

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 24, 1989.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition and it conforms with the privileges and practices of the House, and complies with our rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? Dispense.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, would you kindly read the petition?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? (Agreed)

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): We, the undersigned, urge and request the Government of Manitoba to reverse its decision to eliminate the General Insurance Division of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation inasmuch as:

1. The Division has experienced a significant financial turnaround and has shown a net income of \$1.5 million for the first nine months of the 1988 operating year.
2. Many small businesses, persons in remote communities and others would not be able to obtain adequate general insurance coverage from the private sector at acceptable rates.
3. There will be a serious loss of jobs in the province, including 55 in Brandon, with a payroll of \$1.5 million, which will have a detrimental effect on those employees as well as the economy.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Annual Report 1987-88 of the Department of Northern Affairs, as well as the Communities Economic Development Fund 1987-88, and McKenzie Seeds for the year ending October 31, 1988.

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): I wish to table the Annual Report for 1987-88 of the Manitoba Community Services Department.

* (1335)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

BILL NO. 3—THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 3, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant le Code de la route.

BILL NO. 6—THE LAW REFORM COMMISSION ACT

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 6, The Law Reform Commission Act; Loi sur la Commission de réforme du droit. (Recommended by His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor.)

BILL NO. 7—THE INTERNATIONAL SALE OF GOODS ACT

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 7, The International Sale of Goods Act; Loi sur la vente internationale de marchandises.

BILL NO. 8—THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 8, The Endangered Species Act; Loi sur les espèces en voie de disparition. (Recommended by His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor.)

BILL NO. 9—THE FOREST AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 9, The Forest Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les forêts.

BILL NO. 11—THE ELECTORAL DIVISIONS AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 11, The Electoral Divisions Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les circonscriptions électorales.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, may I direct the Honourable Members' attention to the gallery where we have from the Garden City Collegiate twenty-eight Grade 9 students under the direction of Mr. Rod Kormylo. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema).

We also have with us this afternoon from the Bannatyne School fifty-two Grade 6 students under the direction of Sylvia Allard and Monique Renaud. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo).

Also with us this afternoon from the Killarney School, twenty-seven Grade 9 students under the direction of John Ross. This school is located in the constituency of the Speaker (Turtle Mountain).

On behalf of all Honourable Members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

* (1340)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

CN Rail Layoffs Minister's Intervention

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger). The federal Government and its agencies persist in attacks on rural Canada. Again, as with the defence cuts, Manitoba is going to be severely hit; 413 CN workers will be laid off in Manitoba. Provided they are prepared to move, 225 will be rehired, but 188 will not. Thirty northern centres will lose all permanent track maintenance workers.

Mr. Speaker, these layoffs come as a shock to all Canadians, especially after having received assurances from both CN and from this Minister that there would indeed not be any layoffs in this province. Can the Minister tell the House this afternoon what action that he has taken, since learning of these layoffs, in the form of phone calls or letters to the President of CN and to the Ministers of Labour and Transport at the federal level in order to avert these layoffs and will he table the letters?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, it is with great disappointment that I became aware of the tragic layoffs that are slated for Manitoba. However, I would like to indicate to the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) that possibly she should get some of her facts straight, because I was in touch with CN today and there are 1,480 permanent positions that are being deleted or where there will be layoffs in Canada. One hundred and ninety-three of these will be in Manitoba.

I think it is very tragic because a lot of these layoffs will basically impact on the small communities. In fact, I have 10 jobs that will be deleted in my constituency, so I have a real feeling for this. I was in touch with CN, and the layoffs have basically been triggered by the fact that the CN is trying to reduce costs, to be competitive in the transportation industry. I find very little comfort in that. However, I indicated when I spoke with the vice-chairman of CN that my concern was for the people who were being laid off, because many of these people who are laid off in small rural communities do not have an opportunity to pick up jobs in the local areas, and I think that makes it twice as tragic.

* (1345)

I just want to indicate that I asked for some assurances to deal with the employment factor for these people. The vice-president indicated that 172 of the 193 positions in Manitoba will be employed on a seasonal basis for six months, that they will be looking at early retirement for some of these and different placements for some of the other employees. Unfortunately, there are going to be some people who are going to be hit. I am very concerned about that and will continue to try and see whether we can get positions for these people.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Carstairs: I can only assume from his answer that the Minister has been in touch with neither the federal Minister of Transport nor the federal Minister of Labour.

CN Rail Layoffs Relocation

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): My supplementary question to the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner), in light of these and his Government's intention to a commitment to rural development, will he obtain guarantees from the railway that those employees offered new jobs will be relocated in rural Manitoba?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development): The employment of our people in rural Manitoba and the depopulation of rural Manitoba is a concern to all of us. All Members of this House, I think, share the concern that the yard lights in rural Manitoba are being one by one switched off. It is our intention, as the Province of Manitoba, to put in place actions that will stem that. It is certainly a concern to me, as well as my colleagues, that CN is now laying off people in those small rural towns and villages and that individuals would be adversely affected.

I can assure you that I will do everything in my power to convince the federal Minister, as well as CN, to make sure that they make every effort to retain these employment opportunities in those communities and, if necessary, help retrain those people to do other jobs in Manitoba.

CN Rail Layoffs Safety Record

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a supplementary question to the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), Mr. Speaker, CN has been using old running stock, some of it is 35 years old. This has resulted in an increased number of accidents and overheating, resulting in brush fires. Now 30 northern communities will be without any permanent maintenance workers. Can this Minister tell the House how the safety of rolling stock, the safety of our natural resources will be maintained without adequate personnel?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation):

I have some difficulty with that question because I cannot see how people in the rural areas are not doing the maintenance on these units. We have the shops in Transcona that are basically maintaining our rolling stock. I do not know how our people who are working on the lines are going to be responsible for the safety of the rolling stock. I do not know what the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) is basically referring to.

Mrs. Carstairs: We are talking about the maintenance of the lines and the safety of the lines when the stock goes over the lines. Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary question.

An Honourable Member: Aging stock on deteriorating lines.

Mrs. Carstairs: Exactly.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Minister's Awareness

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

A supplementary question to the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), and perhaps he can answer this one. In November of last year, the Minister indicated that to his knowledge there would be no layoffs at CN. At the time the Minister added that CN had agreed to meet with him to negotiate any layoffs before they took place as promised. When did that meeting take place when he learned of these layoffs to CN?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I indicated last year that I had met with the officials from CN and that they had indicated to me that they would meet with me and inform me prior to any major layoffs that would be taking place in the province.

I met with Mr. Frank Campbell from CN two weeks ago, when he indicated that under the administration alignment that they were doing, there would be changes taking place, and he indicated that the net loss at that time would be approximately three or four positions to Manitoba. That was two weeks ago.

Mr. Speaker, I was not aware of the fact that there was rationalization taking place. In fact, the only way that this came about, that we became aware of this, was because CN officials had met with union officials on a confidential basis. Somebody decided to leak the information, which is fair enough because I do not think that should be confidential information, but this is what happened. I did not become aware of the situation until late last night when he came back from Calgary.

* (1350)

Minister's Intervention

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

Well, Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary question to the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), all the more reason why he should have been in touch with the Minister of Transport since CN is breaking its promises to the Minister to inform him. When will he get in touch with the Minister of Transport and lay before the Minister of Transport that Manitoba will not have its Cabinet Ministers abused in this fashion?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation):

Mr. Speaker, I have to express regret that I was not informed sooner of the impending layoffs, and I expressed that regret to CN based on the commitment that I made to myself. I have been in touch with them today. I will also be getting in touch with the federal Minister of Transportation to express my disappointment on the way this has been brought about.

I think that if the normal course of action had been followed through, possibly I would have had the opportunity to meet with them. This was the first meeting that took place and the first indication that came forward from CN, the way I have been made aware of it. Unfortunately, I became aware of it through the information the way it came about through the media and through leaked information. I am very disappointed with that and I intend to take that issue up with the federal Government as well as with CN.

Mrs. Carstairs: We have to hope that his counterpart takes his phone call.

CN Rail Layoffs Labour Adjustment Strategy

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

With a final supplementary question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), we have repeatedly been asking this Government to implement labour training and adjustment programs to assist those workers who have lost their jobs because of plant closures, which have plagued this province over the past year: Canada Packers, Ogilvie, Wescott, Marr's, Toro, Marks and Spencer, Molson's, Wardair, and now CN.

My question to the First Minister, in view of the CN layoffs, will he now consider implementing a full scale job and labour adjustment strategy to assist those workers who, because of federal-provincial economic policy, are out of work in this province?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, no one in this Chamber enjoys seeing jobs lost in this province for any reason, whether that be for adjustment in terms of the market, adjustment of firms to try and become more competitive so that they can retain other jobs. None of us want to see labour adjustments that involve

people out of work. However, we as the Government are fully committed to provide the full range of services that we have for retraining, for redeployment of people, for assisting them through the committees that we set up regardless of when there is a major loss of employment. We set up committees with the assistance of the people in our Government, federal Government and the employers. We set work force adjustment committees in place to help them find new jobs, to help them train for new jobs and to help them adjust to the changes that have taken place as a result of their loss of employment.

Mr. Speaker, we are fully committed to that. We have indicated in the Throne Speech that we are going to do more towards that, and indeed I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) will be pleased with some of the information that will be provided when the new Estimates and Budget come forth to this House, because we are fully committed to ensure that we have a comprehensive range of assistance and support for anybody who should lose a job for whatever reason in this province.

* (1355)

Sport Policy Advisory Committee Steroid Use

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): I look forward to the Liberal support on our plant closing legislation. In terms of really helping the people, the working people and families, we have to not only deal with these issues. We have to report them to the public because this Government is out of touch.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Sport (Mr. Ernst). The Dubin Inquiry has been going on for almost seven months now. There have been public revelations of a very significant proportion in terms of the use of steroids with our young people and athletic people in this country unfortunately, and the testimony continues to be produced on the Dubin Inquiry. In fact, Dr. Jamie Astaphan, I believe, is on the stand today.

Last year, the Minister indicated that he did not know how deep in the system performance-enhancing drugs were utilized in Manitoba. I would ask the Minister, given that revelation last year, when he established a Sports Policy Advisory Committee that was going to deal with drugs in sports, why did the Minister not put anybody on that committee to advise him with direct medical knowledge of the problem of steroid use with athletes in this province?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister responsible for Sport): Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer) that the reason no one went on the Sports Policy Advisory Committee was that we have a Sports Medicine Council which is dealing with that matter and contains people involved from sport medicine directly: doctors, we have nurses, we have physiotherapists, we have trainers, we have sports clinicians, and a wide variety of other people associated with the sports medicine community. They are the people who most properly should be looking into it, and they are doing that.

Mr. Doer: The Sports Medical Advisory Committee has asked to be on your Sports Advisory Committee. They believe that the members of that committee should be directly informing the Minister of the activity going on. We have heard stories now that high school football teams have got at least 7 percent admission of anabolic steroid use in their sports teams. That is public knowledge.

Steroid Use Veterinary Prescriptions

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): We have been awaiting a strategy from the Minister over the last seven months, and I would ask the Minister is he aware of any potential abuse in the sports community of the issuance of steroids by any member of the medical field in the veterinary area of medicine?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister responsible for Sport): Mr. Speaker, let me say that I have received no communication from the Sport Medicine Council requesting to be on the Sport Policy Advisory Committee. The Sport Medicine Council has its own concerns, its own mandate, and we will deal with that mandate in due course.

With regard to the second part of the question, Mr. Speaker, I have no knowledge of anything, assuming I understood the Member correctly, of veterinarian steroids being passed on to athletes.

Mr. Doer: I have a copy of the minutes of the University of Manitoba Medical Committee on Drug Abuse, and in the minutes of the meeting on March 31, 1989, the comments of the committee state the issue of anabolic steroid abuse has been mentioned to various people in Government. The committee appears—there is little problem with physicians prescribing anabolic steroids. However, another source appears to be veterinary medicine. That is in their minutes for March 31. Why was the Minister not aware of it if this is the committee that is advising on the use of anabolic steroids?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, that is not the committee that is advising me. That is not the Sport Medicine Council of the Province of Manitoba. That, if I again understand what the Member has purported to and if he were just to table it I could confirm it, is a committee started up by one Dr. Wayne Hildahl of his own volition. He is operating on his own volition to do those things that he sees as being necessary or required. He has invited other members of the community to participate with him, and I believe the chief of police is one of them. That is not the Sport Medicine Council and that is not the committee that is advising me in this matter.

Strategy Development

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, while the committee, which does include the chief of police, members of the pharmaceutical community, other members of the university, have identified a potential problem of veterinary medicine with the anabolic steroid use, I would ask this Minister,

given this very major problem—and it is not a political issue, it is a public issue—why this Minister has not developed a strategy, why he has separate committees dealing with this issue, why this Government has not dealt with an overall strategy with the use of anabolic steroids with our young people and athletic people, and why he is taking no action at all with his own committees dealing with amateur sport to get a coordinated strategy on a very, very serious problem facing our young people and facing the citizens of Manitoba.

* (1400)

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister responsible for Sport): I have no control over private citizens in this community who wish to form a committee to study a particular problem. We have the Sport Medicine Council. The Sport Medicine Council involves all people associated with sports medicine. They are the people who should properly be advising us. If one of those individuals wishes to gather together other people from the community and strike off on their own, that is their business. They are entitled to do that. It is still a free country.

Group Homes Staffing

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) is aware of the supervision difficulties cited by residential care providers for the mentally handicapped. In fact, this Minister herself commissioned the Wiens Report to deal with these serious issues. Now we discover that the same Minister has written to all community residences and indicates a new policy which changes the staffing patterns in these community residences. This new policy effectively reduces the ratio of client-staff in these residences, thereby jeopardizing the health and safety of the mentally handicapped. My question to the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) is, will she explain why she has sanctioned this regressive ill-conceived policy?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Yes, I did commission the Wiens Report and they reported, and I reported to the public the findings. The Member perhaps could provide me with that if she has that piece of correspondence. Otherwise, I will have to take the question as notice because I do not know what correspondence she is talking about.

Ms. Gray: I would be quite prepared to table this letter in the House, written and signed by the Minister herself. I wonder whether she knows what she signs in terms of policy.

Winnserv Inc. Staffing

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): A supplementary question to the same Minister, larger residences in this province, such as Winnserv particularly, will be penalized by this new staffing formula. Will the Minister—and I hesitate to ask this question since she does not seem to

understand the policy that she has signed—immediately meet with Winnserv residents who also wrote to her on May 12 outlining these difficulties, and please review this particular policy which will in fact put clients who are mentally handicapped into more danger?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, our first interest is the safety and well-being of people in group homes. I will review that matter. I do recall getting a letter from Winnserv. I will review the matter and bring an answer back to the House.

Wiens Report Recommendations

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray), with a final supplementary question.

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary to this Minister is, can the Minister reconcile today for Manitobans how she can spend \$75,000 on the Wiens Report and then put in place a policy which is totally contrary to those recommendations? Can she reconcile that today in the House?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): The Wiens Report brought some very valuable information on the state of group homes, Winnserv in particular and group homes in general. I think that is very valuable information which we can use to build our programs in the future.

St. Boniface Hospital Obstetrical Capacity

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) posed a question regarding obstetrical capacity at St. Boniface General Hospital. I would like to correct some false impressions left by the Leader of the Opposition in posing of questions.

The Leader of the Opposition indicated that the capacity at St. Boniface was 2,600 deliveries per year. In fact, it is 4,200 deliveries per year. The Leader of the Opposition left the impression, in phrasing her question, that a high-risk almost delivering mother was turned away at the last moment by St. Boniface. I would like to share with you some facts that were presented to me by the hospital.

On May 18, 1989—the Honourable Leader of the Opposition had the correct day—at approximately 2:20 a.m., a woman was admitted and, in the course of admission at St. Boniface, was assessed as a risk factor 1 in terms of her delivery capability. To be classified as high-risk, as the Leader of the Opposition left the impression, the risk factor has to be 3 or higher. So this individual was a low-risk delivery, as assessed by medical experts at St. Boniface. The individual was transferred to Victoria Hospital at 3:15 a.m. by car with her husband, not by herself as the impression left by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. The individual was admitted to Victoria Hospital at 4:10 that morning and delivered her baby at 19:56 that same day.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to my honourable friend, arrangements are in place with St. Boniface between the Misericordia Hospital. Victoria General Hospital have offered obstetrical services to St. Boniface at times of low-risk need. To raise those allegations with such incomplete information does a disservice to the fine obstetricians in Manitoba.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) on a point of order.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): On a point of order Mr. Speaker. The Premier, the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), from his chair, indicates "irresponsible." Mr. Speaker, there was not a single fact which was presented yesterday which was not correct. If the Premier and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) would like to speak with the patient, who delivered a nine-pound child via forceps, then perhaps they would come to me and I will give them the information with regard to the patient.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order. A dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

Mr. Orchard: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I have ruled there is no point of order. Order, please.

Manitoba Intercultural Council Granting Capacity

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this House, I asked three very serious questions affecting our ethnocultural community in Manitoba. I did not receive proper answers. I would like to give the Minister (Mrs. Mitchelson) the opportunity today to give the answers that she would like to say. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw any unparliamentary language that you seem to be indicating. I would like to give the Minister an opportunity today to respond to the questions I asked yesterday, the first question being why she would think that a board appointed by the Government will be more responsible and more accountable than a board elected by the peers of the ethnocultural community which now exists in the form of MIC.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson) may indeed have something to say at this point, but let me ask you to remind the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) that it is not for Honourable Members in the House to pass judgment on the quality of the answers given in the Question Period.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. I believe that the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles)

had indeed herself indicated that she realized she had breached Rule 363 of Beauchesne's. The Honourable Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) does not have a point of order.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage, and Recreation): I would be very pleased to answer that question. Mr. Speaker, when the needs assessment was done and when decisions were made by Government to make some changes to the lottery distribution system, we looked at all areas of the umbrella distribution, and the Manitoba Intercultural Council was the only umbrella group that had both an advisory and a funding role to Government.

I have discussed this many times with MIC and, although MIC would like to maintain the funding role, it was a Government decision that we wanted to separate those two areas. The last time I met with the acting chair of MIC, he indicated quite clearly to me that MIC was reviewing its mandate and they really did want to get back to their main mandate, which was to advise Government on multicultural policy.

So by taking the funding and putting it in another area under another advisory grants council, we are giving MIC the complete opportunity to get back to what legislation first permitted them to do and that was to advise Government on multicultural policy.

* (1410)

Advisory Role

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Can the Minister indicate, since this is an advisory group, as she wishes to have it, why she has not asked for their advice within the year of her mandate, nor has she given back any comments on advice given voluntarily by the organization?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the first number of times that I met with the executive of MIC, I quite clearly asked them to come forward to us as Government and indicate what recommendations they had made in the past to the other Government, and to prioritize those recommendations, to remove those that were outdated or not applicable, and to bring forward and prioritize the recommendations that had been made and we would deal with them.

Just very recently, I received a list of recommendations that had been made to the former administration but they were not prioritized. So in a meeting with MIC just yesterday, I indicated to them that I wanted those recommendations prioritized. When they gave us the priorities of the multicultural community, we would deal with them according to priority.

