

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA  
2:30 o'clock, Tuesday, February 5, 1974

Opening Prayer by Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we proceed I should like to direct the attention of the honourable members to the gallery where we have 30 students of Grade 11 standing of the University of Winnipeg. These students are under the direction of Mr. Matheson and Mrs. Anderson. This university is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Matthews.

We also have 20 students of Grade 5 standing of the St. Girard School. These students are under the direction of Sister L. Leuschen. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Elmwood, the Minister of Public Works. On behalf of all the honourable members I welcome you here today.

Presenting Petitions; Reading and Receiving Petitions; Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees; Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports. The Honourable Minister of Labour.

TABLING OF REPORTS

HON. RUSSELL PAULLEY (Minister of Labour) (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the report of the Manitoba Civil Service Superannuation Fund for the year ending December 31, 1972, and also the Annual Report of the Fire Commissioner.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

HON. IAN TURNBULL (Minister of Consumer, Corporate and Internal Services) (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, may I table the Annual Report of the Manitoba Telephone System for the year ending March 31, 1973. Mr. Speaker, may I say that all members of the House have previously received copies of this Annual Report.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other Ministerial Statements? Notices of Motion; Introduction of Bills; Oral Questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIDNEY SPIVAK, Q. C. (Leader of the Opposition) (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Industry and Commerce. I wonder if he can indicate to the House whether there will be a shortage of fresh fruits and vegetables in Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

HON. LEONARD S. EVANS (Minister of Industry and Commerce) (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, not that I'm aware of.

MR. SPIVAK: My question then to the First Minister: Has anyone in the government been in contact with the industry to determine whether there will be a shortage of fresh fruit and vegetables in Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. EDWARD SCHREYER (Premier) (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, there has been no indication directed to us to that effect and therefore for us to seek information of that kind from each sector of the economy would hardly seem to be a practical way to proceed.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. I wonder if he can indicate whether the price of fresh vegetables and fresh fruit will go up in Manitoba in the next week or two?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The question is asking for conclusion of an opinion. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Consumer Affairs can indicate to the House whether any consideration or any studies have been undertaken by the government to determine whether the price of fresh vegetables and fruit will go up in Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. TURNBULL: Mr. Speaker, the staff of the department is continually monitoring prices both in northern Manitoba and in the south. To date I have not received information

(MR. TURNBULL cont'd). . . that there is in fact a shortage of supply in the retail stores in the city.

MR. SPIVAK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Social Development and rises in light of the fact that for the third time in less than a week the Misericordia Hospital has had to close its doors to emergency cases. I wonder if the Minister can indicate how frequently hospitals in Winnipeg have in fact had to close their doors to emergency cases?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. SAUL A. MILLER (Minister of Health and Social Development) (Seven Oaks): Mr. Speaker, the question I assume is in the very last sentence and I can't answer that, I have no idea if any records are kept in this regard.

MR. SPIVAK: Well I put the question to the Honourable Minister: Has the government not been informed the hospitals have had to close their doors to emergency cases in the past month?

MR. MILLER: We are informed and have heard that there have been cases, isolated cases, where in fact one hospital couldn't take it and referrals had to be made to other hospitals but I gather this is not uncommon.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. My question then is to the Minister. I wonder if he would consider as the Minister involved and in charge of Health and Social Development, visiting the hospitals to see the stretcher patients who are now in the corridors and be able to be in a position to report.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I wonder whether the honourable member would rephrase his question. I can see no merit to the procedures of this House whether the Minister visits someplace or not.

MR. SPIVAK: Well, Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that there are emergency cases that are not allowed in the hospitals, and that can be documented I believe without question, I wonder whether the Minister - yes, I wonder whether the Minister would be prepared to visit the hospitals to be able to determine the exact nature of this situation.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, if my presence at the hospital would make a difference perhaps I would visit them. However I'm not endowed with that kind of spirit that somehow with my entry things are going to change. The problem posed by the member, it may be a serious one, I think it merits looking into; I can tell him for a fact that an inventory is under way and has been under way for the last month. There is a problem and it will be dealt with but it cannot be done overnight.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Yes. The Minister has indicated that there has only been a few isolated cases. I wonder if the Minister is in a position to indicate whether within the past month there have in fact been references to the government by the hospitals indicating that they are not in a position to take emergency cases?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure there has been any reference to the government at all. I know that discussions have taken place with the Health Services Commission but I'm not sure of the nature of those discussions.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. STEVE PATRICK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the same Minister. Is the Minister still of the same opinion that he gave me the answer the other day that there are no shortage of hospital beds in Winnipeg?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I didn't say there was no shortage. What I said was, it's no different today than it was a year ago.

