get so critical of certain aspects of it, let us do this fairly. I always believe in using a broader scope in time, being reasonable and fair. I have tried to establish that kind of a position in this House from time to time. I get carried away like other members from time to time when I take a few good shots, and I think that is part of the process that we have in the House.

Those are some of the issues I wanted to touch on in transportation. I want to just before I close indicate that in the construction aspect of it that I feel very proud of the kind of program that we have been able to deliver in the last two years. By comparison of what happened under the previous administration, if they had not let it slide to the point that they did, we would be spending possibly, using the rate of inflation, \$130 million or \$140 million in capital construction alone. This is a very important part of the economic piston that drives the economy here, job creation, et cetera. Even at a time when government was struggling in terms of trying to make commitments and we were trying to hold the line and seeing whether we could rationalize our operations, my capital program stayed in the last three years at 106.5.

* (1600)

The one thing that did happen though this year, Mr. Acting Speaker, is the fact that this year we had—I called it an unnormal year. Maybe it was a normal year, because prior to that we had five years where it was dry. Every time you have had a contract, even in fall, a contractor would be out there and three weeks later he would have the job done. It was very difficult to try and stay within the limitations that the budget allowed.

This year we have had a little bit of a reverse in that respect. We have had rainfalls. We have had problems developing in terms of completing our projects. We have three communities where by and large we have ripped open the streets and have not been able to complete the job. Come springtime, there is going to be a big mess and a lot of phone calls.

I have to indicate that I am very proud of my department, of Highways and Transportation, the 2,500 people who work for me, and enjoy the challenge and look forward to the coming session.

Thank you.

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): I have been looking forward to this Throne Speech Debate, and I welcome the chance to participate today. I am going to take a bit of a different approach given that it is International Human Rights Day, given that we had an emergency debate on December 6 on violence against women and given the state of our economy and the state of society that we are in right now. I am going to focus my comments on the plight of a number of citizens living in our society who are suffering terribly.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

I am going to start off my comments by talking a little bit about politics as we experience it today in our political culture. Being the multicultural critic, I will talk a little bit about our political culture. I am also going to talk a little bit about power as we experience it in our political culture, and I am going to then make some comments from the notes I took when we heard the Speech from the Throne. I am going to hopefully have time to end off with talking a little bit about what is going on in a lot of the communities right now that are being hardest hit by the recession.

So to start off with, what I also did was I looked back in time just over a year ago when those of us who are new were first elected, and I pulled out my initial Throne Speech Debate. A lot of people

commented when they rose to speak on the throne speech this time around, how they were nervous and how much of an awesome experience it was or how they felt when they rose to speak for the first time in the House.

It was interesting for me to look back and see some of the comments I made, and I wanted to look at how my perspective and position might have evolved or changed. I also wanted to look at the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) comments and his response to some of the comments I had made, particularly when I talked about a feminist analysis. A feminist political analysis, I think, is fairly new to the political scene in Canada.

It was not long ago that women were not allowed to vote. It was not really that long ago. It was not that long ago that women were not allowed to go to university. It was not that long ago that women were not allowed to do a lot of things that we now do. That is sort of one of the things that I wanted to focus on, because I think a lot of us who are part of the political debate who are women come upon the task that we have from quite a different perspective.

When I speak of a feminist analysis, I think central to that feminist analysis is a different definition of power. I want to talk a little bit today about a feminist definition of power and how politics hopefully will change because of a different orientation to this thing that we call political power.

Political power or power in our economy and society as we have seen it practised for the last number of centuries has been oriented around control and domination and authority to mean that certain people in our society have the right to have control over others. This is something that I reject, that a lot of people, I would say, on this side of the House also reject, that the definition of power which equates power with control and domination and that kind of thing is to be rejected if we are really going to change in society.

It is interesting that during the government's comments on December 6 which commemorated the catastrophe in Montreal two years ago on that day where 14 women were killed, they referenced the need to have fundamental changes in society and fundamental changes in our attitudes if we are going to deal with the problem of violence against women and violence against a lot of other members in our society, but primarily the violence of men against women. This relates directly to this notion of

power, that power is defined as the right to control and have domination over other people.

I would suggest that a feminist definition of power has more to do with the power to relate, the power to have empathy, the power to understand, the power to reach consensus, the ability then to get along, to put it simply, and the power to develop those kinds of skills as people and as a society. A friend of mine used the phrase—right now we need empathy, not apathy.

One of the concepts that is central to a feminist orientation or perspective, which is a political perspective that I would say I believe in or try to be guided by, is the phrase, the personal is political. What this means is that when I as a woman experience a personal problem—violence against women, for example, if I am experiencing violence—that because we live in a society where I can be guaranteed that if I am suffering violence, it is likely that a number of other women in similar relationships are also experiencing that same violence.

So one of the first principles of this concept "the personal is political" is that when I have a personal problem, I can bet my boots that a number of other people in our society are suffering a similar personal problem. That makes it political in the sense that there will be a group of us who can form a political group that are being oppressed by violence against our person.

So the other thing that happens in a feminist analysis is there is this sense of collectivism that then we cannot view an individual problem as simply that. It gets into the whole area which I will lead to later talking about collective rights, but central to this idea of the personal is political is what happens when people are in a system that insists that their problems are personal problems when they are not. So what happens is the victim is blamed, and over and over again, if we are talking about violence against women, if we are talking about aboriginal injustices, if we are talking about child exploitation, if we are talking about a number of other groups such as people who are poor, they are often blamed for those problems.

We see over and over again how that happens. People on welfare are told that they are lazy and they should go out and find a job, but people are never told that there are no jobs to be had. People who are on welfare and have three degrees and are

unemployed and do not want to take a job that is going to pay them \$4.50 an hour are told, well, you should be thankful that you can get any job. All of those kinds of things are related to this notion that you can blame the individual person for a problem that is systemic, a social problem and a political problem.

* (1610)

The other thing that a feminist analysis would uphold is that a lot of the problems that we are experiencing in society today are not only social-political problems but they are a function of the way that society is structured. The society that we live in, unfortunately, is structured in a pyramid or a hierarchy where there are a few positions of power and authority at the top and a very large number of people at the bottom who fit into the base of the pyramid who basically are disempowered. They have no access to positions of authority and power which are very limited. They have a number of experiences which eventually become what seems to the rest of us to be quite self-destructive: alcoholism, domestic violence, drug abuse, all sorts of other kinds of similar problems.

The political analysis that I subscribe to tries to explain this by looking at what happens to people who are disempowered because they exist in a political structure, a societal structure which systemically limits the number of people. I can talk more about how our economy does that, that can have access to prestigious, well-paying jobs. All of these people at the bottom of the pyramid who are either on welfare or the working poor, which I was horrified to see make up the large percentage of people who live below the poverty line, go through a process of disempowerment which involves them internalizing their oppression.