Granting Capacity

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, the Minister keeps indicating the intention has been given to her by MIC that they wish to have the granting funding

situation stripped from them. In fact, they do not agree with that attitude at all. Can the Minister explain her version of the truth?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): Mr. Speaker, let me just clarify for the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) because I did answer that quite clearly in my first answer. I indicated that MIC wanted to maintain the funding but we as Government made a decision based on the needs assessment that because they wanted to maintain the funding but they also did express a real desire to want to get back to their main purpose of advising Government on multicultural policy, that we made the decision as a Government to separate the two functions. It was the only umbrella group that had those two functions, and now none of the umbrella groups have that function.

CN Rail Layoffs Rural Impact

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): As we revealed yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and as has been raised again in the House here today, devastating layoffs are taking place at CN across Canada and particularly in the prairie region of CN. While Liberal and Conservatives here are quibbling over the exact numbers, the fact is that, community after community, small communities are having their own CFB bases removed.

In other words, the impact on those small communities is comparable to the impact of removal of the CFB base from Portage to those small communities when you have four and five and six families removed. This is the result of continued federal policies, Mr. Speaker, in post office closures, rail line abandonments, UIC changes that move people from rural areas, a complete capitulation in terms of economic development in the rural areas, and this Government has stood by.

I understand now that the Minister was not even consulted on this decision, and I ask the Minister, since he has not even protested these, will he immediately contact the federal Minister and his provincial counterparts, the council of Ministers for Transportation in this country, for support and ask that this decision be on hold until such time as consultation reviews can be done by those council of Ministers and alternatives can be developed by those Ministers?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I indicated before how I felt about the layoffs that are pending for Manitoba. I feel it is tragic, and I know the impact it will have on the rural areas. I have already been in touch with CN. I will continue to try and work with CN. I will also get in touch with the federal Minister and look for the kind of support he is indicating to see whether we can take and lessen the impact that it will have on Manitoba.

I just might add though that this is small comfort, but in comparison to the rest of the country in terms of the employment factor, we are the second highest CN employee. You know, we have the most employees

in Canada next to Montreal, and the impact on Manitoba is less than it is in other provinces. That gives me no comfort, but I will do everything I can in terms of making sure that the impact is lessened.

CN Rail Layoffs Rural Impact

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) a question. He now has a position, he has a name and he has to accept some responsibility for rural development in this province. I ask him, since he did not answer the questions that were posed earlier insofar as what action he is prepared to take, will he contact his federal counterparts immediately and ask that they put this decision on hold until such time as a scheme and strategy can be developed for rural economic development in this province so alternatives can be provided that will replace the devastating losses to the small communities? Will this Minister of Rural Development ask for this to be put on hold? Will he develop a rural development strategy?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, the concern expressed by the Honourable Member for Dauphin is a good one. The question is a valid one. However, let me ask the Honourable Member for Dauphin, why is rural Manitoba in the economic shape that it is? Why have we over the past seven or eight years seen nothing but closures in rural Manitoba? Our towns and villages are dying.

This Government has appointed and has developed a department that is going to look after trying to reverse that trend that has been initiated by the previous two administrations in this province, the NDP administration and by the federal Government of the Day which said, "Sell your own wheat," pointed fingers at us and said, "we do not want anything to do with western Canadians," and Manitobans are forced to face those kind of economic conditions.

Mr. Plohman: The reason why rural areas are declining is because of Tory policies that have resulted in post office closures and rail line abandonments and Via cuts and UIC changes in this country and a complete abandonment of rural economic development initiatives. That is why the rural areas are declining and this Party is sitting—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Dauphin kindly put his question now.

CN Rail Layoffs Rural Impact

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, I ask the Premier, we have seen equivocating non-answers from these Ministers. He has seen them stand up in this House this afternoon. I ask him will he now contact the Prime Minister and ask if these devastating cuts be put on hold and alternative strategies developed for economic development so we do not see the loss

and decline of our rural communities worse than they have been across this province?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, there was no greater devastation to our rural communities than during the past six-and-a-half years when that administration with that Member as a Minister wreaked their havoc on the people of rural Manitoba. That is why we have the problems in rural Manitoba.

The fact of the matter is that my Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) has indicated that he has been in touch with the officials at the vice-presidential level of CN. As a result of his discussions of the 193 people who are going to be laid off, 172 of them will be employed for the next six months, and all of those people will be dealt with as fairly as possible to ensure that if there are employment opportunities with CN they are given first preference.

He is working with them positively, not standing up here like that Member is, trying to make politics with peoples' lives. We are doing things to help those people be employed and that is the kind of positive attitude we have dealing with rural Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), on a point of order.

Mr. Plohman: This First Minister is imputing motives as to my reasons for the questions in saying that I am playing politics with the lives of those people. I am concerned about those people in rural communities, those families that are impacted by Tory policies, and I want this Tory to stand up for the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member does not have a point of order.

Lottery Revenues Rural Funding

Mr. Gilles Roch (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, many communities in rural Manitoba have had their major source of lottery funding cut off by this Government since it decided to have their so-called "family night out" casinos operating year round at the Fort Garry Hotel.

This is blatant discrimination against rural Manitoba. So much for this Government's lip-service to rural Manitoba and rural development. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Lotteries (Mrs. Mitchelson). Given the fact that there was no indication of any alternative funding for rural community organizations mentioned in the Throne Speech, what plans does the Minister have to replace the loss of revenues to rural organizations from rural casinos?

* (1420)

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): Mr. Speaker, I am quite pleased to

answer the question that the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) posed. Just a little bit of background and history on rural casinos that surrounded the City of Winnipeg, 90 percent of the people who frequented those casinos were people from the City of Winnipeg who went out to those rural areas. The only reason that there was any success at all in those casinos was because of the people from the City of Winnipeg, but I want to say to you that over the period of the last few years they were losing money.

They were casinos that were losing money in rural Manitoba and quite frankly the communities were not benefitting, so a decision was made to amalgamate those casino days into the casino at the Fort Garry Hotel. Those people in rural Manitoba who were receiving casinos' revenues are going to be able to apply through the expanded Community Investment Fund for Lotteries funding.

Mr. Roch: Mr. Speaker, the fact is that most were not losing money on those revenues and those 90 percent of the people went to rural Manitoba. Can the Minister assure this House that whatever form of alternative funding, if any, that could be provided to rural organizations will fully and equitably compensate them for the loss of the rural community-operated casinos?

Mrs. Mitchelson: No one throughout the province is going to be receiving casino revenues anymore except health care projects in this province, and that is what the people of Manitoba want. They wanted Lotteries dollars to go to health care. All of the casino revenues in the future are going to go to health care projects for all of the people of Manitoba, and all of those groups and organizations will have to apply through other lotteries channels to receive funding and they will be receiving funding. As a matter of fact, we have an extra \$900,000 through recreation in the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation that is going to serve rural Manitoba and the . . .

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Roch: Is the Minister then saying that all of these communities and organizations will receive no less than what they used to receive under the previous system that has now been destroyed by this Government?

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear! Good question.

Mrs. Mitchelson: If the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) had his facts together and his facts straight, he would know that those casinos were making less and less money in rural Manitoba. I do not know what kinds of assurances he wants me to give them. Does he want me to give them assurance that they will have money that they received three years ago, or money that they received last year? If they have worthwhile projects, they will certainly be funded.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENTS

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): May I have leave to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mrs. Charles: Today is the 50th anniversary of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, and I was very pleased to attend the reception at noon hour today celebrating that matter. I would like to, on behalf of this House and I am sure others will join with me, express to the Royal Winnipeg Ballet our gratitude for the service they have given, not only Manitobans but the world.

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet are the ambassadors of Manitoba to many countries throughout the world. They are a world-class quality organization from a province that I believe is world class. We will look forward to very much of an extravaganza this next year as they are putting on very many special events, not only in Manitoba but across the country. I hope this House will join me today in congratulating them on the 50 years they have put in and wish them all the best on the 50 years to come.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): I ask leave to make a non-political statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. Storie: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the House for its indulgence. I am proud to stand and say to the House and ask the House to join me in congratulating a group of young Manitobans who attended a National Chess Championship on Sunday and Monday of this current week. Three of the 12 students who attended that national championship came from a very small community in northern Manitoba, the community of Snow Lake. That in itself, given the size of that community, is quite a feat but even more impressing is the accomplishment of those students.

So I would like the House to acknowledge the accomplishment of the following three students: a Grade 3 student by the name of Ignace Moya, who placed fourth overall in Canada and was one half a point from second place in Canada; a Grade 5 student, Mr. Gavin Horne, who placed seventh overall and was only two points away from fifth place; and Mr. Jason Oswald, a Grade 7 student, who placed fifth overall and was only one point away from being in third place. For three young people from a small community in northern Manitoba to travel to a national championship and come away with those kinds of honours is a remarkable feat.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to send out my commendation to those young people, to the people who worked with them, including their chaperones and the cooperating teacher, Mr. Gary Malcolm, who teaches

at Joseph H. Kerr School. Their accomplishment, in terms of their performance in this national championship, is excellent and shows that beyond the normal accomplishments of the many students throughout the province in recreational and athletic endeavours, students in this province continue to excel in more academic, esoteric skills as well. Chess, as most of you know, is an intellectual game and for students at this level to achieve this kind of national prominence is an achievement that is worthy of recognition of all Members. I ask you to recognize this achievement.

* (1430)

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, could I have leave to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Leader of the Opposition have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mrs. Carstairs: There will come a time in the history of this province and in this country when we do not make special recognition of the achievements of women, but that time has not come yet. Therefore, I would like to bring a message to this House about which, I am sure, I will have full agreement, and that is the announcement today that the new president of the University of Winnipeg will be Dr. Marsha P. Hanen, a graduate of Brown and Brandeis Universities in the United States, and most recently the Associate Dean for General Studies at the University of Calgary.

We welcome her appointment. We welcome the appointment of the first woman president of a university in this province, and we welcome her successive development at the University of Winnipeg, a university in which we all take pride.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I also could have leave to for a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for the Interlake (Mr. Uruski) have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mr. Uruski: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask leave for a non-political statement. I am sure that all Members of this House, especially the Ministers involved in the recent tragedies across Manitoba—and that is dealing with the hundreds, and in fact probably thousands—of what we would call the unsung heroes in our province and those are the many volunteers who took part in working to save their property and their community's property, and worked night and day with many of the volunteers in the fire departments, in municipal councils, and those community people, farm men and women, all those in rural communities right across this province, in the Asherns, in the Moosehorns, in the Jackheads, the Fisher Rivers, in the Manigotagans, the Seymourvilles, in the Cowan area, right across this

province when we were ravaged so severely by the fires of approximately two weeks ago.

I believe all Members in this House would want to pay tribute to all Manitobans, both working within the Civil Service, because I am sure they risk their lives every minute of the day fighting those fires. I know the Minister involved, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) particularly, a fellow Interlaker, who has spoken out in their support both for his staff, the other people who are involved in fire fighting, but especially those people who left their work, left their livelihoods and left their employment to assist their community. I today, I am sure on behalf of all Members, want to pay tribute to those unsung heroes, all those volunteers in the Province of Manitoba.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): Might I have leave to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Minister (Mrs. Mitchelson) have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mrs. Mitchelson: I just briefly want to add a few comments to the comment made by the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) in wishing the Royal Winnipeg Ballet a happy 50th Anniversary.

I do want to say this has been a tough year for the ballet in our province with the tragic loss of their Artistic Director, Henny Jurriens, and his wife, Judy, and leaving behind a small child. I know those who have had any association with the ballet in this province have felt the great loss. In spite of that, I know they have gone on and will go on to do bigger and better things. They are a real tribute to our city and to our province. We want to wish them well and another 50 years and more of excellence in art throughout our country and indeed throughout the world.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): I would like to rise—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): He is afraid there are going to be some more non-political statements to steal his thunder.

ORDERS OF THE DAY THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed amendment of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer).

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honour to join in on the Speech from the Throne. I believe this is my fifth opportunity to participate in this debate in three

short years, so it is becoming a very unusual situation in terms of the rapidity of Speeches from the Throne and the consequences thereof.

But I know it is a very important responsibility and I say in some sincerity—some sincerity—I wish all Members well in this Chamber. And you, Sir, in your role as Speaker, I do wish you well in full sincerity in the tough job you have as the Speaker in this non-partisan Chamber.

The occasion of the Speech from the Throne is a very important one. It is an opportunity to take stock of where we are as a country, where we are as a province, where we are for the people of this province who we are all elected to serve, and almost, if not more importantly, Mr. Speaker, we must take responsibility for where we are going, I believe, as a country and as a province.

It is also very important that this Speech from the Throne is the first Speech from the Throne that we have had in a post free trade era. It is also the first Speech from the Throne and the first opportunity to deal with an environment that is a free trade environment in terms of the free trade Budget and its effect on the people, the workingpeople and their families in our country and indeed in the Province of Manitoba.

I believe that we must talk about where our province and our people are at in an overall context of where we are as a country, Mr. Speaker, and where we are going as a country. We, on this side, are extremely worried about the Americanization of our country and the Americanization of the values in this country and what effect that will have on the people of Manitoba.

(The Acting Speaker, Mr. Mark Minenko, in the Chair.)

We are very concerned that the values we developed for hundreds of years in this country, of a more balanced economy and a more balanced society between the unfettered free market system that is the value and predominant value of the United States, and the values we have in Canada of a more family kind of environment, Mr. Acting Speaker, where you share and cooperate, that the values of the free market system unfettered are becoming more the values of our country through the Free Trade Agreement and, therefore, becoming unfortunately more the values of the way in which Manitobans and their families and their communities are allowed to operate within our country.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe that everything we do and everything we say and everything we evaluate over time must be evaluated against the changing Americanization of our country and of our province, and the changing values and for the changing impact on the people of our province, and what that will mean for the quality of life to Canadians and the quality of life for Manitobans.

I believe that the 1980s, through deregulation in the early '80s, which was the forerunner for the Free Trade Agreement and the privatization in the '80s, some of the privatization and the cutbacks in health and social services that started in the early '80s and have continued on through the 1980s in this country has meant that

we are in the slippery slope to Americanizing our country.

I believe that we must do everything possible to return in the 1990s to reCanadianize Canada and get our priorities back and straight, our priorities for people and their families and their communities, and not for these quasi-sovereign states that are running the deregulation policies of the former Liberal Government and are running the policies of the Mulroney Government and affecting Manitobans, I believe, in a very, very negative way. I believe the jury is still out on that issue and we will eventually win it.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe we have a situation in this province that is a situation that we have described for months as a do-nothing Government. I think, unfortunately, we have a say-anything Opposition. One day it is this position on the tax relief for corporations, the next day it is tax relief for people. One day it is this position on child care, it is another position on child care the next day. One day it is do not interfere with Crown corporations, then it is interfere with Crown corporations only when we are affected by Air Canada and CN. One day it is do this on a certain issue, the next day it is do that. One day it is fight for the environment, the next day it is bring in an environment Bill that will sell our water to the United States.

* (1440)

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, we have a very strong challenge as the only political Party that is represented in all geographic regions, not by as many seats as obviously we would want, but as the only political Party that is represented in all regions of this province—the North, rural Manitoba, our rural towns of Brandon and Dauphin and the Interlake and the City of Winnipeg. We have a real responsibility to provide the balance, the positive balance between a do-nothing Government and a say-anything Opposition in terms of the people of Manitoba and priorities of our province.

An Honourable Member: It is a no-principles Party.

Mr. Doer: We will talk about your finance policies later, do not worry, do not worry.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Minenko): Order, please. The Honourable Leader of the NDP has the floor.

Mr. Doer: When we mentioned the Americanization of this country and this province, it is not just a slogan. Since the Free Trade Agreement has been signed some five months ago, and contrary to—I mean all of us want to win a political battle and a battle of policy. Quite frankly, when the policy is over and the battle is completed, some of our worst predictions we do not want to see come true.

We do not want to have 10 seconds of a Question Period and then have hundreds of families laid off. We want to be wrong about people losing their jobs. We want to be wrong about regions losing their support. We want to be wrong about all the negative predictions

we made on the Free Trade Agreement, because it does affect real people and real families and real communities.

Besides all the rhetoric in this House, it does affect real people, Mr. Acting Speaker. When we leave at the end of the day, there are families that watch the six o'clock news and that watch the late news, and they have to wrestle with the real reality of those plants being closed down. What am I going to do? Where am I going to work? Can I stay in this province? How are we going to make ends meet? Do I have to have my children go out and work earlier instead of staying in school? Can I keep my kids in this child care centre? Can I keep our kids in this community? Are we going to have to sell our house and go move somewhere else?

Beyond all the political and partisan rhetoric, Mr. Acting Speaker, those are the realities that people are facing. Those are the terrible situations we have had to face with the close down of the Ogilvie plant, where we met with workers who have been there 35 years. It was making money. It was doing well. If we cannot have food processing in western Canada, where can we have it? If we cannot process oats in the West, in Manitoba, and we have to rationalize our jobs and have them go to Midland, Ontario, what do you tell those workers who have been there 30 and 40 years? Oh, it is free trade, oh, it is free trade. This is the rationalization.

Some quasi-sovereign corporation is going to close you down just to make more money, just to move the jobs to Midland, Ontario, just because they are greedy in terms of the profits in this country. There is enough to go around, Mr. Acting Speaker. Ogilvie and Labatt's could keep that plant in Manitoba. They do not have to rationalize and we do not buy the excuse of the Free Trade Agreement, even though we recognize and predicted that would be one of the unfortunate examples.

Marr's Marina in Brandon, again we are seeing that industry go to South Carolina, I believe it is, Mr. Acting Speaker. Again, we have many, many people affected by the loss of those jobs. We predicted the merger of the breweries. Everybody said, oh no, you cannot have the merger of the breweries. In fact, we even spoke and predicted that would happen when we were dealing with the domestic sale of liquor and beer that was being proposed by the Government, and asked them to withdraw that resolution. Do not even aid and abet, in terms of the rationalization of that industry, but even the industry experts have admitted it is part of the Free Trade Agreement.

We could go on about plant closures, Mr. Acting Speaker. We hear of worker and family after family across this province who are going to be affected by the continued rationalization, whether it is in the unionized sector, as we have mentioned, or the non-union sector or the service sector. It is not just the unionized workers at breweries who are losing their jobs. It is salespeople, administrative people, accounting people. It is people in the insurance industry now in some places in Manitoba, it is people in other places. Every one of those statistics represents a family that

sits down at the supper table that night and is totally devastated by the new realities under this so-called free trade, unfettered economic constitution with the United States.

We have seen the regional development grants. Again, we were hoping we were wrong. We have seen the regional development grants be cut back in a radical way, Mr. Acting Speaker. We have already seen the action by the United States Government in terms of the regional development grants in Nova Scotia. We are going to see more action on the part of the United States in terms of regional development in western Canada, in northern Canada, in all the regions of Atlantic Canada because, again, we have produced the level playing field.

The level playing field, Mr. Acting Speaker, is very simple. It means we have an economic constitution with the United States. It means the nine families that control 48 percent of the stock on the Toronto Stock Exchange for Canada will determine where they are going to put their little pieces on the chessboard and will sit back and let people whimsically be cut off at the knees, and the regions that were built in this country to be much stronger than the regions of the United States will be also cut off at the knees.