MR. PATRICK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the Minister been informed that last night there were no beds in Winnipeg in any hospital for emergency cases.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I have not been informed of this. It could be it's possible. I suspect however that no one was turned away and people were looked after last night.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. HENRY J. EINARSON (Rock Lake): Mr. Speaker, I direct this question to the Minister of Agriculture. My question pertains to the two-man committee established to look

(MR. EINARSON cont'd) . . . into all possibilities of the supply price set for fertilizer last year. Could the Minister indicate whether a report will be given on that subject this session.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Minister of Agriculture) (Lac du Bonnet): Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. EINARSON: A second question, Mr. Speaker. That being the case, could the Minister indicate that the report could be updated and give us the present situation on the fertilizer situation?

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, the members on that commission are still entertained by the government on a number of duties with respect to the same question and I presume that we will have some oral presentation as well as a printed copy to update my honourable friend.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE (Roblin): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. I wonder can the Honourable Minister explain to the House why sugar's retailing across the U. S. A. border for about \$15 a hundred while it's \$25 a hundred or higher in Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Again it's asking for an opinion. The Honourable Member for Morris. The Honourable Member for Roblin cannot have a supplementary to something that is out of order. He can have another question.

MR. MCKENZIE: I'll rephrase the question, Mr. Speaker. May I rephrase the question Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Very well.

MR. MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs if he will investigate, or his department will investigate the difference in retail prices in sugar between the U. S. and Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. TURNBULL: Mr. Speaker, I think that the prices of sugar in Canada and in the United States is determined by the International market as the member well knows, and by the fact of course that Manitoba sugar has a monopoly position within the province.

MR. MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Would the Minister and his department investigate the differential in price between U. S. and Manitoba?

MR. TURNBULL: Mr. Speaker, if the member is suggesting that the government investigate the price of sugar for the purpose of establishing price controls, I will undertake that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): I'd like to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Is he implying that the free movement of sugar across the border constitutes a monopoly for the Manitoba Sugar Company?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

HON. IAN TURNBULL: Mr. Speaker, it is well known that Manitoba Sugar Company, a subsidiary of B. C. Sugar, in fact enjoys a captive market within Manitoba. There is virtually no other supplier of sugar in Manitoba and I think that if the member investigates the price of sugar he will realize that the implication to Manitoba and the processing of cane sugar here, although it's practicable, is not done; that the sugar refinery does process sugar beets and sells the sugar for a price less than what Eastern manufacturers could process and sell cane sugar in Manitoba for.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSEN: I repeat my question. Does he say . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The honourable member admits it's repetition which is contrary to our rules. The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSEN: I should like to direct a further question then to the First Minister, and ask him if the government have received a report from the Ombudsman regarding a Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation loan which was supposed to have been granted to Dauphin Hog Farms and had been rescinded by one, Max Hofford?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. E. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, without accepting the latter part of my honourable friend's question, the answer to the question is "Yes". Such a report has been received and the report of the Ombudsman will be tabled in this House, I assume, sometime between now and the end of March.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege. The Minister for Health and Social Services just stated he never said that there was a critical shortage of hospital beds to my question just a minute ago. In Hansard he misinformed the House because he did say a couple of days ago, and I would like to quote, "Mr. Speaker, I deny that there is a critical shortage." And that's in Hansard.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

HON. SAUL MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I haven't the Hansard with me and I don't know the page; the point is this - what I said was this - that the critical shortage today is no more critical than it was a year ago. The situation has not really changed, that's all I'm saying.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIDNEY SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister: Is the situation critical?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, you know the word critical has many connotations. If I was waiting to get in I would consider it critical. If you take it in the context of the total problem I'm not sure it is that critical. The point I am trying to make is that the situation today is no different than it was a year ago, or two years ago. There is a total problem in the field of geriatrics. It's a problem that cannot be resolved simply by slapping up another hospital or adding a few more beds. It has to be attacked in total by a number of methods, and we are going to be doing just that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. GEORGE HENDERSON (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. Has the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs done anything to determine if there is an actual shortage of antifreeze in Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. TURNBULL: Mr. Speaker, I have had a report to the effect that antifreeze being produced from glycol could be in short supply, is in short supply in one supplier's house, I think it was Shell Oil, and that the main problem arises from the fact that for some reason all the glycol is produced in the United States.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member from St. Boniface.

MR. J. PAUL MARION (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of Health. Can the Minister advise this House if the government intends to enter into a formal agreement with the Manitoba Medical Association now that the dispute has been settled?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I think this matter was aired to some extent in the newspapers. It's my understanding that the Manitoba Health Services Commission and M. M. A. are entering into the agreement which was discussed at great length. Insofar as the Government of Manitoba is concerned, we have indicated that the Government of Manitoba will not enter into a written agreement with the M. M. A.