This is where I want to spend some of my time talking because I think that this is again misunderstood and again it leads to us blaming victims, who are, as I said, often stripped of their rights, people, for example, who are mental health patients, children who enter our youth justice system—not so much even the youth justice system, the child welfare system, I should say.

All of these systems that we hope are going to take care of or protect people who are being exploited or disadvantaged in our culture and in our society, often the very systems that are there to protect them end up disempowering them even

more. This is a function of the political structure which is hierarchical and has this orientation of power and control being centralized at the top and having an effect of making decisions for the people whom they are trying to represent or take care of.

The big thing that happens to these people who are involved in this kind of a system who have no power or access to power is, as I was saying, they become disempowered. That happens because they internalize the discriminatory attitudes that are prevalent in the society. By discriminatory attitudes I mean things like sexism, homophobia, ageism and racism.

It is when people internalize the attitude that they have fewer rights and they start believing that for themselves, that is when they really get into trouble. I experienced this first hand because before being elected I worked for a couple of years as a counsellor, both in a high school and doing employment counselling and running a youth program. I was both horrified to see the kinds of things that people could suffer, but also totally amazed and impressed by the things that people could suffer and still hang on to their spirit and their sense of personal empowerment.

I witnessed the stories of a number of young people who had been horribly battered and abused and raped and totally violated in a number of different ways, and was always amazed to see their courage, and the way that they would fight back, and the way that they would not allow completely their being to be destroyed. Many of us, I think, would think that that would be the obvious outcome.

As we saw the other night on TV, there was a program that highlighted a young man who is now currently—I think he is in a Manitoba prison. I am not sure which one. They tried to look at what makes someone become the kind of criminal that this man had become. Again I go back to this feminist analysis that I am trying to describe for you which looks at the process that people go through when they are having their person attacked and when they are being disempowered in the way that I am describing, when their human rights are being violated.

One of the things that can happen is that they can internalize it as I have described and blame themselves and buy into the whole idea that it is their fault that they are unemployed or a victim of violence or racism or whatever. Or, they can externalize it and

blame others and then they lash out and they become violent.

I wanted to go through that because I think it is important for us to look at how our attitudes are manifested in the kind of society we have, and how many of these attitudes—again the sexist, racist, homophobic, ageist kinds of attitudes we all carry—because we carry them, they are manifested in the kinds of institutions and organizations we create. I think that this is what has happened over the centuries in our culture and it has led us to the point we are at today.

I would suggest that one of the things that has led us to both the economic and environmental crisis that we face right now is because women's perspective has been denied, and it has only been even in my lifetime that women have even started to gain equal access to all the positions that exist and the roles that exist in our society.

Part of this has to do with a holistic way of looking at the world and of thinking, which is another basic part of the feminist political perspective. To look at the economy in a whole way means that we cannot divorce the economy from the environment, we cannot divorce the economy from the social needs in the community, and we realize that industry and the work force are connected and industry and business have a responsibility to put back into communities what they take in the form of natural resources and the resources of labour.

Until this starts happening, I would suggest that we are going to continue to see environmental exploitation. We are going to continue to see the exploitation of workers, particularly workers who are nonwhite, who are young or elderly or women. Until we can restructure—

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): How can you say that?

Ms. Cerilli: Have you been listening? Then you will understand how I can say that.

I can say that because, until we realize that there needs to be a cycle in the economy where the people who have power and money and authority are taking responsibility to put some of that back into the economy through progressive taxation, since the banks and the multinational corporations and the larger business institutions have centralized capital monetary resources there, and it is not the fact that there is not any money; there is sufficient

money. Unfortunately we spend far too much of it still in the arms trade, but there is a lot of money.

The problem is the distribution of those resources. I guess that is the premise. Part of the problem of Conservative economic policy, from my perspective, is that they continue to centralize power and monetary control rather than ensuring that there is equal access through a variety of methods.

* (1620)

One of the things that is happening—we have all alluded to the number of people who are experiencing hardship—is the Conservative attitude that you should, in times of recession and economic downturn, dismantle the Civil Service. The Civil Service should be increased at a time when there is an economic downturn because people need more government support.

Unfortunately, this government has chosen to put that government support into welfare rather than into education and job training programs. To put \$30 million more into welfare at a time when employment is at a peak is ludicrous. The logic of that just escapes me, rather than putting those same dollars into education and job training programs.

Part of it, as I understand it, is a Conservative notion that jobs that are outside the public sector are not real jobs and they do not really create any wealth and therefore they are not jobs. I have been a teacher and worked in the school system; therefore, I was paid with tax money. I have also run employment programs that were paid by tax money. I can guarantee you I worked very hard for my salary and that those were legitimate jobs, even though it was paid through tax dollars.

I think the same would be true for any of the people who work in the public service, who are employed in any of the departments that this government is overseeing. Those people have legitimate jobs. What we need are more services in areas, for example, like environment, like cross-cultural education, like youth services, which are the areas I am the critic for.

If we have an economy—and I could go on and talk about how the Free Trade Agreement has contributed to the Americanization of our economy and American control of Canadian economy.

Programs like the trade agreements are making it almost impossible for Canada to get out of the bind it is in because it is going to make it even more

difficult for us to develop any fair and equitable corporate taxation programs, because in reality Canadian businesses are going to be forced to move to the U.S. That is what is happening.

I wanted to talk a little bit about some of the things that were mentioned in the throne speech. One of the things I found really disconcerting was the references at the beginning of the speech, both to sport and to war. I think it is fairly evident, the relationship of these two. It leads right into that whole definition of power that this government subscribes to, that power is used to control people, that it is used to control organizations, that power is domination, that power is equated with positions of authority where the person in authority has more rights.

This is evident in elite sport, where funding goes into—you know, people go and they watch sport rather than doing sport. It also goes along with the whole notion that war is a solution to conflict. War, of course, is the ultimate violent expression of that notion of domination equaling power.

I was really disturbed by the way war was glorified in the throne speech. I think even one of the ministers already, from the government side, alluded to a trade war in the farming sector with grain trade. I would suggest this war is the kind of war that is going on all around us at all times in a variety of industries and trade and not just grain trade.

Countries are at war with each other all the time. They are competing to sell more goods than the other country. They are competing to decrease the amount of money they spend on public services like education so they can compete by having a lower price to compete in this trade war.

Mr. Penner: That is what I say.

Ms. Cerilli: You are following me so far? Thank you.

One of the other things the throne speech talked a little bit about was that we have to have a First Ministers' conference on the economy. I find it ironic that this government is suggesting that when they will not sit down with all of the players in the economy here in Manitoba. Again, it goes right along with their notion that father knows best, the First Ministers from all the provinces should get together and make some decisions and then pass down the answers, rather than including all of the sectors of the economy, including labour, the community and volunteer sector, which is being strangled and cannot provide the services that they

are mandated to, as well as industry, commerce, business and government.