We only have to look at agriculture. We were told the Wheat Board would not be touched, unilaterally saw oats off the Wheat Board. We were told that transportation would not be cut. We saw that being changed and now, again, they are floating papers again to cut back the transportation policies. We were told now we could export hogs to the United States. We have this great umbrella of free trade with the United States. You know what this umbrella says? You, Canada, are subject to free trade penalties under the United States and, United States, you are not subject to anything. Congress and the Senate could do whatever it wants, but it is ultra vires in terms of the Free Trade Agreement. It is heads we win, tails you lose, Mr. Acting Speaker. We have been saying that all along. The fundamental reason for even the Prime Minister signing this document is incorrect and, unfortunately, when you see the actual action, it proves that.

The next thing is subsidies. Subsidies is a nice term, but it is of course our health, our social services, and many of the programs we consider dear to Canadians, but we have not even seen it in the document that is in the Free Trade Agreement because we are already seeing it in the unemployment insurance. We are seeing the Americanization of the unemployment insurance. Remember during the federal election? No, nothing would be touched. The UIC were increasing the benefits. It made a profit last year. You are lying by saying the UIC is going to be changed, you scaremongers in the New Democratic Party.

Well, three or four months later, a flick of the golden pen from Barbara McDougall from somewhere down in a Bay Street office in Toronto, and there you have it, Mr. Acting Speaker, hundreds of people affected. People who were in an insurance program will now be on a welfare program, people who had the dignity. The person we talked about at Ogilvie's will now have to go off insurance, not be able to go on insurance that

they paid for, will have to be thrown off of that so they could put in subsidies for the corporations. Big subsidies for the corporations in terms of job creation programs will all be related to the bottom-line profit.

It will not be related to skill development in this country and real retraining strategies in a marketplace that we see in northern Scandinavian countries, in Sweden and Denmark where they have social democratic Governments, where they see real transition taking place and real support from the private and public sector together in terms of that transition.

We have seen a total reversal on the UIC Program, but what do we hear from this Government? I mean, it was obvious to a Grade 10 student that changing UIC would mean that there would be a greater impact on the welfare system of Manitoba. You do not have to be a rocket scientist to figure that out. You cut back on the benefits at the front end, you cut back benefits at the back end, where do people go? They go onto the welfare system and what we get is a timid too-weak response from this Government in terms of fighting for people who are being cut off their insurance program and being put on a welfare program. I think that is disgusting in terms of us standing up for those people who are most greatly traumatized by the rationalizations and the cutbacks in the Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we have seen a total reversal on the child care position. We need a federal-provincial child care program in this country. We were told that free trade would not affect it. We were told that nothing after the election would affect the child care program in Manitoba and, sure enough, we have again a total federal flipflop on the child care program and a total withdrawal in terms of the support that was talked about.

* (1450)

More importantly, we are seeing a program of health care and post-secondary education being slowly and surely cut back 1 percent a year—the death by a 1,000 cuts. In 1981, it started under the Trudeau Government, and I say this because all the statistics are there, even in Wilson's Budget and Trudeau's old Budgets. In 1981, it started and we said at that point that the Medicare would be dead by the year 2000. We were accused of being fedbashers—49 percent in '82, 48 percent in '83, 46 percent in '84. When the Trudeau Government left office, it was down to 44 percent. The last four years it has wound down to 43 percent, 42 percent. It is now at 38 percent.

If you look at the numbers we tabled in the public of Manitoba in terms of health, we will lose \$142 million in EPF. We will lose \$101 million on health. It will be in its greatest impact in the fifth year. We will be down to 30 percent funding from the federal Government for our health care programs. We will have the death of Medicare through the Liberal and Conservative Governments. They will not kill it in a fair way up front so we can have the battle in support of the Canadian people.

We are seeing a slow and deliberate death of Medicare. I can assure you, as New Democrats who

fought the Liberals and Conservatives to establish Medicare in this country, we will fight these insidious cuts every year, every percent in terms of maintaining a universal health care system in this country.

We have the post-secondary education issue. We have already documented the fact that our universities are being cut again by some \$41 million in the next five years. Native education, I believe that is a major, major change in terms of the policy and Treaties of Native people. Visiting communities and visiting young people in many of the remote communities, we were reminded—the group that visited these communities were reminded—that as long as the sun shines, the river flows, and the grass will grow, that the Treaties will be inviolate between our Canada's first people who gave us so much of their land and so much of the opportunity when we first settled in this country, that they would have an exchange as part of their Treaty rights, the rights of education.

This is not an issue of capping of education grants or the square of the hypotenuse of a funding grant multiplied by some other obtuse formula. This is a fundamental right of Treaty. I believe that treaties and agreements between people, whether they are aboriginal people or other countries, are inviolate and no one should break those treaties.

We are bringing in a resolution to this House to call on an all-Party agreement. We are hoping we can get leave to put that on No. 1 on the priority for resolutions. We hope we can get all-Party support to move that up as we all did before with the deaf language proposal made by the Liberals, and it was a good proposal. I think we should move this proposal up and we should have an all-Party support for this resolution—take the vote.

We believe we should have the same kind of strong message with an all-Party message to our federal Government on returning Native education funding. It is absolutely imperative with 90 percent unemployment rates that we do not take the major way of getting ahead in this world in terms of education and education funding. I applaud our Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) on that resolution. I ask all Members of this House to join us in moving that resolution forward and taking a strong, united message to Ottawa.

I want to talk about the major themes of the Speech from the Throne, but I believe we have to keep things in context of the major environmental issues we are dealing with. I believe the major themes of this Speech from the Throne are the environment, finances of the province, the services that allegedly will be maintained, the rural issues and the federal-provincial relations. I think those are the five themes in the Speech from the Throne, and I want to speak to each one of those themes in a more general and thematic way rather than just scattergun my approach on the Speech from the Throne.

The Government has come out, quite rightly, on a sustainable development strategy and sustainable development initiatives in this province. I want to be honest with the Government and the Members of the Liberal Opposition and ourselves. I think we should be

a bit honest about this. I quite frankly think if we walked out of this Legislature and asked 25 Manitobans what is sustainable development, they would not know. Maybe the term is a little too gimmicky. We have put it in our reports and other bodies who I respect—Brundtland Commission, happens to be an ally group of our political Party. We were involved with Mr. Lecuyer in signing the original document, as the former Minister of the Environment, to get business and Governments together to sign the concept of a round table. I am not so sure the public know what we are talking about in terms of sustainable development.

Perhaps we have to always use the term - (Interjection)- no, I think we should be honest about that. I just say I think we should tie the term "environment" together with "sustainable development" so the people know what we are talking about, because I think we all agree with the goals of sustainable development. Our challenge, Mr. Acting Speaker, is to ensure that it is not sustainable rhetoric in terms of environmental issues, and it really is sustainable environmental development. I think we are going to start using the term "environment" so people know what we are talking about.

We think it is positive that the Government has changed this ministry in terms of the environment. We think they made a classic mistake last year, and we said so, by combining the two departments together. I think the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has admitted that mistake by separating them. The old alleged truism about the fact that the Department of Environment "runs itself," I do not believe is valid. I think the Government found it ran itself right into the ground last Session.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Now, now, now.

Mr. Doer: The Member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) always supported the former Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery) in his position, that the hole in the ozone layer was not big enough. I think most Manitobans do not share that approach.

I do not believe that sustainable environmental development is a partisan issue. I believe that environment is an issue for all of us in this Chamber. All of our supporters believe in the priority of the environment over economic development. That is an important change in the thinking of the public and the thinking that we have to take to all of our decisions in Government. Yes, the economic realities are very important, but we must consider the environment as also very important in our deliberations and make it the No. 1 priority, because the long-term health of our citizens and our earth is more important than any short-term economic benefit we may have.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I think the legislation—we will have to wait to see it—dealing with polluters is positive. I think the legislation dealing with CFCs, as proposed in the Speech from the Throne, is legislation we can support, but we certainly want to see the details of that. We have certainly drafted a Bill and would be willing to consult with all Parties on the type of legislation

we think would be a benefit to Manitobans. Proclaiming the Hazardous Goods Bill, The Endangered Species Act, other proposals that we had in the file, I think, are very positive. As the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) said, when you run out of material in our files, you are going to be in real trouble. I do not want to steal his lines. I do not want to be Joe Biden in terms of that-was-a-Jerry-Storie line. I think it was the Member for Flin Flon's line and I think it was very appropriate.

On the negative place, I think separation of the Workplace Safety and Health Division with the Environment Department is a major mistake. I believe that cancer-causing materials in the workplace are cancer-causing materials that go into the environment. I cannot understand the Government in its wisdom, looking at a comprehensive approach to the environment, taking part of the workplace environment and separating it from the broader environmental issues. I believe that they went from one extreme of having everything combined to one department to another extreme in just managing the environment through the Deputy Premier. I believe and we believe strongly that the workplace environment and cancer-causing materials in the workplace are obviously cancer-causing materials in the environment. Therefore, do not have them separated, do not have them parochialized. Have them together in a coordinated strategy, again which we believe is consistent with sustainable development.

* (1500)

We also believe that the Manfor agreement will put the test to this Government on the environment. Yes, the old way of doing things in all Governments, federal Liberal Governments, NDP Governments and Conservative Governments, was to sit pat and, only when there was a change, to go to a full environmental impact study. The new way of doing things, Mr. Acting Speaker, is saying any change, even if it is a change in ownership, even if it is a change in the conditions of the ownership, if it is a change in one of the conditions of the sale or whatever else, that we do not own the plant, you do not own the plant. The public owns the forests, the public owns the streams, the public owns the water, the public owns the Native rights, the people own the environment. The new way of doing things is having the absolute and fundamental right of an environmental impact study with environmental input from the public.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I do not even want to talk about Rafferty, the Member for Rhineland (Mr. Penner), but I think we have two fundamental options. We can do things the old way. You could talk about what we did and what Trudeau did and what the Conservatives did, and what City Hall is doing, and what Saskatchewan is doing. We can do it the old way or we can do it the new way.

I would urge this Government, without any partisan comment at all, do it the new way. Do it the way of having public participation. The public owns the forest, the public owns the Treaty rights, the public owns the streams. Let us start today with this major change in capital investment. Let us start off on the right foot.

Let us start off in a positive way. I do not believe we have anything to fear but I believe the public has rights. That is the new way to go with the new Environment Act. That is the new philosophy of environment. I think we should go with the new way, Mr. Acting Speaker, and I would strongly urge the Government to do so.

In terms of the City of Winnipeg Act, the same arguments can be made. We had to fight the "Gang of 19." Harold, I guess you remember that, the "Gang of 19" at City Hall. We had to fight the "Gang of 19," the Liberal-Tory coalition at City Hall. They were opposed to us changing The Environment Act and, quite frankly, we were too timid for years not to change The Environment Act, to take away the exemption from the City of Winnipeg.

We stand before all Manitobans in saying we should have done that years ago. We should not have backed down from the City of Winnipeg in terms of The Environment Act. That is why when we took the new Environment Act, 1987, when we brought in the new Environment Act, we did not have the ability to exempt a municipality from the provisions of The Environment Act.

We believed in a new way of dealing with the environment under the new Environment Act. Yes, the city needed some time, no question about that. Yes, they cannot double-pipe the City of Winnipeg water system or sewage system in one year but, Mr. Acting Speaker, when we proclaimed the Act on March 31, 1988, we did not expect to be another 15 months before we heard from the Government on what they are going to do with the City of Winnipeg and The Environment Act, and the enforcement of The Environment Act.

We want The Environment Act in with the City of Winnipeg. We will be pressing with everything we have, Mr. Premier (Mr. Filmon) and Members of the Government, to have full enforcement of the Environment Act, full complicity with the Environment Act and the full rights of the public in terms of public participation, the public participation of the granting of licences, the denial of licences, the timing of licences, the timing of changes, the timing of the new changes to be made in the City of Winnipeg.

We cannot have a situation where we are breaking the law and, in my opinion, we are breaking The Environment Act. We cannot have administrative deals between this Government and the City of Winnipeg Liberal-Tory coalition. We must go open, proclaim the Act and have a bold new world of environmental policy.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to—again keeping on the environment -(Interjection)- a number of Liberals are not in it. You better check your Liberals, Madam Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs). Yes, the Liberal-Tory coalition is alive and well at City Hall.

Mr. Acting Speaker, Rafferty-Alameda is a very serious issue and I am pleased the Government, after the court decision, has decided to ask for a full federal environmental impact study. There is no question that we relied on Joe Clark's advice and Mr. McMillan's advice on April 19 to give us a full environmental impact study in this province. There is no question on June

17, 1988, we, the people of Manitoba, received probably the greatest conspiracy of environmental shafting, I believe, in terms of the people of Manitoba, in terms of our needs for a federal environmental impact study.

Let us learn from that lesson that all of us stand up for Manitoba in environmental concerns, that again the new way of doing things with the environment is to have public participation. The public have rights. It is the public's water, it is the public's streams, it is the public's water quality, it is the public volume.

Governments come and go. Opposition Members come and go. Members in this Chamber come and go. When we are changing something affecting the people of Manitoba for a hundred years, it is not our rights, it is not our administrative deals, it is the public's right and the public's administrative deals.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we are very concerned as well about Shoal Lake and the water quality on Shoal Lake. We are absolutely appalled at the Environment Minister, the Environment Liberal Minister, Mr. Bradley, in Ontario, who preaches one way to the people of Detroit, Michigan. He says to the people of Detroit, Michigan: "We, the people of Windsor, Ontario, demand an environmental impact study in Canada and in Windsor to deal with the incinerator in the Windsor community." Then he turns around and when it is a Canadian city of 600,000 people, the second best water supply in the province or in the country, if not in North America, he will not give us an environmental impact study.

Now, Mr. Acting Speaker, we have raised this issue in the Ontario Legislature on four occasions with Premier Peterson, with the Environment Minister Bradley, with other Members of the Ontario Legislature. Our Members are raising this on a weekly basis and our counterpart in Ontario will be bringing in a drinking Bill for the Province of Saskatchewan, demanding there be an environmental study on a drinking Bill in the Province of Ontario.

That will not give us directly what we want, Mr. Acting Speaker, but indirectly—(Interjection)—not your drinking Bill, water drinking Bill. We will get to your Visas in the Liquor Commission later. With the drinking Bill in Ontario, we believe that the bands that are on that lake that take their water from the Shoal Lake and Lake of the Woods system, we believe the bands on that lake, if the Liberals will pass the NDP Private Members' Bill—and I ask you to get them to pass it because they have stonewalled it for two years. I would ask that they pass that Bill because it will guarantee us an environmental impact study for the quality of drinking water in the bands on the Shoal Lake area and, therefore, it will guarantee Manitoba some rights in this area because obviously water quality for drinking is consistent between the two provinces.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we believe that this Government must be much more vigorous on Shoal Lake. We believe you should be bringing the federal Government into this. Do not wait like we did with the Rafferty-Alameda dam. Do not wait for an NDP press release. Stand up the first day you have an opportunity. We believe you should have an environmental impact study consistent with the new environment laws today to deal with public

participation and public rights. We believe that you should immediately enforce The City of Winnipeg Act.

Those are our positive recommendations to you as the Government to have any credibility with your words in the Speech from the Throne. Those are the minimum requirements we believe this Government should pursue on an immediate fast track way with the Province of Manitoba.

Dealing with the finances of the province, Mr. Acting Speaker, I know that the Government is taking some pleasure in all our tough work and activity in terms of reducing the deficit. We believe over time the public will realize that we did all the pain and they are trying to get all the gain. We are not bitter about that; we are not bitter just one bit. But we would note that spending is higher in many areas with this Government, including the Premier's Office, even the Third Quarter Report shows it overbudget. We will watch and see what happens with the Fourth Quarter Report.

* (1510)

We believe the fundamental issue facing our province and finances is tax fairness on the one hand and the whole area of economic growth on the other hand. In terms of the finances of this province, both the Liberals and Conservatives campaigned a year ago on tax breaks to corporations. There is no question about that. They both campaigned on getting rid of the payroll tax on companies, \$200 million. In fact nine companies that had offices outside of Winnipeg and in fact in eastern Canada would get almost half of the tax breaks in terms of the \$200 million in that provision.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we said then and we will say it again, yes, raise the threshold to help small business. We did it three or four times ourselves. Continue to raise the threshold, but we say very sincerely that there is no question that that tax for large corporations and large enterprises does not create any jobs. In fact, we have a situation where in Winnipeg today the job situation is half a percent off of St. John's, Newfoundland. The Members of the Treasury Bench should hang their heads in shame for a situation where we have gone from one of the best employment creation provinces and the best job creation provinces for young people and other people in our province. We are slipping slowly the way of Sterling Lyon, Mr. Acting Speaker. We are going to a situation where we are one of the worst provinces. It is a shameful situation when we have a situation where we are moving toward St. John's Newfoundland, in terms of the economic situation of this province.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we believe the people of this province will see when they compare over time the job creation record of the Conservatives, which is the same as the philosophy, the trickle-down philosophy of the Liberal Opposition, they will see it is the same philosophy. They will come to a Party over time that really did perform job creation, did not talk about it in this House but really did perform in terms of job creation, in terms of the Province of Manitoba. They will go for performance, not the rhetoric of the old-line Parties.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the same promises were made between the Tories and the Liberals in terms of their priorities for corporations. They go to the same Chamber of Commerce breakfasts; they attend the same meetings in terms of who their constituency is—(Interjection)—they deny that now. We have seen a very serious situation. I ask the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) to take note. Last year in this Chamber, he said to us and I quote, and I remember him saying it: "Michael Wilson is one of the most honest individuals in Canada. Michael Wilson, his word is impeccable. I trust him with our life." He said these things. He said that in this Chamber—check Hansard. When Michael Wilson says there is going to be no increase in revenue based on a sales tax change, Michael Wilson will not mislead us.

I do not even want to go into the five or six things he has misled us on since November to today, Mr. Acting Speaker, but I do want to go on to the issue of a national sales tax. It is not a revenue-neutral sales tax. Don Blenkarn was correct. Don Blenkarn, the chairperson of the committee, said it will produce a \$9 billion revenue increase—

An Honourable Member: 14 billion.

Mr. Doer: —net increase, 9 billion over the 5 billion that is here now. A \$9 billion increase over what is there now on the old manufacturing tax and the old sales tax is not revenue-neutral. I believe that if our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is going to keep his word to the people of Manitoba last fall, he must mount a vigorous campaign on the national sales tax and its devastating affect on workingpeople and their families and their communities. It will cost Manitoba families over \$1,000 in increased costs they will have to put out.

We believe we are at a point of crisis, in terms of our tax system in this country, and we need a Minister of Finance and an Opposition in Ottawa and Governments in Ottawa that will look at the crisis in this country. If you look at Michael Wilson's Budget, Mr. Acting Speaker, and look at the chart that said in 1961 that 20 percent of the taxes in this country and revenue came from corporations. By the time the Liberals left office, they had taken billions of dollars off corporations. The Trudeau, Turner, Chretien Liberals had taken billions of dollars off corporations and they are now down to 11 percent at the switch.

At the switch of the Government in 1984, they were down to 11 percent of corporations. Under Michael Wilson's Budget, we are going down to 9 percent in corporations and billions and billions of dollars are being made up in terms of family increases in taxes in our middle class. They are being made up in increases in taxes for workingpeople and their families; they are being made up in cutbacks to communities; they are being made back in cutbacks to our health and post-secondary education. This is the biggest scandal in this country, what the big business community has been able to get away with, with the Liberals and Conservatives, is a tragedy of immense proportions. I believe the people of Canada will rise up someday and vote for a federal Party that will stand up for them and right the tax system in this country.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there was one minor White Paper that Michael Wilson put out to deal with the profits, the bank margin profit tax, it was called. Mr. Acting Speaker, that was going to be a tax, not on consumer loan tax, which is part of the debate going on, on the sales tax and the federal sales tax, but the federal Government had a proposal to tax the amount of money that was between the margin of what they borrowed money for and what they lent it out for. The federal Government had a White Paper and identified the fact that this would produce \$1.4 billion worth of income for the people of Canada.

Maybe we could have saved UIC, maybe we could have kept the Medicare system at 38 percent instead of going down to 30 percent. Maybe we could have kept post-secondary education, saved the \$40 million, maybe we could have put that bank money into Native post-secondary education, maybe we could have kept the Port of Churchill open to have our northern vision and our northern transportation system, maybe we could have used that for any number of things.

The banks whined. They said, "Oh, we are so mad at you for bringing the American Express into Canada now that we are really going to fight you if you bring this bank profit margin tax in," Mr. Acting Speaker, "we are really going to fight you now, you cannot do that," so they dropped it in the federal Budget.

Two things happened when they dropped it in the federal Budget. One is the Liberal Finance Critic applauded the federal Tory Government for dropping that tax and tried to mislead the public and say that it was part of a consumer tax, which it was not. The second thing that happened—that is where the Liberals have always been at—is the bank profits went up so well that day that they had record days on the stock market.

The only group that was not crying the day after the Budget was tabled—the second day after it was tabled, maybe the third day after it was tabled—the bank, the stocks—(Interjection)—I know the Tories will side with the banks over Manitobans. I know the Tory Finance Minister would rather have a tax on people and a sales tax on our Manitobans than a bank tax, because four out of the six banks had record days on the stock market the day after the Budget was tabled.

When people were going to the Burns plant, when nurses were going to the Health Sciences Centre, when people were going to work in Brandon, when people were going to work in Churchill with a cutback on our transportation system, they were all crying, but the banks were laughing, and here we have the provincial Finance Minister (Mr. Manness), supported by the Liberal Party in terms of the priorities of banks, Mr. Acting Speaker.

That is the second issue in the Budget. We must develop an economic strategy; we must have fair taxation. Now that Ontario has moved to a corporate tax system and now that we have reduced the deficit, we believe that if there are going to be any tax breaks—and we believe there should be, we can offset the federal Budget—let the tax breaks be on people and their families and communities.

Let the tax breaks not be on the mining companies which was produced in the Budget last year. Let the tax breaks not be for the railways, the CPR and the CNR, which was produced by the Minister of Finance last year, much to the chagrin of John Diefenbaker in his grave. Let the tax breaks not be for the corporations in terms of the payroll tax, health and post-secondary tax. Let any tax breaks in the provincial Budget be for people.

Secondly, we challenge this Government to get out of their planning seminars, get away from the flip charts, get away from all this esoteric rhetoric and create a real economic strategy that will create jobs for people in our communities, in our cities and for our youth and for our people in this province. We challenge you to do that.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to speak for a moment about the quality of services, which I believe was the third theme in the Budget. As I have mentioned before, we have heard nothing from the Conservatives and nothing from the Liberals on the major issue in our health care system, and that is the fact that our Medicare system, the system that we fought for years ago that makes us a better society than our American friends, our Medicare system, the principle of a universal health care system available to all Canadians, is slipping into terminal illness, and it will go from terminal illness to death.

* (1520)

We can see what started in 1981 going into 1990 where we will have a system where the federal Government is only one-third a partner in our health care system that started out 50-50. I say with all sincerity, cannot we rise again above partisan politics in terms of our health care system and fight as one voice and one Party in terms of a universal health care system, that is a health care system that we started?

We have some serious administrative problems in the Department of Health. We have some positive initiatives in the mental health initiatives areas. We have some positive starts from the Department of Health. We have some positive initiatives in terms of citizen involvement in the mental health area in our province, and I would like to put that on the record. We have a lot more to do, but we believe there are some positive starts in the mental health area.

We believe that the health system though is in a state of administrative chaos, not because the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is not a competent Minister. He is very competent in this Chamber, but the problem is he has a management style that does not allow any delegation of authority to allow for decisions to be made in such a way to get our health care system going. I say that with all sincerity. We have a system that is absolutely trapped in the Minister's office. We have a system where major decisions are taking months after months to be made because the Minister of Health is holding those in his system and holding them in his office.

We have gone 15 months and the system of health, quite frankly, is in a state of chaos because the system

of health does not know where it is going. So we have a classic case of a Minister who wants total control of the Department of Health. I do not mind any Minister not wanting to know what is going on, but there is a balance between knowing what is going on and being able to control the debate in this House, and hiring the type of people who you believe are necessary to carry out your reforms and carry out the reforms necessary for Manitobans.

Mr. Acting Speaker, it has taken seven months to establish the Health Advisory Committee. The Health Advisory Committee is ill-established in our opinion. It has some nice people on it, yes, but it has a number of fundamental weaknesses. It has no representation from the North. It has no representation from nurses who are directly servicing the people of Manitoba. We believe the Health Advisory Committee should be made up of people who not only will give you advisory advice in the Minister's office but give you bedside advice in terms of the health care reforms that are necessary in this province.

The committee has taken so long to deal with the issues. It is overly occupied with people who are made up of the two teaching hospitals as opposed to the community hospitals, like Concordia or Dauphin, or some of the other community hospitals. Because of that, that is why we see a Speech from the Throne which has some good recommendations from our two teaching hospitals, but really we have missed the balance in terms of community-based health like Klinik, community-based health like Home Care, community-based health in our community hospitals, our community-based health in northern Manitoba, our community-based health in public health, our community-based health initiatives in the Health Action Centre.

We are in a state of total chaos, Mr. Acting Speaker, and I suggest to this Government that they better, on behalf of Manitobans, get a specific strategy to deal with the true nature of the health challenges. They better put that Health Advisory Task Force on a fast track and come to some very immediate decisions on Klinik, the Health Action Centre, Home Care programs that are being cut back in the North End of Winnipeg, programs such as the Northern Health Initiatives, northern representation, nurses, the role of nurses, because this will become and develop to become the grace of this Government in terms of a new Government is ending.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, William Chornopyski, in the Chair.)

People expect action in terms of their health care system and New Democrats will fight for action in terms of the health care of this province.-(Interjection)- Action is not a user fee in the health care system. Action is not to charge for meals in hospitals, let me assure you of that. Mr. Acting Speaker, that is a serious issue; that is not a partisan shot. We believe a health care system should be accessible to all people, notwithstanding wealth. We do not believe the people of this province should pay for their meals, pay for their slippers, pay for their dressing gowns and have a quality health care on the basis of wealth. That is the Liberal policy and we totally reject it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker (William Chornopyski): Order, please. The Leader of the New Democratic Party has the floor.

Mr. Doer: It is fundamental to our being, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We fought for Medicare. We established Medicare and we will fight for universal Medicare every step of the way with every Member in this Chamber, believe me. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is not funny to charge for meals in hospitals.

The education system is also an issue of principle that we would like to deal with in the Speech from the Throne. We have to deal with the fundamental principles first of all in our education system before we go into scattering advice in terms of the education program in this province. We believe that one of the most fundamental issues that we are going to have to deal with in this Chamber, and I say this again in all sincerity to all Parties in this Chamber, is the whole issue of the public and private school system in this province.

The Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) asks me how many times I want to deal with it. We believe that a promise to fund the public and private school system in this province to 80 percent will produce again a two-tier education system. We believe it will produce a system for people who have the means to opt out of a public school education system which again has served this province well.

Yes, we have funded the private school system to the tune of 30 percent. But we always believed that the enrolment in the public school system and the private school system should be very closely monitored. We believe in being fair to all students and all parents. But beyond that fairness, we believe in the fundamental paramountcy of the public school system in this province. We will be fighting to maintain a strong public school system. You cannot have it both ways. You cannot continue to put millions and millions of dollars into a private school system over the last 15 months and promise to give 80 percent to private schools. Our priority for education is the public school system, not St. John's Ravenscourt in terms of the Province of Manitoba, and that I pledge to the people of Manitoba.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

Mr. Speaker, on speaking on the education program, I would urge the Government to get on with the illiteracy program. I would also urge the Government to get on with the Native education program in The Pas. I would strongly urge the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) to take heed of the recommendation from our Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) on this issue. It is a great idea for northern economic development, it is a great idea for aboriginal development, it is a great idea to have that nursing program in The Pas and we will support the Government to immediately produce that program. It will be very positive. The Government will get lots of plaudits and I think that will be very positive.

In terms of child care, again let us go to the principle of the issue. The principle of a child care system is again to our way of thinking, a universal, non-profit,

fully accessible child care program. We applaud the community representatives who made up that committee. We do not applaud the fact that this Government has withheld this report for some two and a half months. Last year, we thought the Government would have a strategy on child care as they announced funding to the private system and funding to the public system, but much more funding to the private school system.

After a year they have the task force report. Is there any strategy, is there any direction, is there any philosophy, are there any principles, does the Government know where it is going? No, to all those questions. Is it going to stand up against the federal Government? No, Mr. Speaker, and again we believe in a public accessible child care system. We do not believe in a profit system like the Liberals and Conservatives. We will again fight for non-profit, a fully accessible child care system. We know which side we are on. We do not have to move back and forth in terms of that issue. We know who we stand up for.

Workplace, Safety and Health is also a major issue in this province. We are absolutely flabbergasted with the position of the Government with the Workers Compensation to go against the original King Report on Workers Compensation. We believe you are going in the wrong direction. We know of case after case where a worker has been told, do not file for workers compensation, do not file for injury. You are going to affect our rates and, therefore, our levy in terms of the next year.

* (1530)

Again, we were absolutely flabbergasted when the Liberals supported the Conservatives and supported the Chamber of Commerce against the original Manitoba recommendation in terms of the King Report. We can go on and on and on in terms of Workplace, Safety and Health, but the conclusion of our caucus is there is no difference between the Liberals and Tories on Workplace, Safety and Health on any major issue of substance in terms of the Province of Manitoba.

We would ask that the Government continue to delegate in Family Services through community services to the volunteers and parents. We established a decentralized program for the people of Manitoba with the Family Services, with volunteers. We have raised it time and time again, the centralization of Child and Family Services in the City of Winnipeg. We believe that would do a grave injustice to the volunteers and staff in the community-based activities, Mr. Speaker, and we will again fight for a community-based Family Services Department. We will watch the Minister and the ministry and the Government very carefully in those areas.

In terms of urban issues, we do not know whether the Government is going to come back with a full reform of urban issues. We know they are tinkering with a few of the more positive recommendations that we produced in terms of urban affairs. We do not know whether it is going to do something with the travesty that allows the EPC, the Executive Policy Committee,

to be made up of a gang of back-room people from, again, the two traditional Parties that allows for the situation to develop where the pie is cut up in a back room, the decisions are made in the back room, all the perks are given to the Liberals and Conservatives across the city in the back rooms of the city. Real urban reform will mean that we develop an Act, as we proposed in our White Paper, to get rid of the Gang of 19 and the insidious backroom dealing that has gone on at City Hall. We will see if there is real civic reform with the Bill that this Government brings forward.

In terms of the multicultural community, we have proposed legislation, our critic has proposed legislation, and we will work in a positive way on a true multicultural Bill that will have true enforcement and true targets and true development. We will work in a very positive way with our community and with this Government and all Members of this Legislature, hopefully in an all-Party multicultural policy, to deal with the legitimate aspirations of our multicultural community.

I think the accreditation program, or the activity, the efforts, the commitment in the Speech from the Throne to try to equalize some of those professional standards is a very good idea. The Government had it introduced and I applaud them for it. You will have our support on that. Full speed ahead on that proposal and you have our support on that.

In terms of the Justice Committee, I have said before that the Justice Minister (Mr. McCrae) should give our Consumer Affairs critic (Mr. Maloway) half his salary, and I believe that the Member has come up with a lot of positive suggestions in terms of consumer legislation. Again, he is one step ahead of the Government with the "lemon-aid" legislation, but I am hoping that Brick's Furniture—let us deal with last year's consumer issues. Liberals and Conservatives, let us deal with last year's legitimate concerns of Brick's Furniture and then let us move on to this year's consumer issues. We would ask all-Party support for our "lemon-aid" Bill that has been produced.

In terms of violent criminals, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing in the Speech from the Throne, nothing in last year's Budget, to deal with an expedited process in terms of violent offenders. You made a promise, you have not kept it. I would ask the Attorney General, or the Minister of Justice, in terms of the safety of Manitoba citizens to move forward with that recommendation that is buried somewhere in the bureaucracy of his department, and New Democrats will support an aggressive approach to dealing with violent offenders.

We are absolutely appalled, Mr. Speaker, that the Attorney General would take away the community-based volunteer program in terms of victims of crime. We believe we had the first and finest Victims' Assistance Program in Canada. Do not let that be taken hostage while the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) huffs from his seat. You know, you are being captive of the bureaucrats too early. We know the bureaucrats want to get their hands on that money. We know the Treasury Board would love to allocate it to their favourite items, but we believe that the community-based Victims' Assistance Program, working with our community-based volunteers and our volunteers from the

community, allocating that money on the basis of merit is a far superior way to go. We will vote against any change, any way of removing that in any way, shape or form, in terms of taking away the rights of citizens to be in partnership with victims in our criminal justice system.

I want to talk on the fourth theme of this Speech, and that is rural economic development. We say "economic development" because we believe the Premier (Mr. Filmon) made a mistake by not putting economic development into the rural development portfolio. We think it is a positive step forward, but I believe strongly that the Minister responsible for Rural Development (Mr. Penner) must also have Business Development and Tourism as part of that individual's portfolio.

I really believe to have Business Development and Tourism with IT&T and all the other portfolios does not allow this Minister to get his or her hands on enough rural economic development levers, and that is why our critic is a critic who deals with the economic realities of rural economic development as well as the rural development idea of property assessment. Rural development needs jobs, economic opportunity, Mr. Speaker. It does not need property assessment and a couple of boards of water services, although I agree those are positive steps forward. It needs real jobs, real opportunities.

We are going the wrong way, Mr. Speaker. We are cutting back the development jobs in Dauphin. We are cutting back the development positions and tourism money in Thompson. We are cutting back business grants in The Pas. We are cutting back business opportunities in Flin Flon. We are cutting back jobs in Ashern and the Interlake area. We are cutting back opportunities obviously in the City of Winnipeg.

We suggest to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) in a positive vein, go one step further, Sir. Put in the rural economic development program with some real teeth and some real levers, with real opportunity to move things and develop opportunities in rural Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that value-added jobs plus Government services is the only way to go in rural Manitoba. We know that is easier said than done but we would ask you to look at value-added opportunities in our rural communities. Look at the kind of proposals we had for improving water and water treatment. Just adding a water treatment plant in the community of Dauphin would add hundreds of opportunities for job creation and job creation opportunities in the rural economic communities.

Mr. Speaker, again our rural communities, as our critic has outlined today in his question, our federal Government is devastating western Canada rural economic life. Rail line abandonment, agricultural policies, rail employees, the Port of Churchill, and our northern communities are being devastated by federal economic policies.

Mr. Speaker, Portage is just part of that. Churchill is just as important as Portage. Portage is just as important as Ilford. Ilford is just as important as

Pikwitonei. All of these communities are getting massive amounts of their percentage of economic life taken right out of their bodies.

Native education is also an economic development idea that is being cut back by the federal Government.

Flin Flon is another area where we are seeing no action. We had the agreement in our hands as part of the acid rain agreement. The Prime Minister goes down to Washington and talks in glowing terms about the acid rain policies in Canada and why does the United States not get on board. What does he do for the community of Flin Flon? Nothing, nothing in terms of that community, to upgrade that smelter which needs upgrading. It is a major environmental problem in terms of the acid rain.

Mr. Speaker, the policies of this federal Government and policies of the last 10 years have been to put jobs into the golden triangle of Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal, and we, no matter what political Party, have got to stand up for the rural way of life, the western way of life. We have been totally abandoned by policies from the federal Government that support a strategy of getting all the seats in Quebec and try to get some seats somewhere else. That happened before with the Liberals. It is happening again with the Conservatives. Western Canada is being decimated, and we have got to start standing up for the Province of Manitoba and the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, agriculture is another area that we are very concerned about in terms of rural economic life. Agriculture, we have a strong Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), but why do we have a weak voice dealing with the federal Government? Why are we being so timid with a competent, capable, Minister of Agriculture in dealing with our federal Government?

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, again, it is back to an issue of principle. It is an issue of principle because there is one policy that supports corporate farming and the development of marketeering in our agricultural communities and the abandonment in some ways of our family farm, and there are other policies that support the family farm. We know where we stand. We support the family farm. Our critic of Agriculture and our former Minister of Agriculture, we knew who we stood for. We do not stand for Cargill and the grain companies and the profiteering and the exchange market. We stand for the family farmer. We stand for the rural way of life.

Mr. Speaker, that is why we have no philosophical problem when the marketeering decision takes place on a unilateral way to take oats off the Wheat Board. Why do we not hear this Government speak up for farmers who are voting in every one of their districts to put oats back on the Wheat Board? Why do we not hear from the friends of farmers? I suggest there are more friends of the grain companies and the exchange market when it comes down to the crunch. The farmers who are voting constituency district after district, they are voting to return to an orderly marketing system.

* (1540)

We do not see that voice in terms of this Government and we do not see the voice in terms of offloading on

tripartite programs, and we do not see the voice of our Agriculture Minister (Mr. Findlay) on transportation policies. Again, after the federal election, farmers are going to pay a lot more for transportation policies, again as we predicted under free trade. We do not see any voice in terms of the subsidy issue. The federal Government is floating a policy on subsidies. It is floating a policy, another Ottawa trial balloon to figure out another way to kick farmers where it hurts in rural and western Canada in terms of the quality of life in western Canada.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to stand up as a political Party and as a movement in terms of the principle of our small farmers, our family farmers. We will speak out against the profiteering and free market system. We believe in a balance between our markets and orderly marketing. That is why we can stand up on every issue of principle with the family farmers, with the people of rural Manitoba, with our rural communities.

I have spoken before about the aboriginal peoples. I would again urge all-Party agreement on aboriginal people in terms of the education capping. I would urge all-Party agreement on Churchill. I would urge all-Party agreement on our railways. I would urge all-Party agreement on the bases, and I would urge all-Party agreement on the other aspects we have raised.

Mr. Speaker, the last issue I want to raise is federal-provincial relations. I have said before, and I know it bothers the Government for me to say so, but I think it is very important. When you are dealing with a barracuda, you cannot act like a goldfish. I really believe that we must act in a very predictable—predictability is a very important quality. You do not go running off all the time in terms of federal-provincial relations. We must deal in a very predictable, forceful way with the federal Government. We must know when we are going to fight. We must know when we are going to cooperate, but we must be prepared to stand up for the people of Manitoba.

It is clear in this country that the provinces that deal with the federal Government, notwithstanding partisan politics, there are Governments that deal with the federal Government very well. It has nothing to do with Meech Lake. New Brunswick is doing much better, quite frankly, than P.E.I. or Manitoba with the federal Government. It goes right across partisan lines. If you look at the bottom numbers, we did much better, notwithstanding the "cousin" comment of just picking up your phone.

We did much better than this Government in terms of the bottom lines of federal-provincial agreements. When we went into a fight, we knew where we were going to be at the end of the day. This is high stakes, this is very important. When we had one fight on a very major issue, we came back with five or six other agreements in our hand and five or six other agreements that we were negotiating. We said positive things about the federal Government on the cooperative areas and we said negative things on the non-cooperative areas.