I would recommend strongly to this government to start taking that more consensual approach, to start working with the other people who are interested in seeing a vibrant, strong Manitoba, that this government also claims to be interested in. I would encourage the government to listen to the political analysis of parties other than themselves, the parties that I have mentioned already, labour as well as the community volunteer sector. I would suggest that they start valuing workers and work as much as they value monetary capital and money in the bank and money put against the debt.

I would suggest that that seems to be something, as I listen to the ministers on the opposite side, that they have a hard time understanding: that work done is just as valuable as the money for the work. Again I go back to the idea of putting people to work in Manitoba by developing some well-thought-out, well-implemented job creation and job training programs which would go far and away to both accomplishing work as well as reducing our welfare rolls which are booming.

Contrary to what the government suggests, this would not have to increase debt, especially if nationally the government also would take the same philosophy, but I would suggest that the Conservative Mulroney government is even more ideologically bound to a profiteering economic policy than this government.

I would suggest that people in the community whom I talk to and I meet with every day are more concerned about other things than just their pocket books. The government prides itself in the throne speech by saying that this is the fourth year that they are going to keep personal income taxes down, but that is not what people are only concerned about—

An Honourable Member: What are they concerned about?

Ms. Cerilli: I am going to tell you. People are also concerned that they have good schools, that they have good health care, and they realize that they have to pay for those things. The way to pay for it is through taxation because in our country we have public services, so that everyone has equal access to those services. If people want good services they realize that they have to pay for it. Unfortunately, the system that has been created in this country and in

this province by governments like this one have created a system—

An Honourable Member: This province has had an NDP government for 15 years.

Ms. Cerilli: This government has created—I will explain what has happened to you, the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey). Because of the fact that historically in this country we have unfortunately never had a national NDP government, our national income tax policy in this country for people, workers, has been put out of whack in terms of its comparison to the corporate tax policy and tax system.

I would say that it is hard to do this as a province, and I appreciate that our newly elected NDP governments in the three provinces, Ontario, B.C. and Saskatchewan, are going to have a difficult time in changing their tax structure in the face of a Conservative federal government which is going in the opposite direction with their tax policy, but because Conservative governments continue to give tax breaks to corporations at the expense of the individual working taxpayer, people unfortunately are being taxed to their limit.

We are seeing this government, who on one day criticizes the federal government for its tax policy and its restraint policies in terms of public spending, on the one hand they will criticize the federal government for restraint policies and for its restraint spending and in transferring payments for health and education and then on the next day they will do the very same thing and offload onto the municipalities. That is what we are seeing right now.

* (1630)

We have seen dramatic increases in the constituents in my constituency suffering the biggest increase, I think, in the province in terms of the municipal money that they pay toward their taxes. These are average working people for the most part. They are, I would suggest for the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), that the average working person does not have a stash of money in the bank. They work from pay cheque to pay cheque and they rely on their pension to ensure that they are going to be taken care of in their elderly years. They do not have private investment and all those kinds of things. They may have a few RRSPs, but your average person does not have a lot of disposal income. -(interjection)- I do not know if the average person has a cottage. They may or may not own their home.

I have been quite perturbed by the number of people in my constituency who have been government employees, employees who are at colleges and universities who have been laid off and now are putting their homes up for sale that they have owned for 15 or 20 years. That is what is happening in this country. Some of those same people are going to a food bank in Transcona, which now services over 350 families. These are the kinds of realities that are being discussed in the constituency that I represent.

I suggested to the groups who were at a food bank meeting in Radisson area last week that they not look at food banks as the answer, that food banks are addressing a symptom of the problem, that food banks unfortunately are necessary right now, but we must go deeper and deal with some of the other kinds of problems that I am talking about.

One of the things that has really puzzled me is the lack of depth in the debate that often goes on around these issues. I would hope that within the session coming up in the Legislature we will begin to talk about the reasons for the recession and not just take the recession as a given, because there are some definite economic policies and monetary policies in this country that are creating this recession.

It is the kind of economic policy that I have been describing now for 20 minutes, the kinds of attitudes that workers should not have the right to be assured that their job is protected and that their pension is protected. It is the kind of basically profiteering, economic policy that tries to put profit making ahead of meeting the needs of people. To me, that is the bottom line, that we should have an economy that puts meeting the needs of workers and people first and that emphasizes that industry has a responsibility to the country, to the province and to the citizens who work in its shops and factories and offices.

One of the other very concerning omissions in this throne speech was the lack of intervention into the rural decline in our province which is hinged on the farm crisis, and I think we all agree, which is based on these trade wars. Since being elected I have had quite an opportunity to spend more time in rural Manitoba than I did before, and I have been quite appalled.

Because I am the Environment critic, I have had the chance to visit a number of areas which are suffering horribly because their environment has not

been considered, and they have had the kind of economic development, be it through agriculture or forestry or mining or other primary industry, that has had the attitude that the environment is there for us to either dominate or exploit or take from, without realizing that the environment is there for us to depend on. It is that kind of change in focus that we need to take, I think, in rural Manitoba in dealing with economic development.

The other big issue is how are we going to reverse the exodus from rural Manitoba so that we are not seeing the pressure being put on our cities from people moving into large urban centres, stressing the cities and putting both the rural and the urban centres at risk. I do not see any creativity in developing new ideas to keep industrial community development moving in rural Manitoba. The attitude of this government seems to be: Do it yourself in rural Manitoba.

I am quite concerned about the right-to-farm legislation that this government is planning. Hopefully, it will emphasize diversification as it says that it does, and hopefully, it will not further stress the environment in rural Manitoba. Hopefully, it will not take the approach that your right to farm means you can do whatever you want and you do not have to follow environment and zoning regulations. There is a huge need in rural Manitoba for us to revisit a lot of the municipal provincial government relationships, particularly around zoning and environmental law. There are horrible omissions in environmental legislation with respect to lagoon and sewage siting. We need to clarify whose responsibility it is. -(interjection)- No, we do not shut them down, Mr. Penner. We do not shut them down definitely but, unfortunately, in some areas they might as well be shut down because the amount of sewage that is leaking into rural water in our province is quite sickening.

We saw the Dunnottar spill during the recess from the Legislature where it was the problem between the municipality and the province to decide "whodunit." Rather than having emergency measures or some other emergency organization involved in ensuring that this farmer be protected, there was a squabble between the provincial government and the municipality over who had jurisdiction and authority. These are the kinds of problems that area after area in rural Manitoba are suffering.

I have a number of calls and files in my office from -(interjection)- I will name them, you just wait. We will name them one after the other. You can bet on that. The other thing that I will let the members opposite know is that there has been proof and evidence of government negligence in intervening in a number of these leaking lagoons and improperly controlled sewage lagoons. The whole attitude and approach that is being taken with the Department of Environment encouraging the use of creek beds and ravines and rivers to dispose of sewage has to be dealt with.