I believe also that you cannot just say anything to the federal Government. I say this in all sincerity that

you cannot just wile away all the time, complain all the time and say anything about the federal Government. It will not do us any good. Manitoba relies on 25 percent of our income. We need a balanced approach to federal-provincial relations. We need to know where are our priorities. We have to telegraph those priorities very early. We have to know where we are going and how to get those priorities. We have to establish lobby groups in business, labour, communities and all caucuses of all political Parties. The other Party has to know what the consequences of failure are going to be.

We must have a strong, consistent, predictable, balanced approach to federal-provincial relations. I believe that we are not having that in this province and it is a major, major concern, I believe, to the people of Manitoba. We must get that on track because it is a partner really with the whole area of true economic development in this province.

Mr. Speaker, as I said before, this is a very major time in our Speech from the Throne. It is a very major time in Manitoba with the first couple of months of a free trade environment, a very major time with a free trade Budget. We have to operate in a way that I believe is in the best interest of families and workingpeople and their families and their communities in this province. On almost every issue of substance, whether it was last December, our tax policies or policies on economic development, we do see unfortunately the old-line Parties that have the traditional trickle-down theory from business in terms of the policies they take and the positions they take.

We believe that we are the Party that does represent workingpeople and their families. We do believe that we believe in equality, a value system that is close to families. We believe that values of families of sharing and cooperating are the values of our movement, whereas the values of corporations which are just unfettered, free market profit, let the losers fall where they may, are not the values that are good for Canada in the future.

We believe we must stand up for Manitoba in a balanced way. We believe that we cannot have a situation where we have a do-nothing Government or a say-everything Liberal Opposition. We believe the Tory-Liberal agenda has not created economic development in this province. We believe over time it has not created the health reforms that people want. We believe we have not gotten sustainable environmental development in the long run. We urge the Government to go ahead with it.

We also know, Mr. Speaker, that the people did speak in a democracy a year ago. We believe, and one of our fundamental principles is democracy. We believe in democracy when people speak that it is our job and responsibility to go with the will of the democracy, in terms of the Legislature of this province. We believe that when the democratic rights of people have been expressed in an election and there is a minority Government, we have a responsibility under our democratic principles to follow through on that democracy.

We believe the people of Manitoba do not want another election—three elections in 39 months! We

believe they want us to work on the job creation issues. They want us to deal with the plant closures. They want us to deal with the Medicare. They want us to deal with the environment. We will vote with the people of Manitoba. We will vote to have responsible minority Government. When the Government moves to a position of a radical right agenda, as we have always stated, whether it is next week in the Budget or down the road, if they move to a Liberal-Tory radical right agenda, we will vote to force an election. Therefore, we will take the responsible approach and not necessitate an election—three elections in 39 months! We will not give any blank cheque to this Government. I say, in all sincerity, a radical right agenda will result in a vote against the Government.

Thank you very much all Members of this Chamber for your indulgence.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): I rise to join in on the Throne Speech Debate. Mr. Speaker, I was not rising to give the Leader of the New Democratic Party a standing ovation, even though I can assure you and the people of Manitoba that we, the Government of Manitoba, appreciate the support of the New Democratic Party and one can understand why.

This is probably the second best, or if not equally the second best, Throne Speech he has ever had a chance to vote in favour of, because there was not a lot from the Government that he was a Member of to vote for. It was more by the fact he had to sustain his Government was the reason that he voted with them, not because he wanted to. This particular situation, I am sure, he wants to vote for what is a very progressive document laid before the people of the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, let me first of all congratulate my colleague, the Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz) and his fine presentation in the moving of the Throne Speech, and my colleague from Swan River (Mr. Burrell) in the seconding of the Throne Speech, presenting to the people of Manitoba what I would consider, and I am sure the people of Manitoba consider, as a balanced approach to the governing of the Province of Manitoba, a fair and equitable approach on behalf of all those people who expect that their Government is here not to be a servant of the people any more than the people should be a servant of the Government, but it is a working combination. It is the situation of which we have the opportunity to lay before them our agenda. They have the opportunity to judge.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased with the support we are getting from the different groups in society. When we heard the comments from the New Democratic Party and of course the other Party, I am sure when one reads their amendment to it, there may be some of the Members of the Liberal Party who may want to reconsider the position which their Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) has put forward on their behalf because it is pretty weak gruel, the amendment that was put forward by the Leader of the Liberal Party. It was pretty

weak gruel and I could take the time to read it but I think it is important that I put my comments on the record as it relates specifically to our Throne Speech.

* (1550)

Mr. Speaker, I think it is extremely important as well to say how pleased I am as a Member of the Legislature representing the constituency of Arthur that we have had one good year in Government, that we have had a group of people working very cooperatively towards some common objectives. When we work towards the common objectives of fiscal responsibility and accountability, those stand out utmost. In the whole work that we have done this past year has been the accountability and the bringing of fiscal affairs into line with what the people of Manitoba, I am sure, expect.

At the same time, we had a commitment and maintained the commitment of providing the essential services for the people of Manitoba. Health and education, it is extremely important that those essential services be maintained. I say that, Mr. Speaker, because in many of the comments heard from some of the Members opposite, that would be the first thing that would happen under a Conservative administration is that they would lose some health care benefits.

Thirdly, but not any less important has been the economic development and job creation for the citizens of the province, not solely by the taxpayers' money but more precisely by the encouragement of private sector investment in the province. I will elaborate more on these three points at a later opportunity. Again, this has been done, this has all been done under the overall umbrella of an environmentally sound and sustainable development within the province.

For those Members—and I appreciate the comments of the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) when he suggested that certain people may not know what the words sustainable development means and that could be quite true. There could be a lack of understanding of what sustainable development means.

I happen to come from a basic background from the farm community. Sustainable development is somewhat more understandable when one has a close and direct relationship with the land, as I am sure my friends in the Native communities have had a very close association with the land in the environment in which they have been brought up, land and water, how important it is to sustain their livelihoods. I think it is important that we do clearly express ourselves very clearly and plainly when it comes to the expression of an overall direction we want to go and such comments as sustainable development.

Let me add as well, Mr. Speaker, and I indicated my feelings about working with the colleagues, the opportunity I have had in working with colleagues like our Premier (Mr. Filmon) and Cabinet. I say this very sincerely, that I am extremely pleased to have my colleague, the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) who has joined our Cabinet, who brings a wealth of experience and knowledge from many years of being not only the dean in the Legislature but a man who has, over his years in office representing the people

of Manitoba, taken a very fair and balanced approach to the overall running of not only his constituency but his involvement in many Cabinets within provincial administration. So I am pleased and I am sure the people of my constituency, the constituency of Arthur, want to congratulate my colleague, as they would want to congratulate my colleague, the new Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond), the Member for Kirkfield Park, in carrying out her responsibilities, and I am sure will be done in a very capable manner.

Let me say as well, Mr. Speaker, that my colleagues who are not in Cabinet are very much a part of the overall area of Government responsibility in giving direction to us, a very close relationship with my Legislative Assistant, the Member for Swan River (Mr. Burrell). I take his judgment and I take his input very seriously. He has an extremely close relationship with not only his constituents but all the constituents in northern Manitoba.- (Interjection)-

The Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) is making some reference to Meadow Portage. I will have an appropriate time in which I will address that particular issue. I do not think the Member for Dauphin will be very anxious to pursue that with too much vigour, following that particular time. I made reference to the fiscal responsibility and the actions carried out by this administration. I will deal specifically with some of the actions taken within the Crown corporations.

Mr. Speaker, we went to the people of Manitoba. We put a mandate before the people of Manitoba that we would divest the province of some of our money-losing Crown corporations. We have carried out to some degree, and I say very successfully, that mandate to divest the province of some of our Crown corporations that were losing the taxpayers' money, the first one being the divestiture of ManOil.

In divesting of ManOil, we offered the corporation to the industry, to the people of Manitoba, to the highest bidder. That exercise was carried out very capably by our board of directors and we now have a private company accepting the risk of operating an oil company. The people of Manitoba no longer have to shoulder the losses incurred by the operations of a speculative oil company in the Province of Manitoba.

I am very proud of the fact that this Government has moved in that direction and we moved very aggressively to carry out that mandate. Let me say as well that I am extremely and equally as proud of the work of my colleague, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and other colleagues who were involved, the Cabinet who were involved, in the decision to divest of Manfor Forest Products at The Pas.

There seems to be, however, some misunderstanding by my colleagues in the Legislature from the Liberal and the New Democratic Party as to what the people of The Pas really want. For some reason, Mr. Speaker, I cannot understand why they have not tuned in with what the people of The Pas and the northwest region of the province want. I have never seen such a community. I have never seen a community get so excited and anxious to see the final decision made and the purchase of Manfor by Repap.- (Interjection)-

They were extremely excited—and I will deal with Swan River in a minute. I will deal with Swan River because I can tell you, I can assure you that there are some expectations. There were some expectations in Swan River that were, I think, a little bit falsely pent up by politicians. Yes, not overly critical, but let us deal with it in an up-front manner.

I want to deal specifically with the divestiture of Manfor. How can the Members of the Opposition Party pretend that they are representing the people of Manitoba, the northwest area of this province, when they were trying to block the potential investment of a billion dollars in that community? A billion dollars, a quarter of the provincial Budget, Mr. Speaker, from the private sector, and these two Parties—on the basis of I do not know what, their own political stature, I guess—were trying to block progress in those communities. Shameful, shameful, I say, Mr. Speaker, extremely shameful. For their own political purposes, they were blocking the investment of a billion dollars, of hundreds of jobs for those northern communities, of hundreds of jobs for the Native community who were very much involved in a lot of the activities.

* (1600)

In fact, when the Parties get up here the other day and comment that the chiefs or the individuals representing the Indian communities did not have a chance to discuss it, there were several meetings at which my colleague, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), and I participated, directly speaking to them on behalf of the Province of Manitoba, speaking with the Native communities.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is extremely important that we point out to the Members of the House, and I make it very clear, when you see Chief Oscar Lathlin and his comments recently in The Pas, when he made his comments about the involvement that he expects for his people to have in the opportunities that are developed under the sale of the Manfor to Repap, it is not the people of the North. It is not the people of Manitoba who are out of tune with what is going on in Manitoba. It is the Members of the Liberal Party and the Members of the New Democratic Party who are playing strictly politics for their own benefit.

This time they are on the wrong side of this issue - (Interjection)- Yes, one has to be extremely conscious and concerned about the environmental impact of what happens today in society. But let us remember this, Mr. Speaker, let us remember that Manfor, under the operations of the previous administration, was outside the environmental Act of this province. I mean, what are we trying to do here? Are we trying to say that we should not sell the Manfor property and have it cleaned up, or should we have left it in the provincial hands and let it operate outside the environmental Act? It has to be cleaned up, it has to be done and we now have an investor who is going to work with the province and work with the people of that community to clean up the environmental problems that have been there.

Mr. Speaker, as well, before any one change takes place, they have to go through a full environmental

impact study under the normal process. We are protecting the environment. Not only that, we are improving the environment with the reforestation clause that is built into the agreement.

I am extremely pleased to say that, as the Minister responsible for the Moose Lake Loggers Corporation, I am working toward the goal of having Moose Lake Loggers completely controlled by the Native community in Moose Lake, that it will be their company, that they will fully be able to give it the direction that they want to give it and that it will fully participate in not only the current operations that have been going on, but that it can expand the opportunities for the youth in their communities. That, Mr. Speaker, is extremely important.

I feel very strongly about that and I am sure the people of Manitoba, when it comes to the next election in The Pas, will express themselves very clearly as to how they feel about the sale of Manfor to Repap, and they will mark their ballot accordingly. They will mark their ballot accordingly and it will not be a Liberal or a New Democrat, I can assure you that.

The Members sitting in this House representing the Liberals and the New Democrats will have assured any candidate who runs on their behalf in The Pas or Swan River or any of those constituencies in the next election will not have a chance of winning that election. You can thank your colleagues. They can thank their colleagues in the Manitoba Legislature for putting them in that position. You have given up the seat, Mr. Speaker. Well, The boundaries Act has unfortunately—and I say this very seriously and I want to touch on that in my speech—done away with the Churchill seat in the Legislature. I am not so concerned about the Member for the seat of Churchill. It is the riding that I am concerned about and the people of Churchill who I have a very strong feeling in need of support at times like this.

Mr. Speaker, let me make reference to another area which I feel has been very progressive and something that there has been a lack of action on over the past many years. Everyone in Manitoba feels that Manitoba Hydro is very much part of Manitoba and the people of Manitoba. I have to say how proud I am of the move that our Government has made, and our Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has made, to offer the people of Manitoba an opportunity to invest in Manitoba HydroBonds. Never before have the people of Manitoba been able to express, in dollars and cents, their support for a Crown corporation, an activity to invest in the province. I think that is an excellent move. I think it provides the people of Manitoba an opportunity to show confidence, to earn revenues, and a true progressive action which will lead the way for other involvement by the public through public investment, not a forced taxation investment, Mr. Speaker, but a voluntary one through the offering of share sales.

Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention to speak about my personal matters. I take the general interests of the public at heart, first of all, and then at some time privately I will discuss that with the Member who has asked the question. I have to say that I am a farmer, not a lawyer, and I have a hard time raising the kinds

of funds that it would take to invest, but I do appreciate the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) taking into consideration low-income people like myself, by making them available in \$100 denominations. That I do feel is very thoughtful on behalf of him.

Let me just put into perspective one of the problems. Again, it has never been identified by the New Democratic Leader (Mr. Doer). It was pointed out in our Throne Speech. One of the major problems that we are still having to grapple with as a Government, that is the \$1.5 million per day that we spend in interest charges to the banks in New York, to Japan or wherever else. That is a drain. Let us put it into perspective. I happened to get last year's Estimates book.

We talk about environment. Let us take a look at how many days that we use up the money. Let us take a look particularly at Environment, Workplace Safety and Health—and this is totally for Environment, Workplace Safety and Health. How many days do you suppose it would take if we were not spending that \$1.5 million a day to look after the total Department of Workplace Safety, Health and Environment?

An Honourable Member: That is the legacy.

Mr. Downey: That is the legacy. I will tell you for your information so that you and your constituents can understand it. It would take 10 days, every 10 days we eat up in interest what it costs to operate the Department of Environment. That is right, it takes 10 days to eat up. The money that we pay in interest, it would pay for the Department of Environment.

An Honourable Member: You can build a \$1 million road every day.

Mr. Downey: That is right. You can build a \$1.5 million road every day.

An Honourable Member: All the way to Churchill.

Mr. Downey: That is right, all the way to Churchill, Mr. Speaker. That is the legacy. Again, remember that is the legacy left by one Howard Pawley and all this phony type of economic activity that he was creating in the province, like the bridge north of Selkirk without a road to it. So let us put it into perspective.

Last year, we spent about \$18 million on a drought program for the people of Manitoba. That is about 12 days of interest that has gone out of this province. So again it reinforces the need to allow the people of Manitoba to invest in hydro in Manitoba. It reduces the exposure. Internal financing, in my estimation, if you have to finance, is the safest and the most secure and the most internally helpful form of financing. I congratulate my colleague for the progressive lead in that and my Premier (Mr. Filmon) and his colleagues for supporting it. Without that deficit, again we would have a lot more abilities to make life easier for the people of Manitoba.

I want to deal specifically with a couple of areas within my portfolio. I am pleased to say that in receiving the responsibilities for seniors in the province, I look

forward with great optimism about the working relationship that the Government has had or will have. I think that the Minister previously had laid the ground rules in the work and did some positive things with the seniors' community. I plan to expand that whole area in working with seniors. I believe, and as I indicated the other day, my colleagues and I are extremely proud of our pioneers and the seniors in this province, as they are proud of their young grandchildren and the young people of this province. There is a connection; there is a bond. I say that, particularly speaking as Minister responsible for Native Affairs, because I have come to fully appreciate over the past year the close bond between the seniors in the Native community and the youth in the Native community.

* (1610)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Ellice.

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the Member across the other side of the House, who is speaking so eloquently, would entertain a question?

Mr. Downey: I would be more than pleased to have a question come from the Member.

Ms. Gray: The Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey) has just indicated that his Government and Ministers before him have certainly laid the groundwork in the area of Seniors. I am wondering if the Minister could elaborate for us specifically what his Government has accomplished in the area of Seniors in the past year.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Downey: I really and truly appreciate the opportunity the Member has given me. I just made reference, Mr. Speaker, to the financial affairs of the province and the order in which we have been able to bring them into.

In providing a lower-tax cost to those people of cleaning up some of the deficit for the people of Manitoba, the seniors, it gives us the opportunity to give them an assured health care system to make sure that they have the necessary personal care beds, to make sure that all those things that they depend on for their support and livelihood and continued well-being, that is what we have done in trying to clean up the fiscal affairs of the Province of Manitoba.

They are not looking for anything more than a fair opportunity to continue their lives to the maximum. They do not -(Interjection)- well, the question was asked, what have we done, and I am saying we have improved the economic conditions tremendously for the people of Manitoba, the seniors included, to provide them with health care that is so essential, to provide them with the kind of personal care homes, all those things that the seniors expect and deserve. We will continue to do that and expand and enhance other opportunities, as it relates to their activities on a day-to-day basis.

The Member asked a fair question and, as taxpayers, I can tell you they are very interested in having the provincial financial affairs straightened out and cleaned up. They, I have to say, were not very happy about \$27 million in Saudi Arabian telephones. We could have given them all free telephone calling all across this province to their grandchildren and to their families and to their friends. But no, the former administration went off on this adventure into Saudi Arabia and, as the former Member for St. Vital—is that where the former Speaker was from?—said, where did that \$27 million go? Did it sift off into the sands of Saudi Arabia? Sifting sands, that is right, sifting sands. The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) said—the Member for Churchill does know—it went into the sifting sands in Saudi Arabia. I am very proud of my colleagues' activities and work to assist not only seniors but all the people of Manitoba, and I look for an expanded role.

I have to touch briefly on the agricultural policies and I do it on two specific areas. That is the continued relief of education taxes off the farm land, again a very progressive move. Referring back to the \$1.5 million per day interest charges, it would only take 10 days of interest to pay for last year's program or less. Ten days interest of money going to the banks of New York, wherever, would have given the relief to the farmers on their education taxes on farm land, a very progressive move and one which I completely support and will continue to support.

As well, the continued enhancement of the Young Farmer Rebate Program, and one has to be modest in this place, but I am pleased to see the Minister continuing it and expanding it. I happened to be the Minister when that program was introduced. As an acknowledgment of the need for some interest relief for young farmers, I am pleased that it is continued to be supported and expanded. I am pleased to be a Member of a Cabinet that continues on with such a program.

We have made reference, and I want to talk specifically now about northern Manitoba and the economic opportunities. I will make a specific reference to one of the Crown corporations which I have had the responsibility of administering, that being the Communities Economic Development Fund. Well, there has been quite a history to that. We have had an Auditor's review, we have had a process of moving to try and straighten out some of the affairs.

When we were going to have the Auditor's report, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) said, what do you need that for, we have just done a review. Well, I would invite him to reread Hansard to see what he said at that particular time and read the Auditor's report as to why the need was there to help clean it up. I would invite him to do so and come back in his speech and tell us that we did the wrong thing. There is still room to improve the activities of the Communities Economic Development Fund and it is my desire and the people in the Government's desire to have that happen.