One of the biggest environment issues though is related to the comments I was making earlier about empowerment and our traditional notions of power and how community residents have no rights in the current system that we have. Community residents are at the mercy of both municipal and provincial governments to hear their concerns and heed their advice. Communities who know their land and know from experience what is likely to be expected are not listened to. They are treated with disdain and disrespect whenever they call to inquire about safe drinking water or safe disposal of waste and sewage. They are treated like, oh, we have the engineers and the experts. Do not worry about it. Then, when there is a disaster like we saw in Dunnottar, they are left to bear the cost and pick up the pieces.

I would hope that government legislation on the environment is going to address compensation and property values that are destroyed because of inept monitoring and enforcement of environment law.

* (1640)

One of the other areas that I was concerned about was this government's direction on youth and education programming, and we have seen already the dismantling of support services for youth. Student loans are being taxed and decreased, student bursaries, student social allowance, and we are moving toward a system where only the wealthy can afford to go to post-secondary education. We are seeing the dismantling of public education, we are seeing again political influence into the program Workforce 2000, where this government would rather see money going to industry rather than to public education institutions.

I am fully in support of co-operative education programs between governments, schools and universities and colleges, and industry and

business. However, I do not support and would very much discourage that there not be more accountability for how that money is going to be used and to ensure that the quality and standard of education provided under these programs be broad and not narrowly focused. That is always the risk when industry is given authority to run education programs, that they will train people for a very narrow job and often for jobs in such a way that things like human rights and worker rights are not given the kind of emphasis that they need to be.

There was nothing in the education part of the throne speech that dealt with multicultural education, education to deal with racist attitudes, to deal with violence in schools. There was nothing to deal with sustainable development or education for vocationally gifted or disabled students.

With that, I would like to conclude. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Seine River): Mr. Speaker, I too would like to welcome all honourable members back to the House for another session. Let me also extend my thanks to you and your office for all the assistance and co-operation extended to me in fulfilling my role as Deputy Speaker.

I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and all the staff in the Clerk's Office, Hansard staff, the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms for their assistance during my role as Deputy Speaker.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new pages. I trust you will enjoy your experience in the House, and I am sure it will be an invaluable learning experience for you.

Mr. Speaker, I am ever mindful that I would not be here today were it not for the support of my constituents. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the residents of the Seine River constituency for their ongoing support. I appreciate their input and their questions as I go door to door, as I attend functions, meetings and events throughout my constituency.

Whether it is the residents of St. Germain or the Save Our Seine committee, I always enjoy opportunities to meet with constituents and hear their views. I am proud to say, Mr. Speaker, that one of the views I hear often from constituents is the confidence that they have in Premier Filmon and our government's ability to properly manage Manitoba's economy.

Just as we have seen changes in our world over the past year, so too have we seen changes in our province and our city. Recently, residents of Headingley voiced their will to alter their status as a part of the city of Winnipeg. No doubt this decision will have a profound impact on the other large lot residential areas of the city. The St. Germain area of my constituency is currently investigating the options available for themselves. A few weeks ago I had the pleasure of chairing a meeting of some 400 residents of the St. Germain area, to allow them the opportunity to provide valuable input and create a dialogue with my colleague, the honourable Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst).

I look forward to a positive decision regarding the St. Germain Community Association's request for a study. These residents are not bent on leaving the city structure and its benefits; however, they are very distressed by what they see as unfair taxation for the city services they receive. It is my pleasure to serve these constituents by ensuring they have the information necessary to make an informed decision regarding their future.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to tell you about another group concerned about the future of our young people. I am proud of the association I have had with the St. Vital Parent Resources Institute for Drug Education, more commonly known as PRIDE. Recently, I attended a two-day workshop and had the opportunity to share some thoughts with this group. As the co-chair of our government's consultative group on alcohol, drug and substance abuse, I welcome opportunities to discuss these issues with Manitobans. Groups of concerned Manitobans like the PRIDE group are making a difference when it comes to preventing substance abuse. I am pleased that the Seine River constituency has a strong local group established to help protect our young people.

Time and time again we hear of examples of Manitobans pulling together to accomplish common goals. I would like to share another example with you. This fall marked yet another Terry Fox Torch Light Run in St. Vital. This terrific event is organized by the teachers, staff and students of the St. Vital Division, and once again their efforts led to another in a series of annual successes. Terry Fox remains to this day an outstanding Canadian and a national hero. The legacy of courage from his own fight against cancer lives on in bringing strength and courage to all Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, this past year has been a difficult one for all Manitobans, indeed for all Canadians. We are now just starting to emerge from one of the most severe recessions to ever occur in this country.

As a government we must be ever vigilant about how we spend taxpayers' money. We have carefully laid a fiscal foundation over the past three and a half years. Now it is imperative that we continue to build upon that sound foundation. I welcomed the news in the throne speech that our government is extending the freeze on personal income taxes for a fourth consecutive year, a decision that will benefit Manitoba families, Manitoba farmers and Manitoba businesses.

Our government understands that all Manitobans benefit from a competitive taxation policy, unlike previous NDP administrations. For some reason the NDP insisted on increasing taxes for Manitoba families year after year after year. Let us take a moment and look at the record. Under the NDP in Manitoba taxes rose 16 times and five new taxes were created.

* (1650)

In 1982 Manitoba's NDP said thanks for electing them by increasing personal income taxes, increasing the insurance premiums tax, increasing the bank corporate tax rate and introducing a payroll tax on Manitoba jobs.

In 1983 they increased personal income taxes again, increased corporate income taxes and increased Manitoba's provincial sales tax.

In 1984 the Manitoba NDP increased corporate income taxes.

In 1985 they increased personal income taxes yet again.

In 1986 the NDP increased personal incomes taxes, increased bank corporate capital tax and increased the corporate capital tax on investment.

In 1987 the NDP celebrated their fifth year by increasing personal income taxes, increasing the payroll tax on jobs, increasing corporate income taxes and increasing the retail sales tax a second time. They also brought in the land transfer tax and brought in a corporate capital tax surcharge.

Now, let us compare that to our government's record. So far, we have cut taxes for families, cut taxes for small business and cut taxes for farmers. For the fourth straight year, we are saving

Manitobans money by holding the line on personal income taxes.

By keeping personal income taxes down, more money is staying in the pockets of those who need it most, our Manitoba families. We are also committed as a government to serving as the watchdog over the deficit by maintaining priority spending on the vital human services that Manitobans need most—health, education and family services.

By keeping taxes down, controlling government spending and implementing initiatives aimed at encouraging growth and development within the private sector, jobs are created. As new businesses start and existing businesses grow, more and more Manitobans are put to work. These same Manitoba businesses and their employees pay taxes, the same taxes that finance vital human service programs for Manitobans. The more Manitobans that work, the more money government has for programming.

Our government is working co-operatively in partnership with the private sector and indeed all Manitobans.

Manitobans have proven themselves capable of competing in a highly competitive international marketplace.

Reflecting on some of our government's initiatives of the past year reaffirms in my own mind that our government is definitely heading down the right path to economic recovery.

The Crocus Investment Fund assists workers in taking an ownership role in the businesses that employ them. The fund, established in co-operation with the Manitoba Federation of Labour, supports economic development and renewal to promote long-term capital formation and a broad understanding of local ownership. The result will be that Manitoba companies and jobs will remain in Manitoba, and the people that work for these businesses will become involved in the decisions that affect them for the benefit of all concerned.

Another key to being able to compete in the '90s and in new markets is to have a highly trained and well-qualified work force of Manitobans available to supply and attract new businesses and industries. Programs such as Workforce 2000 are helping to build on the high quality work force that Manitoba already has. The program is a partnership between industry and government that will see the

development of skills to maintain or create a competitive edge.

Through incentives such as the payroll tax deduction and the private sector training incentive to small and medium-sized companies, Workforce 2000 aims at meeting the educational and training needs of Manitoba employers and employees for the next decade and beyond.

As a former educator and representative of a constituency with many young families, education is a high personal priority for me. In the last year, our government committed itself to reviewing the entire spectrum of the education system. The consultative paper on education reform sets up a process of consultation in which legislators, teachers and parents have an opportunity to review our system.

Our government is committed to moving ahead with a review of the school division boundaries and a review of the university system. Through a process of consultation and discussion, I know that we will be able to build on our strengths in the field of education.

Our government's ongoing commitment to education, capital construction to keep up with localized population growth, is to be commended. In the St. Vital School Division, as example, a total of 10 portable classrooms were set up at Samuel Burland, George McDowell, H. S. Paul, and St. Germain Immersion School to address an overflow.

I also welcome the announcement of the construction of a new K-9 school in the Highbury Park area of the River Park South development of my constituency. This new school is expected to be completed during the summer of 1992.

Another initiative, I am happy to note, is the restructuring of the Industry, Trade and Tourism department. The new structure will enable individual firms and groups of companies to work closer with the department on specific projects.

Many areas have been identified as strategic development opportunities. They include aerospace, environment, health and information technology sectors. These sectors, as well as other areas, such as telecommunications, are areas that Manitoba can and has competed very well in. Through this new project-oriented approach, I, T and T can work directly with the industries in these areas to develop markets both within Manitoba and abroad.

Our efforts to stimulate a competitive economy must not be based solely within the boundaries of Canada. They must be expanded into the international markets because of the global nature of the world's economy.

Our government is determined to develop trade opportunities through a proactive approach, not only as the business approach us. In fact, Mr. Speaker, our government recently signed an economic co-operation agreement with the State of Kansas and initiated one with the Russian republics, specifically the Ukraine. Agreements such as these open up vast opportunities through new markets and co-operation in the advancing of technological changes.

* (1700)

I also join with our Premier in welcoming the Apotex announcement of Monday. This \$50-million investment, over five years, coupled with work for a total of 160 Manitobans over that same period speaks well of the potential that others also see in our province.

In the area of the environment our government has a strong record of projects and accomplishments. Programs such as the Environmental Youth Corps provide the opportunity for young people to get involved in local projects that enhance the environment today and show their commitment to the future. These projects encompass a wide range of possibilities from planting trees and cleaning rivers to recycling. One such project is through the Winnipeg Boys and Girls Club. This project involves youth from the ages of 15 to 18 who perform community service orders by cleaning our riverbanks in Winnipeg. The project involves 50 to 60 youth and they concentrate their efforts primarily on our Seine River and Omands Creek.

Another initiative involves Environmental Innovations grants. These grants assist in the completion of a wide range of environmental projects. In my constituency a grant assisted the St. Vital Environmental Action Committee in developing a recycling program for the schools of the division. This recycling program was introduced in seven schools, with an additional three scheduled for future involvement. The program involves the recycling of aluminum cans, plastic bottles and tin cans. I am proud of the work of this committee and

the students of the St. Vital School Division for their very worthwhile recycling efforts.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes right down to it, the efforts of all Manitobans working together can accomplish great things. Manitobans are intelligent, innovative, hard-working people. For many of us, our forefathers came to this province and had to overcome countless adversities to succeed, and succeed they did by working together, by finding solutions that worked for them and by maintaining a positive attitude. The spirit of our forefathers is still alive in Manitoba. We have demonstrated that we can accomplish great things when we work together. Recent examples of that include the Grey Cup Festival, the World Curling Championships and, every year at this time, the annual Christmas Cheer campaign.

Volunteers are everywhere in Manitoba and continually are welcome and indeed are acknowledged. Once Manitobans join in placing the focus on the economic recovery that is at hand, I am confident that by working together we will build a stronger Manitoba for all of us and particularly our children. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Je vous souhaite la bienvenue et je vous remercie encore une fois pour votre travail pour la protection que vous avez offerte et pour les droits que vous avez donnés à tous les membres et tous les députés de cette chambre. Est-ce que je puis, aussi, offrir mes sympathies très personnelles à votre famille dans la mort de votre mère.

(Translation)

I would like to welcome you and thank you once again for your work, for the protection that you have provided and the rights that you have upheld for all members of this Chamber. May I also offer my personal condolences to you and your family on the death of your mother.

(English)

It is a pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to be able to respond to the throne speech today, to welcome back the staff and the new pages, to thank them and all people who make a contribution to the smooth operation of the House. I would particularly like to acknowledge the staff outside the Chamber, the security staff and others, who make this a public building in which all Manitobans take pride, and there is no better evidence of that than the Christmas Open House when people really do come

to the building and take a great pride in the way in which it is kept and the fact that it is open to all Manitobans.

I remain eternally hopeful, Mr. Speaker, that the government will use the opportunity one day of the throne speech to offer some leadership and guidance to Manitobans. I expect that it will indicate the general direction that the government is taking. I expect that it could demonstrate that it understands the strategic choices that it is making and that it recognizes the national and international context of our situation, and that it has listened to the people and translated their words and indeed cries into fair and just policies.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, this is not the case for this throne speech. Perhaps the government will be lucky. Perhaps they will have another chance at yet another throne speech. I look forward to some improvements and I remain eternally optimistic.

Indeed there are some changes in this throne speech. I compared it to the others that I have heard and I should acknowledge that there are some changes for the better. There is a different tone and I suspect a different author. Gone are the images of individuals of Tiananmen Square and the feeble attempts in the last throne speech to invoke a Manitoba heritage of barn-raising and quilting bees.

Instead this has been replaced by two significant elements, and although both deal with the style of the speech, I think they are both useful in understanding the mentalité of this government. It is striking first of all I think to note the deliberate and consistent adoption of the language of community. Collective resolve, working together, common cause are the leit motifs through this speech. It is a canny strategy, Mr. Speaker, but a dangerous one when it is far from the real politics of this government, for the essence of this government is individualism, not collectivity. The reality is a government which fundamentally shares the view of Adam Smith.