(The Acting Speaker, Mr. Parker Burrell, in the Chair.)

Let me say, Mr. Acting Speaker, that northern Manitoba continues—and I say this, continues—to have

the difficulties. The one difficulty that I think each and every one of us can appreciate is the difficulty or the problem of isolation, the fact that they do not have the kind of transportation, road access, to develop their economies, to improve their job opportunities. It is not in a lot of those communities.

I am committed as Minister. I am committed particularly for the young people who find themselves in the tremendous numbers of unemployed. In some communities, it is up to 90 percent unemployment of our young people where we have to provide, and it is indicated in the Throne Speech, infrastructure for those communities to communicate and sell whatever they produce, whether it is in the area of timber, reforestation, mineral development, their traditional trapping methods, commercial fishing, tourism, or educational programs. We have to enhance the accessibility of those people to the rest of society and to markets that are there for them.

It will be my objective, Mr. Acting Speaker, to continue to work on behalf of the northern communities and to work with the Native communities to enhance their opportunities, particularly as it relates to job creation and long-term self-determination and opportunities for keeping their families and looking after themselves in a manner which they feel is in their best interests.

I believe it is extremely important as well, when we talk of our northern communities, that we talk about the need for increased—and I made reference to it—training opportunities. That in my estimation is the key to further development of those people and of our neighbours and our citizens of northern Manitoba. I will do everything I can to help enhance their opportunities when it comes to educational opportunities.

I want to touch as well, Mr. Acting Speaker, because it is important that we talk about the Northern Development Agreement and some of our federal-provincial activities. We have had over the past seven years a five-year agreement and in the past two years the former administration were only able to attain a one-year extension of those agreements.

The federal Government being new, and us being new as a Government in Manitoba, are taking a look at the overall thrust of those northern agreements. We have not—and I say this very up front, very openly—been able to sign a new long-term agreement at this point, but I can say to this Chamber and I say to the people of the North and the people of Manitoba that I feel we are progressing very well in certain areas on some developmental work.

I believe we have to identify specific areas. We have to work very closely with our Native communities so that they are very much involved in the programs that are going to be developed and we will be able to, before very long, accomplish a northern development or a development agreement which will again enhance the opportunities of the North.

One has to ask the question though, Mr. Acting Speaker, how successful have the last programs been? I made reference a few minutes ago to a continuation

of 90 percent unemployment in some of our northern communities. We have to make a very careful assessment as to whether or not the monies that have been spent have been spent totally in the interest of job creation or has it encouraged people to be trained and educated only to move out of their communities, or what has it really done?

* (1620)

There have been assessments made, and I can tell you some of the local people indicate clearly to me they want more local involvement and direction of the programs because they do not feel that they have hit the mark as well as they should have. So I have no trouble in making an assessment, but I think it is extremely important that we target on those areas, I say particularly, job opportunities for the youth. We have to work very closely with our Native communities. I think joint venture is an excellent way to consider participation with our Native communities. I think more control by the citizens of the North is extremely important, so I feel very strongly about that and will be working with my federal counterparts to establish a new agreement. I hope to establish some specific areas of which we can identify where both levels of Government can get involved.

I want to conclude my remarks today by indicating how essential it is we work cooperatively as Members in this Legislature on two fronts. No. 1, it is extremely important we work towards rural development. If we do not put all our efforts—and I say this in a very serious manner—as a Legislature to the enhancement and the development of rural and northern communities, then we will see the majority of people, not 60 percent, not 50 or 60 percent, we may well see 70 or 80 percent living within our city limits.

That is not a healthy environment. It has tremendous difficulties, future problems for this province and this country. So I stress again that I think that every Member of this Legislature, if they are serious about the provincial economy, about keeping a fair and equitable balance, will work toward the long-term goal of decentralization, not only—and I say this very seriously, Mr. Acting Speaker—of Government services, but of business. I think we have to continue, and my colleague who is responsible for rural development has to encourage the business community to emphasize the need for expansion and/or diversification into our rural communities. That, I think, is essential.

Government cannot do it and do it alone. We can set the example, we can create the environment but we have to encourage the other business investors, people in this province, to support the decentralization move. It has a very serious connotation and a very serious situation could develop. I say this again to the Members of this Legislature that when we look at the changes to the Electoral Boundaries Division, the Act that will be passed again eliminating one rural and one northern seat, we have to as an all-Party committee work towards redistribution of these seats so that we do not get the kind of imbalance that we have seen taking place between eastern and western Canada, and what we are seeing taking place between rural and urban cities of this province.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we have to make sure the people in the rural and remote areas, the North and rural Manitoba have a fair and equitable say in this Legislative Assembly. So I request of the Members opposite even though there is a presentation of The Electoral Boundaries Act which will be passed, which will eliminate one rural and one northern seat, that we do take very seriously this situation, we address it seriously and with meaning.

If we do not, over history, there will be such a dissatisfaction, such a pulling apart, that this province will not survive as we want it to survive. So I say here and I want it very clearly stated on the record that I do not want to see a loss of rural and northern voices in this Legislature. Those Members who see, if they would agree with us, that we do take it very seriously and we approach it as a Legislative Assembly. So I wanted to conclude my remarks with those comments.

I again say I am extremely pleased to have the responsibilities that have been given to me as Minister in the Executive Council. I want to say that the one year we have had of Government has been most rewarding. I am extremely proud of the Throne Speech document which is laid before the public of Manitoba, so that they can judge the future direction that we are going. I can assure you that we will do everything in our power to accomplish the objectives that are laid out in this document.

I have to say, very seriously, I am extremely disappointed in the resolution, the amendment put forward by the Liberal Party. It lacks any pride in the province.

An Honourable Member: It lacks vision.

Mr. Downey: It lacks vision, it lacks initiative. It is even, Mr. Acting Speaker, and I say this sincerely, it is even poor negativism. It is.— (Interjection)— Yes, it is poor negativism.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

It is almost an exercise and we have to do it. We have to do it. I hope the Members of the Liberal Caucus look very seriously at what their Leader has presented to this Legislature. That was not Premier material, that was not Government material. The lust for power, Mr. Speaker, has got in the way of their vision. The Liberal lust for power will make sure that they never achieve it. That is one of the difficulties that they are going to have.

So, Mr. Speaker, I again fully endorse the Throne Speech. I am pleased with the initiatives that are put forward and thank my colleagues for the support in my portfolio and look forward to a good Session of the Legislature.

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to take this opportunity to speak in response to the Speech from the Throne. I was not sure when the agenda was drawn up today whether I was going to follow the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) or whether I was going to follow the other Member of the coalition, from Arthur (Mr. Downey). But I want

to make it clear that I am not following either of them. I just happen to be unfortunate enough to have spoken after them.

Before I get into the text of my talk today, Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate you for having carried on as Speaker. You have lent an air of confidence to this House. I think the other thing about it is you always have a smile on your face. I think it is important that while we are dealing with such important business in this House that we never get so serious about it that we cannot find a way to smile. So I appreciate that approach that you have taken.

I also want to congratulate my good friend and colleague from Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) on his appointment or election to the Deputy Speaker role. I am sure that in his case, while he may be inexperienced in the role of Deputy Speaker, he has the experience in other capacities over the years and, if all else fails, he will charm his way through.

Now, Mr. Speaker, each time that I listen to a Throne Speech, a little jingle comes back to mind, and I think this comes from Alice in Wonderland. It says: " 'The time has come,' the Walrus said, 'To speak of many things: Of ships—and sails—and sealing wax—Of cabbages—and kings.' " I get the impression when I read this that that is what has been attempted in this thing is to touch a little bit upon everything. It is a document that says very little about a great number of things.

I think what has happened in this country, we have come to the point where Throne Speeches are in fact a tradition, they have to be made. No one expects them to be fulfilled and so in many respects they are what you might call something that we have to put up with. We have to respond to it, we have little expectations that anything in it will ever be followed through.

It is unfortunate, in this particular time, that we have a Throne Speech which is dull. It is disjointed, it is deliberately vague and it sounds as though it was written by a committee. One has to assume that now that we have a coalition in this House, which is made up of the two Parties, the NDP and the Tories, that they operated as a committee and that they probably each took a part of this to write, because you have one part of it which has that right-wing dirge to it. It has that Tory touch to it. Then you have the other socialist crap that you have to put up with, and that of course is the part that one has to be a little bit concerned about. Fortunately, the Government is planning to bring in this Bill that will deal with endangered species, so that is the only time I plan to talk about the socialists in my speech today. They will be looked after by that Bill, I would hope.

* (1630)

Now, I am only going to deal with a few of the issues in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. I am only going to deal with those that I find tend to be somewhat sinister because one could spend an awful lot of time, as some of my colleagues on the other side have, going through these things and attempting to put some meat on the skeleton. Well, in actual fact, there is not much meat

on this skeleton and why should we take the time to try and put some on it.

The first thing that I want to talk about is the whole concept of sustainable development, and it has been brought up a couple of times today. But it is the one that is spoken of, I believe, eight times if not more, in this Tory coalition Throne Speech. It has become the buzzword of 1989.

Now, the only thing that is clear in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, is that if this phantom ever lights it will light in Winnipeg. That is the only thing you see and so the concept of decentralization has obviously gone down the drain very early. If and when we see a Centre for Sustainable Development, it will be in Winnipeg. I do not know what happened there. Brandon thought they had a hope of it.

I will quote because I want to make sure this is clear and I will quote from the Throne Speech. It says, "my Government welcomes the initiative of the federal Government to establish the International Centre on Sustainable Development in Winnipeg to help develop solutions to national and international concerns." This is a clear indication of the Government's stand on decentralization, I would say. Other locations are not even going to be considered.

Nowhere in the Speech is there any word about financial commitment to the so-called world class centre. The term "world class" which the Prime Minister used so eloquently at the United Nations is now conveniently omitted. What has been the financial commitment today to this so-called world class Centre for Sustainable Development? So far it has been \$5 million over five years from CIDA and something like \$150,000 from the western diversification initiative. I ask you, is this world class? If it is, poor world, some class.

What has Maurice Strong had to say about this world class centre? I will quote from notes of the Sustainable Development Information Meeting held in Brandon on April 20 of this year. I will quote—I think most of this was sent out to most MLAs—but I will quote. It goes on and it says:

"Maurice Strong was then asked to give his comments on what he heard today. His comments were all very positive. He felt this group was on the right track. It certainly has the right ingredients and it should continue its efforts towards sustainable development. He felt that the centre itself will only be a switchboard. I will repeat that. Maurice Strong said he felt the centre itself will only be a switchboard and it is not as important as the sustainable development itself. He suggested that Brandon continue its efforts and, whether or not it wins to have the centre located in Brandon, it still will have one in that it will be doing some sustainable development and everybody gains. He went on to explain that he has been observing the Japanese develop a World Class Centre for Sustainable Development. They, in contrast with the Canadians, have not made any announcements. He is concerned that in Canada an announcement is the only thing that is in place so far."

So much for the Sustainable Development Centre. Maurice Strong, native son of this province, comes back

and he is not impressed. So the centre will only be a switchboard—interesting, interesting indeed. No wonder the term “world class” is being dropped. Here we have a switchboard, perhaps a world class switchboard.

What do the local officials have to say about the world class centre? Perhaps the headline on page 9 of the Free Press on May 19 tells it all. The title was or the headline, “centre’s budget derided.” It goes on to quote firstly Tanner Elton, Manitoba Deputy Minister of the Environment, and I quote: “If they are talking silk purse in the rhetoric and sow’s ear at the resource level, then it’s our job (as bureaucrats) to say: ‘You’re going to have to lower your sights and you’re going to have to do it as publicly as you have raised them.’” In other words, ‘fess up. If it is only a switchboard and if it is only a two-bit operation, then let us say so.

An international expert has come over to this Sustainable Development Conference, and he also was very concerned that the world class had been dropped from the title. So I think one has to be very concerned, Mr. Speaker, that this highfaluting thing the Prime Minister announced at the United Nations back several months ago, if in fact it ever occurs, will be of minor significance and certainly will not be something that one would be overly proud of.

Why am I so concerned about this concept of sustainable development? Well, sustainable development is the buzzword of the present time and I have seen these buzzwords come and go before. The buzzword back in the early ’80s was biotechnology. We had, at that time, the concept that Canada was going to be a leader in biotechnology. We were going to have plant biotechnology; we were going to have animal biotechnology; we were going to have medical biotechnology; we were going to have genetic engineering. We were going to have all of these things and we were going to lead the world. What happened in western Canada? About the only thing that was significant is that they took the old NRC lab at Saskatoon and put a new sign on it and referred to it now as the Plant Biotechnology Institute.

But in actual fact, Mr. Speaker, and I hope you will excuse my concept here, we are still the runt of the litter and we are still sucking the hind tit when it comes to biotechnology. This is probably what we are going to be faced with when it comes to sustainable development. We are not leading the world. We are dependent on Europe; we are dependent on the Japanese; we are dependent on the Americans. If we are going to do anything in the area of biotechnology, it has to be based on information that we get from somewhere else. Sustainable development will be exactly the same thing because what we have is rhetoric and it will be difficult even to sustain the rhetoric, let alone come up with the bucks that are necessary to do anything about the capital and the operating that is needed.

* (1640)

At this point, I want to go on and speak about a few of the things that are omitted from the Throne Speech

because the errors of omission, to me, are far more important than some of the things that are included. But with a Tory Government and the coalition that we are faced with now, we may be better off if something is omitted because then we may expect something to happen. An afterthought may be of preference.

I want to just talk a little bit about the Port of Churchill and the associated town, the bayline, and so on, despite the fact that it is not mentioned anywhere in the Throne Speech, but we have been told by this Government that we have a total commitment. Benoît Bouchard has just recently told us that there will be no grain shipments out of Churchill this shipping season. He further said our own Minister of Transport, the Honourable Member for Emerson (Mr. Albert Driedger), has agreed to that and agreed that there will be no shipment of grain through Churchill in the 1989 shipping season—such commitment. But did the Minister of Transport tell the all-Party Committee at a meeting recently that he had agreed to no shipments going through the Port of Churchill? It is possible that I was dozing off at that part of the meeting, but I do not think so. It is my recollection that the Minister did not at any time mention that he had already agreed with Benoît Bouchard that the Port of Churchill would not be operational as far as grain shipments were concerned in 1989.

Now the reason that I dwell on this a little bit is that we were told the previous year when Charlie Mayer, the Minister responsible for Grains and Oilseeds, met with the committee, that there was no way that he was prepared to intervene and put political pressure on the Canadian Wheat Board to ship grain through the Port of Churchill. But his colleague, the Minister for Transport, the Honourable Benoît Bouchard, will intervene and step in and say there will be no grain shipped through the Port of Churchill. Now that tells me that he is telling the Wheat Board, do not bother accepting any orders for anything to go out to the Port of Churchill because we are not going to ship it out. So maybe my logic is a bit flawed, but how can one Minister say he will not intervene and another one step in and directly intervene? So we have got this intervention by the Tory Government in Ottawa which has essentially shut down the Port of Churchill for grain shipments, regardless of whether the Canadian Wheat Board could make a sale that the customer would want to take through the Port of Churchill or not.

Now it is ironic that we have just completed spending something in the range of about \$93 million on the Port of Churchill through the ERDA Agreement. In fact, the finishing touches on that are just being made because the dust control system in the terminal is now being completed and I understand there is still some work to be completed on the terminal. But this may be money that is down the drain unless there is some follow-up.

I was interested in the comment from the Minister for Northern and Native Affairs, the Honourable Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) talking about the ERDA Programs and saying that he thought he was making some significant progress there. I just want to point out that there are a whole bunch of those ERDA Programs and I am hoping very sincerely that the

Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) can have some impact on getting the renewal of an ERDA Program, particularly in the area of agriculture and the various other aspects under that previous subagreement because that amount, if my recollection is correct, was about \$38 million, of which \$23 million came from the federal Government, \$15 million from the provincial Government. That had a very significant impact on many aspects of agriculture over the past five years, and certainly would be sorely missed if the Minister is not able to come up with a new program to replace the old one, and pick up some of the very worthwhile projects that have been ongoing under the previous program.

I want to also touch base, very briefly, with the Portage la Prairie situation. This has been mentioned in the Throne Speech but very, very sparingly. I will quote from the Throne Speech again as to exactly what was said because the word Portage itself was never used, and I quote: "My Ministers are extremely concerned about the disproportionate impacts the recent federal Budget will have on Manitoba, particularly the proposed reduction and closure of the two Canadian Forces bases." That is it for Portage. That is all that is mentioned in the Throne Speech that relates to Portage.

What has really happened as far as Portage is concerned? Several Members attended a rally at Portage, including the Premier (Mr. Filmon), the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness), the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) but above all the MP, Mr. Felix Holtmann. Also in attendance were Members from the two Opposition Parties and everyone gave their support to the group. Most of those who were elected to represent the area were given the opportunity to speak.

I want to just comment briefly on what Mr. Felix Holtmann said and what he did subsequent to his statement because he went a little bit further than everyone else. In fact, some would say he might have gone all the way. He supposedly put his career on the line. He said and I think it is almost verbatim: I will ask Mr. McKnight to give me the figures that he used to justify the closure of CFB Portage and justify the closure and, if I am not satisfied that this was not a political decision, I will vote against the federal Budget.

This is what Felix Holtmann said. He said if you cannot satisfy me that the justification for the closure of Portage was non-political, then I will vote against the Budget. But then what happened? Mr. McKnight, I assume, gave Mr. Holtmann all of the information he felt was necessary for Mr. Holtmann to make a wise decision. Mr. Holtmann looked at this material and then what did he do? He planted himself firmly on a pointed picket and he abstained from the vote. He did not vote for the Budget; he did not vote against the Budget; he sat on the fence and abstained.

Mr. Speaker, there are things you are probably wise to abstain from. Some would say that it is wise to abstain from liquor. Some suggest that you are better off if you abstain from sex, but my feeling is that one thing you should not abstain from is voting on a matter that is as important as this one. Here you have an MP who says he will put his career on the line and will vote against the Budget, and what does he do? He abstains.

If this man had any principle, he would have resigned and we would have been faced with a by-election in that federal constituency right now, and you would find out what impact you could have had on our fun friend Mulroney at that time. So that, Mr. Speaker, gives me some indication of the level of principle that we are faced with in that particular situation.

The other thing I think is interesting is to look at the impact that the so-called strong Tory delegation had that went to Ottawa. They lined up all these important people and they went off to Ottawa and they were going to have a tremendous impact. The first thing that happened is that they could not get past Dorothy Dobbie. Dorothy Dobbie said to them, take what you have received or what you might receive and go home with it because that is all you are going to get. They slipped around her skirts and they did get to Bill McKnight eventually, but Bill McKnight said, we have our experts, you have your experts, my experts are the ones that are right, that is as far as it is going to go, the closure will take place, and everybody left.

The Minister, who has the ability to pick up the phone usually gets a busy signal, but what happened the last time he picked up the phone or the phone rang? The call came into the Prime Minister's Office, and his secretary answered the phone and she said, "Mr. Prime Minister, there is someone on the phone from Manitoba and he says his name is Gary." The Prime Minister sat there momentarily with a bit of a funny look on his face. He picked up the phone and he said, "Good morning, Mr. Doer. I expected you to call because I just heard from Sharon Carstairs."

Now that is the type of response you get from Prime Minister Mulroney when he knows that Gary is phoning. He, like most of the rest of us, mistakes one Gary for the other. The question from the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) is, did the Prime Minister speak to Sharon Carstairs? I can only tell you that Sharon Carstairs has the ear of any of her senior people, including Mr. Turner, Mr. Chretien and Mr. Axworthy or anyone else who she feels that she has to talk to.

The conviction that has been shown in terms of the support for the Portage closure obviously is one of political expediency. If it is easy enough to have principle and it does not cost you anything, then you can have it. If it is running any risks, then political expediency pays off and that is the route of last resistance.

Now what about the provincial Tories and their support of Portage? This was an interesting one. We had MUPI a couple of days ago. Here was a MUPI that was based on the Portage closure and we had the unfortunate situation where the support for the MUPI was based on turning the decision of the Speaker. But that was not quite as serious as the fact that then the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) got up and he spoke as though he had supported the MUPI. So here you have a situation where political expediency says you cannot support it, but then you stand up and talk as though you did support it.

Yeah sure, there is always political expediency. Sometimes you do one thing if it is to your benefit, but when it is a matter of principle the principle does not

shine through very quickly. I am disappointed that principle is as shallow as it is on the other side on most occasions.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I am having great difficulty in hearing the Member for Fort Garry (Laurie Evans) in his deliberations and I would ask you to call the House to order.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Minister. The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, if the Honourable Member would just lean to his left, we might all hear the Member for Fort Garry.

Mr. Ernst: It is not possible for me to lean to the left.

* (1650)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Riel, on a point of order.

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Urban Affairs): It is not possible for the Honourable Member for Charleswood (Mr. Ernst) to lean to his left.

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Members do not have a point of order. Order, please; order, please.

The Honourable Member for Fort Garry (Laurie Evans) does have the floor and we are having difficulty hearing him.

Mr. Laurie Evans: But I want to leave it with the final word that we have in terms of the support by the Tory Caucus for the Portage base and they say in the Throne Speech, my Ministers will continue to press for the satisfactory resolution of this matter. Well, to me, to press is what you do with a cookie before you plan to put it in the oven. It is a little bit of gentle pressure that you put on the top so the thing looks flat and looks delightful after you eat it. But pressure to me is not what you require in a case like this. You need somebody who has to have the courage to go in and do something.

I think it is time that somebody from this province, and I do not really care who it is, went down to Ottawa, got into the Prime Minister's office and said, Mr. Prime Minister, do something about Portage. If he looks as though he is still a little bit reluctant, maybe that is the time to grab him by the tie and say, Brian, Portage is important to Manitobans. We want you to do something. If you do not do something, you will not be here to be able to do something very much longer. It is time that somebody got a little bit tough. I am as ready as I will ever be.

If you want a question, there is no problem finding questions. You mentioned yesterday or earlier the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) mentioned—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I know all Honourable Members are enjoying the speech from the Honourable Member for Fort Garry (Laurie Evans), but I am having difficulty hearing him. Order, please.

Mr. Laurie Evans: It is rare that I have been accused of not being able to be heard, but I do want to say a few things about agriculture. The Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) in his address a little earlier today did say that we have in the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) probably the most, if not the most, competent Minister.

An Honourable Member: What about your comprehensive agriculture policy?

Mr. Evans: That will come, but it may take another year. I am sure the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) is not seeking sympathy from me, but there must be times when he gets a little tired of carrying the can for his incompetent Conservative colleagues in Canada's capital, Mr. Speaker, because everything that Mayer and Mazankowski have touched in the last little while has been turned into a disaster. Now we have Mulroney and McKnight, so if you can say it—Mulroney, Mazankowski, McKnight and Mayer—the masters of mismanagement. When it comes to this agricultural issue, I just want to touch on a couple of these things because everything that has been touched by Charlie Mayer has gone sour in the last little while.

Now I am just going to touch on two or three of these. The first of these is the Western Grain Stabilization Plan, which I think all of us on both sides of the House say is an excellent plan. But you have a situation here where the Minister was not prepared to take the advice he had that the premiums had to increase. Finally he decided, yes, we will increase the premiums, but he did it so late that the premiums had to be put on the final payment and a lot of people ended up getting bills when they were expecting to get a significant cheque. Tremendous management. I mean, when you are looking for your pay cheque in the mail and all you get is a bill, that is a bit of a jolt.

Then he went on and, because you were sitting there with a big deficit, decided that perhaps \$750 million of that deficit should be written off, but those who had not participated, he said, well, you should not worry, it has been your tax dollars that have gone in there, but why should you expect to get anything out of it, so the Western Grain Stabilization, which is something that was an excellent program and still is an excellent program, Charlie Mayer made a mess of it.

Now the other thing, of course, Charlie Mayer will not interfere with the Canadian Wheat Board, particularly when it comes to shipping grain through Churchill. His colleague, Benoît Bouchard, will interfere with the Canadian Wheat Board. He does not have any compunction. He will shut down the Port of Churchill, regardless of whether the Canadian Wheat Board is attempting to make sales or not. Charlie Mayer, he will unilaterally take the handling of oats away from the Canadian Wheat Board despite the fact that all of the public meetings asked for oats to be retained by the Canadian Wheat Board. Eight of them asked for Charlie

Mayer's resignation but he still, if he can get enough colleagues to sign the Order-in-Council, will take his responsibility of oats away from the Canadian Wheat Board.

He has effectively ignored the advice of the advisory committee. He has muzzled the commissioners. They are not supposed to say anything and of course as long as they are political appointees, as they are, I assume that they will, in most cases, abide by his word.

Now he seems to be ignoring the fact that 63 percent of the farmers in a recent poll have indicated that they would prefer to have oats under the Canadian Wheat Board. He will take oats away from the Canadian Wheat Board but he is not considering the unilateral movement of canola, flax and rye to the control of the Canadian Wheat Board, so he will do it as long as it is going one way, but he is not prepared to try it if it is going the other way. So I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that if you look at all of the changes that have been made recently one has to assume that the majority of them have been done in order to reach compliance with the Free Trade Agreement.

I think it is time that we warned western Canadian farmers that the Canadian Wheat Board is under siege. Oats have been taken away from it. You now have a situation where there are other farmers who want what they call "flexibility." They want flexibility which is the Cargill term for free marketing.

I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, that the policy in this Government and the policy federally is now a policy that is dictated by Dick Dawson of Cargill. I have had people come into my office from the Western Wheat Growers Association and try to convince me that the Pools are no longer a significant voice in western Canada. I think it is time that the Tories at both levels went out and found out what is the feeling of the so-called family farmers that they are trying to support, where they stand when it comes to the Canadian Wheat Board and the orderly marketing.

The other thing I want to talk about, when I am talking about the federal fiasco, is the \$850 million drought-aid payment. As we all know, as is typical of Tories, this announcement was made a matter of days before the last federal election. Charlie Mayer, without consultation with the provincial counterparts and apparently without consultation with anyone else, said \$850 million would be made available for drought payments. Then we turn around and we see within the recent federal Budget there is \$425 million allocated.

Now I would ask my honourable friend, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), are the Ministers of Agriculture in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta going to come up with 50 percent of the costs to make these payments? Is the 850 million actually going to be available or are we going to get the pittance that some farmers already have?

The maximum that any farmer has today, Mr. Speaker, is \$12 an acre for the most seriously droughted areas. If you were in the moderately droughted areas, you got \$7; if you were in the so-called "light area," you got nothing; and if you were smart enough or unlucky

enough to have grown canola, you got nothing for that acreage because they cannot figure out how to deal with canola, so here you have Charlie Mayer. Every time he makes an announcement, he is an embarrassment to the Ministers in western Canada.

* (1700)

An Honourable Member: The cheque is in the mail.

Mr. Laurie Evans: The cheque is in the mail, and that tells me there are still some Tory farmers who are gullible enough to still buy that old adage that the cheque is in the mail. I hope you do not have to rely on it because it may never get there.

Before I get off the topic of the drought payment, I just want to point out the way in which it was handled because it was handled in such a brilliant fashion as well. Mr. Speaker, as you probably remember—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

Mr. Laurie Evans: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, but I just want to dwell a little further on this drought payment because, while it may be drizzling outside today and we have had a little bit of rain, I think it is unreasonable to think that we have broken the drought yet. I hope that it is broken. I would love to leave the Chamber later on this afternoon and find it is pouring rain and find that it rains gently for three or four consecutive days.

I am surprised that something was not in the Throne Speech about the Tories' ability to do that but so far they are just crossing their fingers. When it comes to the drought-aid payment on the \$850 million, the first thing is it was never budgeted for. The second thing is that the farmers were confronted with a nice map in the farm papers, and that map had a little red section, a little green section, a little yellow section, and a little blue or white section, whatever it happened to be.

The farmers, some of them who were in that severely droughted area, got applications through the mail but some of them, and frequently it was the next-door neighbour, did not get an application through the mail. They were told if you feel that you were in a droughted area you have to fill out an application, and in order to get the application you have to phone a number in Ottawa. You phoned that number and the only ones who ever got through were those who had the device on their telephone which allowed them to recall, because I have never heard of one farmer who got through on that toll-free line on the first time, so they had to ring and ring and ring. They did not even have the application forms in Charlie Mayer's office here in Winnipeg. They had to get those applications from Ottawa.

Getting back to the Throne Speech, as the Attorney General would state, had the Throne Speech any meat in it, I would address the Throne Speech more, but when you are attempting to talk to a void it is very difficult. I think it is also important—and the Member

for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) is bringing this up. This is a joint area, agriculture, and we are being shafted by the federal Government when it comes to agriculture here in western Canada. I am just trying to implore upon the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) and his colleagues across the way to, for goodness' sake, stand up and be counted and be a little tougher with their federal counterparts, or we are going to be left out in the cold.

I am just spending a lot of time on this drought-aid payment because this is probably the best example of mismanagement by Mayer that one has ever seen. Thank goodness we have a Minister in this province who seems to be attempting to unravel the nonsense that he has to put up with from Ottawa, but at the same time I do not believe that we have been able to even sort out the compensation payments to the Interlake farmers. Now this is going on—and it is almost five years—and the Minister puts his hands out like this. I can appreciate why, because once again he has to deal with the incompetence that comes to him from Ottawa.

Anyway, this is a situation that to me is very serious. I want to compliment the Minister on his drought program at the beginning of last year when we had the drought. I was a little disappointed to see that in the Throne Speech at this particular time there is no statement in the Throne Speech that would relate to drought if we are faced with a drought in 1989. There are many areas in Manitoba and western Canada, in general, that are on the verge of facing another drought right now. It is important that we do not leave people out in the cold, because I do not think that they have had the opportunity or the time to change to the point whether the crop insurance is going to be taken up adequately, or that they are going to look at other means of having the level of support that is necessary, if we are faced with another drought.

I want to then just speak very briefly about some of the things in agriculture that are in the Throne Speech. The first one that I want to mention, which is not in the Throne Speech, is the appointment of what the Minister refers to as the Red Meat Forum. Now I understand the intent of the Red Meat Forum, but when you read it over it sounds more like a committee that is going to decide on what is going to be used at the next barbecue. It does not have enough meat in it to tell you exactly what they are going to do.

I think the Minister realizes that the packing industry and the meat industry in this province have virtually disappeared. It seems to me that the establishment of a forum is just a program planned for prolonged procrastination. It just is a way of delaying in order to get some time, and I think it is important that rather than have a forum that is looking at red meat that that forum either disband or act very, very quickly. Something has to be done, not next year or the year after, it needs to be done now. The forum, while it is well-represented I assume, I think that it is a critical thing that we do something very, very quickly.

The other concern that I have with the Throne Speech in the area of agriculture is the committee—I cannot even remember the exact term of it—but it is a group

that has been set up to look at the method of payment. Now it is referred to as the Western Grain Transportation Act, which is due for a review, but I think it is best referred to as the method of payment of the Crow's Nest agreement. I am very concerned there, Mr. Speaker, that Mazankowski and his mates have already made the decision on this one. Now the committee has already been struck. I have not heard or seen the list of the appointees there, but I would hope that the Minister has included membership from the Pool, that it is not a case of Darryl and Dick again, because I am not convinced that Darryl and Dick have the best of interests for all of the farmers. I think that it is important that this be not a situation where the decision is made before Manitoba gets into the act.

The final thing—and the Speaker has given me the time here—that I want to speak about this afternoon is the whole question of leadership. Now as one of the older people coming into this House, I guess it is my upbringing as a kid from a farm in Saskatchewan. I can remember when I was just a little kid, my parents would bundle myself, my brother and sister up and whenever there was a leader coming into the vicinity, they would take us out to see the leader. The earliest recollection I have is, I think about 1939, pictures that we still have in a family album. I do not know whether I remember it or just remember the picture. It was a situation where we were all out there to watch the King and Queen of England go through the country. We were also taken out, Mr. Speaker, to see people like John Diefenbaker, Mackenzie King, L. B. Pearson, T. C. Douglas, the whole range of these people.

What always impressed me with those people, Mr. Speaker, was that they were not only Leaders but they also showed a little bit of statesmanship. What has me very concerned with what I see is a tradition that has developed in Canada where the Leader of a Party when he is elected automatically becomes the Premier or the Prime Minister. Now I have been around a long time and I have been a fan of the Toronto Maple Leafs for many years, which is probably a dying breed. But the reason is that the Toronto Maple Leafs have always had an excellent captain and I can go through them. There was Syl Apps, there was Ted Kennedy, there was George Armstrong, there was Darryl Sittler.

An Honourable Member: John Turner.

Mr. Laurie Evans: John Turner never played for the Maple Leafs, although he was a tremendous athlete. The thing that I think has to be made clear today, Mr. Speaker, is that Tiger Williams and Eddie Shack never became the captain of the team. We have a situation here in Manitoba where we run the risk of the goon of the team being the one who may end up being the Premier and the one who lacks any statesmanship, and this concerns me very much.

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to first wish you well in your continuing capacity as the Speaker of the Manitoba Legislature, and again congratulate you for your manners of treating the House over the last several months. In fact, I had the opportunity to listen to a

panel discussing the role of a Speaker in a minority House and it is indeed a complex role because a minority House is indeed a complex House.

I would also like to congratulate the Honourable Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski) who has been elected as the Deputy Speaker, and wish him all the best in the upcoming months.

* (1710)

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all Honourable Members for their courtesy over the last several months while I performed in the role of the Deputy Speaker of the Manitoba Legislature. I felt indeed honoured to be elected as the Deputy Speaker of the Manitoba Legislature, and always looked to Mr. Speaker for guidance, direction and instruction. Indeed it was a difficult role for a Member with no legislative experience to walk into, not only a Legislature, but a complex minority Legislature.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank some of the staff who were of assistance over the last several months, the Table officers who are most obvious every day, who provided assistance and guidance. I also thank the Journal Clerks and the Hansard staff for their timely advice. Too often, these people are forgotten in the deliberations that we have here in the House every day.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, William Chornopyski, in the Chair.)

I look back over the last several months and look at many of the pleasant experiences, participation in debate, consideration of the fine points of Parliamentary Rules and Procedure, and considering the fine nuances of not just the black-and-white Rules but the nuances between Members and how the Rules are used in the House to ensure that the House functions in an orderly and progressive fashion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was also very much aware of the not so pleasant side of this House and some of the actions of various Members inside and outside of the House, and certainly as one who perhaps was uninitiated in the whole process of parliamentary procedure and often looked to the statues of Moses and Solon, to many of the expressions around the House in the paintings and the ideals, and sometimes it caused me some concern.

One of the concerns that I have is indeed with respect to some of the actions in the past and even more recently with respect to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) of this Government. One would expect, as my colleague, the Member for Fort Garry (Laurie Evans) said, that in the past leaders were indeed statespeople and leaders. Sometimes when one was to sit and watch some of the exhibits of this Member for Tuxedo (Mr. Filmon), and if perhaps that was drawn to the attention of the constituents of Tuxedo, we would not be having that Member representing them, but indeed another Member, who until the last four polls in fact appeared to be the new Member for Tuxedo. Instead, at a recent dinner dealing with the agenda of this Government, looking to the future, providing leadership in this

province, he is reportedly to have launched into personal attacks on the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs). I think that is of concern to not only the Members of this Legislature but all Manitobans when the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), at similar opportunity, laid out certainly her ideas for the future.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am indeed concerned that even now the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) often engages in giggles during debate during Question Period in this House. Other people who come to observe the actions of the Members would indeed look at the actions and consider it unparliamentary. No wonder the public has in the past had such a low regard for politicians and legislators. I thought maybe it was the lighting from the last Session. I thought maybe it was the lighting, but they have changed the lighting for this sitting or this Session, and again there is no change.

I would certainly hope that the First Minister of this Conservative Government would indeed provide some of that fine parliamentary leadership that I believe past Premiers of this province have shown.

I would like to direct my comments now to the Throne Speech, and perhaps to use what I believe is an effective analogy. It is like a drum—a drum that has a shell, a drum that has the leather. But where is the substance? You can beat on it, but all you hear is a dull thud. There is no music coming out of that. There is little direction—just some noise. You can beat as hard as you want on that drum, as undoubtedly we have heard already from Members on the Government's side and we will continue to hear from Members on the opposite side. They will beat as hard as they can but, as hard as they will beat, the deeper the thud will go.

This Throne Speech is a speech of lost opportunities. When I look to the comments of the Honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) from last year's debate, at that time the Honourable Minister said that the 1988 Throne Speech of this Conservative Government was like a breath of fresh air. It was all air all right. It certainly is the same kind that is found inside this drum that we have for a Throne Speech today.

Mr. Ernst: Just wait until Friday. You will eat those words and then some.

Mr. Minenko: The Minister says wait until Friday. I am not sure if he is going to be commenting on the Speech or whether he is going to be rewriting the Speech based on some of the comments from myself and my colleagues. Certainly if he is going to be, I would certainly encourage him to review this and perhaps add a few more comments and amend the Speech himself. We shall wait and see until Friday.

The Minister also mentioned in last year's Throne Debate that he had in the House that this was a Government that had a rudder, that it was back on course. The Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) has indeed covered the kind of course that resulted from last year's Throne Speech. I am not quite sure what kind of rudder it was—maybe it was a rubber rudder. It kept certainly drifting back and forth.-

(Interjection)- Perhaps as my honourable colleague said, it was not attached to a tiller, and we certainly looked for that tiller in this Speech but it was missing. I certainly hope that the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) will add something to the Speech in his comments on Friday.

The Minister also added that last year, right after the election, they called back the House to sit and consider this Government's plan of action last year as quickly as possible, that they did not want to use those Special Warrants. Has this changed? We certainly are well into the fiscal year and certainly well into any planning that departments need to have in order to better serve Manitobans.

* (1720)

There was a comment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in last year's Throne Speech, "that this Government was working towards 'a competitive and diversified economy' providing increased job opportunities," that they "made significant progress towards this goal." We have certainly seen the record of this Government. We have certainly seen this competitive and diversified economy providing those jobs. What is the record? They claim there is a 4 percent growth in this province. Certainly, perhaps based on the estimates of the Economic Council of Canada before this disastrous federal Tory Budget, an assault on all Manitobans.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the military commander in the field has usually a number of options to consider an assault on a particular position or location. He has one of four options: frontal, from either side or from the rear. This Tory federal Budget not only chose a frontal assault on Manitobans but from both sides and from the rear. There was no escaping it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they talk about jobs. Again, it is quoted on the front page of this year's Throne Speech they were looking for increased job opportunities for—providing, providing. For an objective that was No. 1 in their Throne Speech last year and again is reinforced in this year's Throne Speech, the record, the facts, speak for themselves.