The members on the opposite side may owe some allegiances to an ethnic community or even to a sense of place, but their first allegiance is to a philosophy and a government which places high value on the unrestricted rights of the individual and in many instances rejects the very notion of common wealth.

I am reminded when I look across the way, Mr. Speaker, of the old and mocking rhyme:

The law locks up the man or woman
Who steals the goose from off the common
But leaves the greater villain loose
Who steals the common from the goose.

I suggested this appropriation of community language has its dangers because it creates a gap between rhetoric and reality. One of the fundamental flaws, I think, of the Mulroney politics is the inflated language and the sentimentality which so debases Canadian political discourse and which is in part responsible, I think, for the personal distaste felt by so many Canadians for the federal Tory party.

The second element of the context of this speech is the boosterism it contains: Manitoba does it best. It is one of the pillars of this throne speech, and perhaps it should not be so surprising; it has long been the stock in trade of Winnipeg, if not Manitoba political life. It is common in marginal economies such as Manitoba has become. It is common to North American civic politics and, of course, we have many civic politicians on the other side who find in its well-meaning but hollow phrases the opportunity to mask an economic interest in the costume of the common good. The repetition of "Manitoba does it best," the references to Manitoba's determination and will, the forced optimism are all required in the context of a desperate economic situation and are reminiscent of the attempt of Depression political leaders to avoid that very fear of fear itself.

* (1710)

There are two areas, however, of this speech, Mr. Speaker, that are to be commended. One is the congratulatory messages to the organizers of the successful Grey Cup and the international curling championship. In recognizing the role that such events play in popular culture and in the creation of a sense of community, the government I think is on the right track. Perhaps with my eternal optimism I can look forward next time to a recognition by this government that film, painting, music, theatre, dance and literature create that same sense of community for Manitobans every day, that they offer opportunities for participation and enhancement of life for all peoples throughout the province, that they play a significant role in the economic life of Manitoba every day and they leave a permanent

legacy of values and ideas which we transmit to the next generation.

The last area to be commended is the recognition of the Hong Kong veterans, and while I will pay deference to the pacifism of many members of this Legislature on both sides of the House, I do not believe that we can remind ourselves too often of their sacrifice. Perhaps many of you read, as I did, the article in *The Globe and Mail* by Professor Robert Martin of the University of Western Ontario. I was moved by Professor Martin's article which spoke of how he had lost his father twice. First of all, on the Battlefield of Arnhem, and second of all, he believed, in the public culture of Canada which did not recognize the sacrifices that he and his family and others had made.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that although Hong Kong was a senseless slaughter, as was Arnhem, as was Singapore, as was the Falaise Gap, as was Dieppe, it was part of a war against racism and against fascism, and for that it should be remembered. That resistance to racism and fascism must be commemorated, I believe, on a daily basis, because we know that racism is a daily fact of life for some of our neighbours and constituents. Fascism is raising its head again throughout the world, and it is important to remember the sacrifices that our families and our parents made for us.

Well, what of the content of this speech? It is no doubt that the general impression, I think, that people in my constituency, people in the media, people that you meet in the street, that this is a pretty thin product. Its most notable characteristic is the extent to which it reuses and recycles old press releases, and it is unclear to me whether this government has a death wish, that it actually wants to be found out in this or whether it really believes that the opposition, the Liberal Party, the press, the extra parliamentary opposition is unable to figure this out. The recycled promises include the five-year education plan, the Grade 12 testing, the Rural Development Bonds adapted from Saskatchewan, the mining investment, the Vision Fund, et cetera.

We have heard all of these promises before. This is not giving a sense of new direction to the province, and it seems to me a very pathetic version of a throne speech. When it has run out of recycling opportunities, the government then chooses to reorganize. If in doubt, reorganize, a typical kind of activity of governments in despair. Move the civil servants to another building, shift the numbers to a

different column, reorganize it, the response of a do-nothing government.

The other kind of response that the government has in this throne speech, of course, is to, what it calls, restructure, to restructure a cabinet committee to deal with the economy. Well, that one really surprised me. Do you mean that this government has not been dealing with the economy till now, that it has not been on the agenda, that they had to create a special economic committee of cabinet to do this? What kind of an empty promise is that?

They are going to restructure the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism to deal with a more project-oriented approach. Well, could have fooled me, I thought they had projects last year. Was one of them not that map of Safeway which presumed to be a guide to cultural attractions in the city of Winnipeg, a guide which had 29 locations for Safeway stores and could not even manage to locate the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the major cultural attraction close to the center of Winnipeg. If that is the kind of projects they are going to look at, it would be very interesting to see what kinds of changes that is going to have for the people of Manitoba.

They are going to restructure the Manitoba Research Council, which amounts to renaming it, reconstituting it and recycling yet another province. They are going to have the Department of Energy have a mandate to develop conservation proposals. You mean, it was not doing this before? What kind of a Department of Energy was that? They are going to have a provincial labour strategy. You mean we did not have one of those either? Yet another example of responsible Tory government.

What is new in this throne speech? There are a few indications that they are going to talk to their federal Tory counterparts. They are going to develop an immigration agreement. They are going to redevelop the Churchill rocket range. There might even be a core area redevelopment. They are going to have a labour force development agreement and a Canada-Manitoba tourism agreement. That is quite a lot of discussion with the federal Tories who so far have not listened to them. You might even think there is an election in the offing with so much federal money, or at least federal promises, coming into the province of Manitoba.

They are going to continue studying two issues: Francophone issues, no further action on those; and the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, no interest, no

indication that the government is prepared to move on any of the proposals and recommendations in the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. Could that be, too, an indication of a forthcoming election, a do-nothing government which is going to stay away from any kind of controversy at all?

When you have sorted through the dross, the floss and the flimsy of this throne speech, what are you left with? You are left with, first of all, a child advocacy bill. Well I look forward to that one. That might well be worthy of our support. There is going to be a second part of The Mental Health Act. I wondered about this. Does this indicate that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has only one big idea and he has to divide it into two parts or is there going to be Part 3, Part 4 and Part 5? The right-to-farm legislation might also be interesting and the poachers might indeed.

So these are the three or four items which might offer something new to Manitobans. The general goals the government looks for of diversification, attraction of new industries and environmental protection are ones which are and should be shared by all governments of Manitoba. The throne speech offers us nothing noteworthy in this respect.

What is most remarkable, of course, are the omissions in this throne speech. One constituent of mine in fact said, are you really going to spend 10 days debating the invisible hand in the economy? I must admit when he put it that way it did seem incredulous that we would spend 10 days debating the invisible hand in the economy? I must admit that when he put it that way it did seem incredulous that we would spend 10 days of debatable time looking at this document.

* (1720)

It is difficult to believe that the government can hold so firmly to its faith in the unregulated market economy when we are facing such unprecedented changes in our lives. We believe on this side of the House that the government must intervene in the economy. All regional economies are finding that this is the case. We are suffering in the regions of Canada from high Tory interest rates and the high dollar, a policy which was devised to solve central Canada's economic problems.