The unemployment rate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is greater than the national average for the first time since 1966. Providing increased job opportunities—Ogilvie, Canada Packers, Westcott, Marr's, Toro, Marks and Spencer, Gelco, Molson's, Wardair—how is that for increased job opportunities in this province? If that is job No. 1, they certainly need some of their own quality assurance.

They talk about deficit, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They take pride in the fact they are the managers for Manitoba, managers for Manitoba. We certainly heard their braying from this side of the House when the previous Member from Seven Oaks, who was then the Minister of Finance, introduced some of the most taxing tax measures that this province or this country has ever held.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): That was a sad day for Manitoba.

Mr. Minenko: It was a sad day, as the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings) says, a sad day, indeed.

They certainly seem to be taking the benefits with that tax grab. They certainly are seeming to take those benefits and say, hey, we are good managers. We are the managers for Manitoba. They loudly objected, as they now point out their objections, to those provisions that affected all Manitobans. More unfortunately, it hit those people who again seem to always bear the burden of any form of taxation put on by any Government. Where is this same commitment to try to bring some of those taxes down, to deal with some of the housing slumps and retail sales slumps? No, no, we will keep doing that and call ourselves the Manitoba managers. They say investment increased, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When you look at the actual levels, we still need to have that rudder attached to the tiller. We certainly need some course of action.

In 1988, again the Minister of Industry and Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) took pride in the amalgamation of his departments. He took pride in the amalgamation, and certainly perhaps an amalgamation that was required considering the responsibilities of the two departments that were ultimately flowed to the Minister.

In that speech you talked about increased program delivery, making the programs of industry and trade available to all Manitobans, to all businesses. Mr. Deputy Speaker, since my appointment as critic for Industry and Trade just a few short months ago, I have indeed taken that opportunity to visit with many of these Manitoba businesses, from the local corner store in my constituency to some of the larger mega corporations in this province, and what do they tell me? Sure, the larger corporations with their banks of lawyers, accountants and others taking advantage of these programs are knowledgeable, understand these programs, are prepared to fill out the pages and pages of some of these programs, perhaps more geared toward the western diversification, but how many of the small- and medium-sized businesspeople are aware of any of these industry and trade initiatives? None, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I have encountered, certainly in my constituency. Very few indeed across Manitoba are aware, and I think this is a problem that this Government has chosen not to address in this Throne Speech.

We heard last year, program delivery, people will find out, access to Manitobans. We have fallen short, and I certainly encourage the Minister to look at means of disseminating that information.

They deal, in the speech last year and this year, with the expansion of the tourism sector. Certainly over the last year we have seen a litany of difficulties. On a northern Manitoba trip, in the middle of winter on a bus, we indeed were able to listen to many Manitobans who listed some of the difficulties that they were having, and again, another area that needs to be addressed by this Minister were federal grants to the regional offices of TIAM. We are in indeed a shaky situation. People had to quit those positions. Before this Government took any action, it said, oh, we will step in and take over the federal responsibility. Those people are gone.

Indeed, I have been advised that many of the tourism businesses outside the confines of Winnipeg are

considering leaving this province, and I will be certainly looking forward, as I am sure the Honourable Member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), to the evaluation of this province and to see whether it remains as No. 10, as we found out last year. That is indeed an unacceptable and unfortunate position to find this province in.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we look to the Throne Speech and see that this Government hangs its hat on various trade agreements. We look to the Western Canada Procurement Agreement that was supposed to start April 1, and yet when you look through it, again it is a flawed document. There are loopholes, there are exclusions, there are very exceptional circumstances. I would certainly like to see how that is progressing as we go into this Session.

The Manitoba-Minnesota Agreement, I was shocked indeed to review some of the export and import figures for this province as compared to some of the United States. I am indeed concerned as to the tremendous trade deficit that we have not only with further states but also a state like Minnesota.

I am just wondering if someone from the Government could maybe enlighten me on this point, but if I remember correctly, this agreement was signed on the same day as the federal election in November. I am just wondering whether that may have had some impact on the fact that when the present First Minister (Mr. Filmon) of this Tory Government calls his Tory twin in Ottawa, he gets a busy signal.

* (1730)

Western Diversification, Mr. Deputy Speaker - (Interjection)- the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) says it is a good one. Maybe he has not been reading the papers or reading the reviews on the Western Diversification Office. It has a poor record for funding Manitoba initiatives. When I have seen some of these applications that businesspeople in Manitoba, and I presume elsewhere, have to submit to justify their applications, it is incredible. I think this is another problem this Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) has to address and there is nothing in the Throne Speech about that, nothing in here whatsoever about the Western Diversification Office. How about that for working with his Tory twins?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, finally the Free Trade Agreement, we have seen the results of this Free Trade Agreement. We see it everyday, almost on the hour. How many more companies will fail? How many more companies will close? How many more jobs are we to lose? These are numbers for some, there might be numbers for some Government bureaucrat to keep track, if the Minister keeps track of this sort of information. Certainly, if he was keeping track, there should be some sort of reaction in here.

Again, it is the drum, the drum factor, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They beat it a little bit more and there is just a dull thud, but for these people who have lost these jobs, this is their livelihood. It is not a game, it is not a number, it is their livelihood. How many more rationalizations can we expect? Yet the Government seems to stay silent. People are affected, older workers, younger workers, all workers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the feeble response is, although interesting initiatives on first glance do not begin to address this issue of free trade planning, this appears to be a Government that is trying to teach business how to do business. Many of these initiatives appear to be nice but I think the proverbial horse is out of that proverbial barn. When are you going to close that door and look to initiatives? Some of these initiatives, these workshops, these plan assistances, this export development training should have been done a year ago, as soon as this Government came into place.

They certainly, during last year's campaign, enforced the idea they supported the Free Trade Agreement. Yet we are five months into this year, five months after the agreement has come into force, and yet now we are looking to some of these initiatives. I am sure if this Government would have had these initiatives up and running already, we would have seen a ream of press releases. Is this that kind of management that we kept hearing about in the 1988 provincial campaign? Management for Manitobans? It is again that hollow thud. The harder they beat it, the deeper the sound.

One of the things I am concerned about, again about the management of this Government, is this whole issue of harmonization tables that were recently brought to the attention of this Government. On January 1, the United States adopted certain harmonization tables that other industrial nations had brought in place, and lo and behold all of a sudden we have got a 5.7 percent tariff on a product going to the United States where before January 1, 1989 had no tariff. This is a Government that says they are good managers, managers for Manitobans.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would hope this Minister and his Government was aware that these harmonization tables were in place, and I am sure he was. Why was this matter not addressed and how many more problems can we find from those harmonization tables? He says this matter has been addressed. I understand it has been addressed since this matter was raised four or five weeks ago.- (Interjection)- The Minister says it was even considered and dealt with, raised a few weeks before. Try telling that to this industry whose main competitors are in the United States, who are facing 5.7 percent tariffs on every contract that they are trying to get in the United States.

I think that all agree that a Throne Speech should at least deal with some of the campaign promises of any particular Party or Government. We hear for a second time an Ottawa office representing the interests of Manitobans. We heard it the first time around and we are hearing it a second time around and hopefully we will not hear it a third time around because there will be another Government sitting over on that side. I am again wondering how long this promise will take place? How long will it take them to fulfill this promise?

Where is the approach for older worker adjustment? Where is that? It is not in here. It is not in last year's Throne Speech, it is certainly not in the Estimates or Budget last year, and it certainly cannot be found in the Seniors Directorate, if anything else could be found there. Where is the youth strategy? Again, a Tory promise trumpeted throughout the land—trumpeted

as managers for Manitoba. By its lack of initiatives, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Conservative Government has not lived up to its 1988 campaign promises to ensure that older workers and the youth of Manitoba have jobs should they become unemployed.

Over the last 12 months, we have seen Manitobans losing jobs. Where is that action? Where are those campaign promises now? These older workers have indicated to me that they are prepared to continue contributing to this province. I have gotten calls from younger workers who believed that they had a full-time job, that they have started a family, that they have bought a home, and they were looking to working hard to contribute to this province. Just as they were starting out, they had the rug pulled out from under them and they certainly, based on this Throne Speech, do not have a cushion to fall upon.

The Economic Council of Canada in a recent speech to the Canadian Club of Vancouver, the chairman said that their studies show that workers facing the most difficult transition problem tend to be older workers, those with low education and those whose horizons are limited because they live in remote communities where alternative job opportunities are scarce. I certainly look through this and say Government has to take a role in this. Where is this role in here? You certainly cannot see it—again a dull thud. Beat that drum and what have you got? A dull thud.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Read the full report.

Mr. Minenko: The Minister of Transportation (Albert Driedger) prompts me and suggests that I read the full report. In fact I have read the speech and I certainly fail to see where anyone on that side of the House has even considered it, never mind actually reading it. Certainly, nothing appears in these Throne Speeches.

Workers today face many transitions, transitions for many reasons—the Free Trade Agreement, rationalization from technology. We need cooperation; we need leadership—again, a dull thud. The most important resource that we have in Manitoba is the people of Manitoba. A well-educated work force is increasingly critical to ensure that Manitoba takes its proper place as a leader in Canada. This is indicated in many a speech, in many a study.

I would like to quote something out of the recent speech by the president and chief executive officer of Molson's Companies Ltd. just a month ago where he said, and I quote, "A Japanese labour expert has said, 'give wisdom to machines.' One of the most important tasks facing Canada is to ensure that our education and training programs are good enough so that Canadians can give wisdom to the machines." I certainly prompt this Government to take initiatives and actions on this as quickly as possible.

* (1740)

Support to Manitoba industries, again there is nothing here. They take great pride in saying that we brought Wang to set up an Imaging Centre. Well, the talk of

the lack of support to Manitoba industries, because I have been advised that here in Manitoba we had companies whose services could be adapted to provide the exact same services being provided by this company whose head office is someplace else.

What about supporting Manitoba companies? What about supporting Manitoba companies that had that technology? Where do they go? They go to Wang. What the heck! Where is that support for Manitoba companies? What happens then is that nothing stays in Manitoba. They come here as we have seen under some of the grants provided by this previous Government, a situation where grants are given, assistance is provided to companies with headquarters someplace else. As soon as those grants and assistance disappear, those companies disappear.

Let us look at Toro. Toro is a recent example. They have no allegiance to Manitoba and yet here we are giving something to Wang. Their money does not stay here, the technology does not stay here, the people do not stay here. I have spoken to industry and businesspeople in this province and they have said, how about that support to us. I could get \$10 million today to move to Alberta, but I want to stay in Manitoba. But I am starting to wonder whether a Government wants me to stay here. So what do they do? Give it to Wang. Where is their headquarters? Where is their head office? Where is their president? Where do they make their decisions? Certainly not in Manitoba.

The Minister of Transportation (Albert Driedger) asks me, how do you create jobs? By encouraging Manitobans, by giving the Manitobans those opportunities and using and building on the strengths of Manitobans to develop, so they can then take that technology and go overseas and then sell that on their own because businesspeople know when to export. They do not have to be told when to export. This is what has happened to very few companies in this province and I certainly do not see any initiatives by these managers to turn that around. It is just like that rudder. Maybe it is a rubber rudder. I am not sure where it is going.

One of the other things, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I feel is missing in this Throne Speech is they talk about exports. Export this, export that. I agree that we have to be able to be in a position and be prepared to take advantage of Europe's single act of 1992 when we see changes in Europe, and that we have to be in a position to take advantage of some of the opportunities in the Pacific Rim countries. But we also have to remember that Manitoba companies start in Manitoba and earn their first dollars in Manitoba.

Rural development, Mr. Deputy Speaker, well we looked to the campaign promises and I certainly looked to my colleague from Springfield (Mr. Roch) for some more comments in this area. I just want to touch on this and my comments as the Industry and Trade Critic for the Official Opposition. We go through this Speech and in fact they have a section called "Rural Development."

Campaign promise, off-farm income—Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no mention in last year's Throne

Speech, no mention in this year's Throne Speech about any developments with respect to off-farm income. They certainly looked to the agricultural industry as being the industry in rural Manitoba. What about the ream of other opportunities that are available? No mention whatsoever.

One of their campaign promises dealt with the Rural Regional Development Corporations, no mention again. What is going to be the continuing role of these RDCs? No direction, no leadership, and this is the kind of management that we were looking forward to? When you listen to the comments of the Minister responsible for Rural Development, like that proverbial drum, his words ring hollow. When you listen to his comments in today's Question Period, they indeed dovetail nicely into the Throne Speech.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you consider this document, the Throne Speech for 1989—there may be a second one later this year—you listen to it, you read it, you look at it, you consider it, you review it and it is like a drum. On first glance, it appears that there is some substance to it. When I looked first and read through it and listened and considered some of the initiatives being taken by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst), I thought we are looking at some substance here, but like that drum, when you actually start working at it and using it, it reveals itself as something indeed hollow.

I would certainly welcome the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, in his comments later this week, to perhaps flesh it out a little bit. When you look to some of the Throne Speeches in other provinces, they certainly seem to have a little bit more direction than certain efforts for this or that.

I would like to thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the opportunities to address the issues of Industry, Trade and Tourism contained in this Throne Speech for 1989.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the few moments remaining, I will begin my comments on this year's Throne Speech. Before I do that, I would like to pay tribute to yourself, Sir, having assumed the position you have in this House which reflects well upon your own integrity and the view in which you are held by other Honourable Members in this Chamber. I wish you well and, in doing so, I also wish to thank your predecessor for the year of service he has provided to this House.

I would like very quickly, before getting into the matters contained in the Throne Speech, to say how happy I am that my colleagues for Sturgeon Creek and Lakeside (Mr. Enns) have joined the Cabinet of the Government of Manitoba. Certainly I know the—did I say "Sturgeon Creek"? I am sorry, Kirkfield Park, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Honourable Minister of Labour, responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Hammond), will bring dimensions to our Cabinet which I know will provide benefits to the people of Manitoba.

Of course, I would like to pay tribute to my honourable friend and colleague, the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), to whom I have often looked for

counsel in the conduct of my duties, the dean of this Legislature and a man whose place is definitely around the Cabinet Table. We are very happy to have him serving the people of Manitoba in his present capacity.

I also would like to congratulate other Ministers who have taken on new and different responsibilities, as well as those in critic positions in both Opposition Parties, both the Official Opposition, as well as the Liberal Party (sic).

* (1750)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take great pleasure in standing to discuss the contents of the Throne Speech. Other Honourable Members have made contributions in this debate and most of them, I suggest by the time we are through, will have been positive comments because there is so much in the Throne Speech to be positive about. Indeed it is an important time in the history of Manitoba to be positive about our future. This is not the time to be looking upon ourselves as a have-not province. This is not the time to be looking at ourselves as a weak province. This is not the time to be looking upon ourselves as a hard-up province, as Members of the Official Opposition and notably their Leader have been wont to do in recent weeks.

My vision of this province is that of a strong province, the home of strong citizens of our province, those who have much to offer. Those who like to describe us as weak, as have not and as hard up, really do us no service and do the future no service for our children and our grandchildren. I would rather indeed be talking about approaches to an economic growth which recognizes the interdependence of our economic, environmental and social well-being, i.e., sustainable development. Those are positive things for us to think about for the future. Those are things that we can look at and take on an outlook of optimism for the future.

My opposite Member in the Official Opposition, the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), is making a number of comments from his seat, none of which I can hear. I suppose if history were to record what I can hear, history would be better off.

The Throne Speech talks about a vision for the future, a vision that is consistent with the vision that Members of the Progressive Conservative Party talked about as they campaigned in 1988. As we head into 1989, the remainder of this year, we should indeed be focusing our vision on the future rather than on those negative aspects that some Honourable Members in this place would choose to bring forward to try to paint a picture of a weak have-not and hard-up province, which I will never admit that is what this province is. I would far rather look to our strengths rather than to our weaknesses, those few weaknesses that we have.

The Throne Speech talks about the Government of Manitoba bringing the province under control, the finances of the province under control. Indeed those views are shared by others who make financial judgments about Governments in this whole world. We are regarded as being on the right track.

I am pleased also that the Throne Speech contains a reference that the Government remains committed

to no increases in personal taxation. This is in line with commitments that this Government has made. It shows us and gives us a challenge that we must continue as we have over the last year. We must continue to manage well in order to be able to keep that commitment.

We are also heartened by the fact that the Conference Board of Canada has made it known that real growth in Manitoba will reach 4 percent in 1989. All of these things are indicators that give us reason to be optimistic for the future. Those facts, those indicators, combined with the hard-working and single-minded Cabinet and Government in this province, do bode well for the future.

I am very happy to see the emphasis that has been placed in the Speech from the Throne on development of areas outside the City of Winnipeg in the future. As one who resides in and represents a constituency outside the City of Winnipeg, this is good news to me. Indeed I was very pleased when the Government of Manitoba was able to announce that the Boissevain Land Titles Office will, in the future, be used to provide Government Services to the people of Manitoba outside the City of Winnipeg. That announcement was cheered by people in the Boissevain area. Indeed others from outside Winnipeg feel hopeful for the future. Of course, the act of opening regional Cabinet offices in Brandon and Thompson was well received and is seen as a harbinger of future activities on the part of this Government.

Of course I was also extremely pleased, as a Member representing the City of Brandon, to see a commitment stated by this Government towards the Keystone Centre in Brandon. I must say, I was a little dismayed when, in response to the Throne Speech, the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) had this to say about my community. Representing the people of the City of Brandon, I must register my resentment and the offence that I take at the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition with reference to the Keystone Centre. She said, and I quote, "With all due respect, Brandon is one of the most vibrant rural communities in the province. If there is a need for additional funding right now, it is to the City of Portage la Prairie."

Now, aside from the fact that the Leader of the Opposition would like to pit one community against the other in this province, people in Brandon, while we

feel strongly about the strength of our community, about the strength of our resolve to move forward into the '90s and beyond in and around the City of Brandon, we do wonder about the breadth of understanding of the Leader of the Opposition when she describes our economy in Brandon as a vibrant rural community. I will tell you there are people at the political level, there are people at the industrial development level in the City of Brandon who would take issue at what the Leader of the Opposition had to say. With all due respect to the Leader of the Opposition, I do protest the attitude that she has repeatedly displayed over the last three years to the City of Brandon and to other areas of Manitoba which are rural.

Brandonites do take offence to her repeatedly referring to our community as a rural community. Brandon is an urban centre, and I would like Honourable Members opposite to understand that. If they ever hope to make any political gains in that area of the province, they would do well to understand that Brandon is a city. It is indeed the second city of this province and the hub of activity, agricultural and otherwise, in southwestern Manitoba and far beyond.

Under the heading of Family Services, I do appreciate, as Justice Minister in this province, the reference in the Throne Speech to the fact that abuse is a crime. I think that Honourable Members opposite will be seeing more and more evidence of the fact that this Government views abuse, whether it be family abuse or child abuse, as a crime in this province. I look forward to discussing that issue with my federal and provincial colleagues in Charlottetown early in the month of June.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I really am running a little short of time to discuss the other matters that I would like to discuss before I conclude my remarks so, if I may, I would like at this time to call it six o'clock.

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hour being six o'clock, I am interrupting the proceedings according to the rules. When this motion is again before the House, the Honourable Minister will have 28 minutes left.

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