We had an overheated real estate market, particularly in Ontario, and many of the economic policies which are giving us so many problems in Manitoba in fact derive from that. Manitoba, in

addition, is suffering from a Tory political strategy which has moved transport jobs to Edmonton and has moved manufacturing jobs to Montreal. We have suffered additionally from weak leadership and from a weak presence of this provincial Tory government in Ottawa.

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

Manitoba needs jobs now. You can walk out on the street; you can go to any conference; you can sit in any coffee shop across this province and you will find the same answer that we need jobs now. We need a Jobs Fund now and I ask, I implore the government to take another look at that initiative of the NDP government. It was a short-term initiative, Mr. Acting Speaker, but it was not short-sighted. It kept us productive. It gave the jobless self-respect. It gave the young some hope. The Jobs Fund, in fact, enabled us at the college to which I belong to create a day care centre, one which within a year was in fact overflowing, overbooked, and it still survives. The Jobs Fund, in fact, gave a much-needed lift to mature students, enabled them to attend university on a part-time basis and did the job for which it was intended.

The first failure of this throne speech, Mr. Acting Speaker, is to speak to the issue which is on every Manitoban's mind and that is the issue of jobs, the failure to intervene in the economy, the failure to have strategic job creation in rural and urban areas.

Second of all, Mr. Acting Speaker, I notice the absence of any sense of future direction for rural Manitoba. The government's solution is the ad-hoc development of community development boards. As our critic did, I will congratulate Morden on being the first of these, but what of the areas where there is not enough money or surface community energy or the capacity to create such boards? Where is the government concern for those areas? Where in the throne speech is the research that looks at the changing shape of our province? The government is literally standing aside and letting the market alone dictate who will survive this great transformation that is taking place. Indeed, where in the throne speech do we find an understanding of the terrible speed of which this transformation is happening?

The member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey) spoke of meeting with farmers and taking back her understanding to the coffee parties and doorsteps of suburban Winnipeg. There is an important role,

Mr. Acting Speaker, for every member in self-education, but how has this been translated into government policy? Where did the government directly address this issue? Have they looked at the enrollment figures for rural schools for next year? How many farm families and farm businesses will survive this winter?

The response of this government is to reorganize the department and to refuse to go to Ottawa with the ordinary and desperate people of this province.

The third failure that I find in this throne speech is the abandonment of the city of Winnipeg. Look again, and I urge everyone to look again at the changing population structure of Manitoba. I think you probably all received the recent publication of the Rural Development Institute in Brandon, which had a series of maps indicating the dramatic changes in our population. The only growth area is the shadow communities on the outskirts of Winnipeg. That is the shape of the future, and if we take this as the base, it is the city of Winnipeg where we must give great attention to the economic changes that will be happening there.

Where in the throne speech is this acknowledged? It is here, in Winnipeg, that the federal policies of job transfer have had their most dramatic impact.

It is particularly so and particularly tragic in its impact upon youth. We are in fact creating in Winnipeg and to some extent also in the rural areas a generation without work, a generation that has not and will never participate in the basic forms of community life. What is the government response to this?

It is, first of all, to reduce transfer payments for transport and environment to the City of Winnipeg, to reduce the payments which have a direct impact on the quality of life of the part of our province which is growing. It is, second of all, to follow policies which lead to the disintegration of the city, to encourage a perspective that argues that taxes are only a form of fee for service.

Taxes, urban land taxes, recreate the common wealth. They provide a concentration of wealth to be used for the common good, for the common good of libraries, pools, rinks, for popular culture, for the Grey Cup festivities that we all enjoyed, or for the services to the television station that everyone watches, for the parks, for the lighting, the public housing and the public health. All of us benefit from

these goods. We cannot continue to provide these goods on the diminished tax base that this government is urging and choosing for the city of Winnipeg.

In its handling of the Headingley issue, it was a simple abdication of a clear responsibility of the provincial government. The minister, in my view, encouraged a referendum of a portion of the city, something which would not have been permitted in rural areas. There is no way that the rural municipality of St. Clements, for example, would have been able to have had a referendum in one part of its jurisdiction, but we permitted that in the city of Winnipeg. We are beginning to walk away, to disentangle this provincial government from providing the basic common goods for the majority of our population.

This government offered no research. It made no case for the maintenance of a strong, viable tax base for the dominant urban centre of this province. We have waited two years for initiation of a Core Area Initiative. We have waffled. They have danced around the issue. They have in a very obscene way looked the other way from the development of a new Core Area Initiative.

The minister has said time after time that he is hopeful. I am hopeful, too, that there will be a new Core Area Agreement. Every public meeting he has been at, he has said he is hopeful. For two years, he has been hopeful about a new Core Area Agreement, but where is it? Today, in the House, he would not even answer on the timing or the prospective content of that Core Area Agreement. They are walking away from the city of Winnipeg.

We are facing, Mr. Acting Speaker, not just a recession or a depression, as some people would call it, but we are also facing what economists are calling a silent depression. Both economists, Wallace Peterson and Robert Heilbroner have written of this recently.

In the United States, they have noted that the real weekly income of a worker in 1990 was 19.1 percent below the level of 1973. Now I do not have the Canadian figures on this. I have tried to find them. My sense is that they are not going to be as dramatic, because we do have a welfare system. We do have a welfare system which will mitigate some of that, but we do know that the real weekly income of working people across Canada has declined considerably in real terms.

It is a silent depression which we must take into account. It has been accompanied, Mr. Acting Speaker, by an unprecedented shift in income and equality where the only growth in income in Canada is coming in the top 2 percent. This throne speech does not recognize this silent depression. It is content to quote the future, the 1992 Conference Board prediction, that things will be better for Manitoba. I hope to God it will.

Even if it is, even if it is better, even if the Conference Board is right, will it be enough to alter the fundamental inequalities that this depression, this recession, has generated across our country and within this province? What Heilbroner has argued for is for a new period of transformational growth: "One of those periodic surges of expansion based on a technology that alters the entire character of social life," something like the 19th century railroad building or the impact of the automobile in the 20th century.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

He recognizes that "There is no known policy to awaken the slumbering power of capitalists" in this regard. Reagan's—and I would add Mulroney's—tax cuts for the wealthy fail to galvanize the entrepreneurial energy. What economists do argue for, however, is the creation of public wealth or a common wealth, and to build up our base of public capital without which there can be no surge for capitalists. There can be no wealth creation as we attempt to move out of this depression.

* (1730)

It is an appropriate argument I think, Mr. Speaker, for Manitoba. We are a regional economy, and we must compete for industries in both a market-driven, global economy, which we are only beginning to understand, and a politically centralized national economy. It is an appropriate argument that implies that for Manitobans the dollars spent on streets, highways, bridges, airports, environmental issues and public culture will not only create the short-term jobs now, but are the only way to prepare ourselves for the next transformation, which we hope will also affect Manitoba.

One of the leading authorities in this area, David Aschauer, in *Public Investment and Private Sector Growth*, has argued that in the United States the growing deficiency of public services is responsible for at least half of the decline in productivity since

the 1970s. He argues forcefully—and it is an argument which is increasingly accepted by many economists—that an additional public dollar spent on infrastructure may exert between two and five times as much impact upon the larger GNP, and is certainly much larger than an additional dollar of private investment.

I suspect again, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian and Manitoba figures are different. The abandonment of public service infrastructure here has been less than it has been in the United States. I suspect also that the decline in public service has accelerated under Tory governments in Ottawa and here in Manitoba.

Does the Premier know what would be the impact of public sector spending? Has the government examined those prospects? What would be the impact on Winnipeg of the reconstruction of housing, of the replacement of the lead water mains, of river clean up, of roads for the inner city suburbs and of the development of efficient mass transit? Has the government examined these possibilities for economic change and development in Manitoba? I do not think they have.

I think what they have done in fact is to tie both hands behind their backs and essentially to rely faithfully upon only the market to regulate the economy. This government does not ask those kinds of questions. It sadly abandons the city to a declining tax base, to a rotting infrastructure, to high unemployment and an increasing underclass of the poor who have never and will never participate in our community.

A further omission, Mr. Speaker, of course, is education. Any government which looks to the future must look to education. The economic growth areas that every developed country is looking at are knowledge-based industries, service sector industries where 60 percent of total employment in Canada is created. It is the growth area for all regional and national economies. The government does recognize this.

There are several knowledge-based industries which they have targeted for Manitoba, particularly health technology. This is a sensible and appropriate strategy. I commend them for this and we all hope for their success in this area. I will emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that the attraction and retention of such industries to Winnipeg just does not depend upon one isolated decision of a particular agency. It requires a firm and constant

commitment to the public infrastructure to sustain the critical mass of research and education-based industries, to retain the industries once they are here.

One of the keys to understanding the nature of the new global economy and particularly the transnationals are in fact that many of them are turnkey operations. They move freely, very freely and easily from Transcona to Tennessee to Taiwan. What will sustain these industries and what will keep them here and benefit Manitobans is a commitment to the city of Winnipeg and its infrastructure and quality and, second of all, a commitment to education.

We cannot continue to tolerate the high dropout rates in Winnipeg and Manitoba or our illiteracy rate. We have the worst record for any city in western Canada. We cannot continue like that and expect to retain the industries which any government can hope to bring here. We cannot tolerate the limited vocational and technical education in high school that we have in this province. We cannot tolerate the decline, the government-assisted decline of our community colleges. We cannot continue to admit to ourselves that our funding of universities is giving our children, our students an equal education with others across Canada. I expect to have the opportunity to deal more with this in the budget.

The letters written recently to the university president by the Minister of Education indicate that there will be no increase to the universities in Manitoba. I will emphasize now to the government that the universities cannot survive like this. They reached the breaking point last year. In the Faculty of Arts at the University of Manitoba, which remains one of the few open faculties in the province, they turned away 1,100 students from first-year English classes. There were not the places nor the professors to teach them. They turned away 500 students in sociology. They turned away 700 students in psychology. That is the breaking point. That is the point at which you must admit to yourself that we are not giving our students the kind of education that they deserve and that will be considered equal to other students and other universities across the country.

It is not just the size of classes, the provision of professors, it is also the quality of libraries, the hours that libraries are open to students. It is the choice of classes that are available to students, and it is also the cost of education to families who are

increasingly facing bankruptcy on the farm and unemployment in the city. We must accept that a college and university education are basic, are crucial to the economic strategy of any and all Manitoba governments in the 21st Century.

I think finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to look at "the big lie" itself. This government makes much of the fact that it has held taxation down for four years, and here we see the technique which is sometimes called "the big lie." If you take something utterly outrageous and repeat it often enough, if you surround yourself with the panoply of power, you stand behind a podium, you arrange the flags of the provinces around you, as the Premier (Mr. Filmon), the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), and Brian Mulroney so often do, and you repeat "the big lie" often enough, some people, sometime, will believe you.

What they have done is to maintain their allegiance to an unfair taxation system, a system which has been constantly revised under the federal Tories to the benefit of the wealthy. In fact, what we are saying -(interjection)-

Mr. Edward Connery (Portage la Prairie): Your children are educated free at the university while others have to pay their own way, and she talks about fairness.

Ms. Friesen: The member for Portage (Mr. Connery) is again dealing with personal issues. The member for Portage is unable to deal—the member for Portage cannot, I believe, deal in any way with abstract issues and so he deals with the personal. The member for Portage is accusing me of having my children educated for free. I would like to remind the member for Portage that my children go to McGill University.

An Honourable Member: Manitoba is not good enough for them.

Ms. Friesen: Many days—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* (1740)

Ms. Friesen: It is important. There are many -(interjection)- I do not believe it is elitist to go to McGill University. It is a choice that I made as a teacher who preferred not to see my own children in my own classroom.

An Honourable Member: Oh, yes.

Ms. Friesen: No, definitely. It is, of course, that there are many students who leave Manitoba and

go to other provinces. Of course, Manitoba does benefit from this just as we benefit from those who come to Manitoba from other provinces. At the level of higher education the cross-fertilization, the bilingualism that comes from dealing with other students from other provinces can only be of benefit to all of us. The narrow definition of education, the narrow definition of our country, which I am hearing from the other side of this House, really makes me very sad for the future of the Tory party and certainly for the future of this government.

If we had a fair taxation system, Mr. Speaker, there might have been some justification for its maintenance, but we do not have a fair taxation system. We have one which has been revised constantly in favour of the wealthy, and we have here a situation in Canada where an increasing amount of the public funds are being provided by the middle and lower-middle classes.

What this government is doing in its version of "the big lie" is, of course, withdrawing and reducing areas of public funding and offloading roads onto rural municipalities. It is reducing the funding to community colleges. It is offloading onto the municipalities and towns across the province the increasing costs of education. It is reducing the grants to Winnipeg. It is reducing the grants to provincial parks. It is constantly offloading onto lower levels of government.

This government tries to claim that they have not increased taxation. Of course, they know very well when they start to knock on doors, particularly if they are Winnipeg MLAs, that the increase in the taxation has fallen upon homeowners. It has fallen upon pensioners. It has fallen upon people of fixed incomes, who know very well that it is a big lie and that indeed the taxation has increased, and it has increased unfairly across the province.

It is not that the government does not know this. Many of them are former city councillors or school trustees. They know clearly, indeed intimately, the impact of these cuts on the long-term health of the province. One can only conclude that they have deliberately chosen this shortsighted perspective.

I can assure them that it will inevitably lead to a short-term government.

The final omission in this throne speech, Mr. Speaker, from my perspective is its failure to address the aboriginal future of this province.

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

Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? Agreed? It is agreed.

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

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Tuesday, December 10, 1991

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