MR. MARION: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is, inasmuch as you will not enter into a formal agreement, will there be a public utterance by the government of this province. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. MARION: Might I conclude my question before it's answered, Mr. Speaker? Will there then be a public utterance on the part of the government stating what has been accepted with the Manitoba Medical Association?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, there have been many public utterances. The M. M. A. is aware of the information we sent them. The newspapers are aware; they have been in the newspapers; they have been publicized and when the agreement between the M. H. S. C. and the M. M. A. is finalized, that will be a matter of public record and at that time any documentation with regard to what the government's policy will be will also be made public, if indeed there will be any changes.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. I. H. ASPER (Leader of the Liberal Party) (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. Would he reconcile for this House the fact that there is a shortage of acute care hospital beds in Winnipeg and the government has not yet fulfilled its commitment to restore Grace Hospital to become a senior citizens geriatric centre which would relieve the hospital shortage in Winnipeg.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

HON. SAUL MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I cannot accept the first statement that there is a shortage of acute care beds. I'm not sure that it is a shortage of acute care beds as such. There may be a need to differentiate amongst the beds that now exist, a different designation may have to take place; but it's part as I said earlier of a total look at the beds. An inventory is now in process and when we have that inventory we will know which way to move. The answer is not simply to slap up a bunch of beds.

With regard to the old Grace Hospital, there was plans I think at one time for a small number of geriatric beds. I don't recall the number; I know it was very small. I'm not sure at this point whether that's going ahead or not, because I think that was dropped sometime ago.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon. A supplementary by the Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: A supplementary question. Is it the position of the government then presently that the announced plan whereby Grace Hospital would be converted into a centre for extended care patients, that plan has now been dropped? --(Interjection)-- It sure was announced in this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

HON. SAUL MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of the plan that the Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party refers to. Perhaps he announced it I don't know, but to my knowledge there is no immediate plan for a geriatric centre at the old Grace. I may be wrong, in which case I will certainly make known to the House if I am wrong.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. EDWARD MCGILL ( Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Honourable Minister of Education. I wonder if he would confirm to the House that the James Campbell who is listed as the Research Director for the Post Secondary Report on Education and presumably its principal architect is the same James Campbell the Minister has appointed to head a committee to "carefully and systematically review the recommendations of the report"?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. BEN HANUSCHAK (Minister of Education) (Burrows): I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I missed the first description of the James Campbell but the James Campbell who is presently assigned to a further study and research of the Post Secondary Task Force Report on Education is the one who acted as secretary to the Task Force on Post Secondary Education.

MR. MCGILL: A supplementary question to the Minister, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister then confirm that in placing the author of the report to sit in judgment on those who might be opposing the report, that he is creating a rather sticky wicket for the opposing side.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Chairman, I had indicated to the House that he was secretary to the Task Force and the word secretary and author of the report are not synonymous.

MR. MCGILL: A final supplementary. In connection with the Research Director Mr. Campbell, would the Minister explain to the House why it was necessary to appoint a committee to review the acts of the previously appointed committee?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure if the honourable member will go back in his files or to Hansard he will find that we appointed a Task Force to study the matter of post-secondary education; the Task Force has now handed down its report and now it becomes a responsibility of the government to examine it and determine ways and means of implementing those of the recommendations that the government would see fit to do.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. HARRY E. GRAHAM (Birtle-Russell): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Northern Affairs. I'd like to ask the Minister if he has had any talks with Sigfusson Transportation with respect - (this is outside the courts I mean) - with respect to the completion of the northern road system in northern Manitoba this coming year?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. RON MCBRYDE (Minister of Northern Affairs)(The Pas): No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GRAHAM: A supplementary question. Has the Minister then sought other advice, expert advice that is, in methods of completing the roads in time for the movement of goods this winter?

MR. MCBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GRAHAM: A further supplementary question. Has the Minister now given orders

(MR. GRAHAM cont'd) . . . to allow the movement of tractor trains as well as truck traffic on the northern winter roads?

MR. McBRYDE: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health and Social Development. In view of what is now admitted as a serious shortage of hospital beds in the City of Winnipeg . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. SPIVAK: I'm not referring to . . . Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if honourable gentlemen would cooperate to the extent of not expressing opinions but asking questions. It is contrary to our rules to express opinions. I have been a bit lenient and lax but I do wish they would cooperate.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, just on the point of order. I think it was acknowledged by the Minister that it is serious but it's a question of determination . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member is debating the point on the ruling I made.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder in view of the statements made by the Minister whether he can indicate whether the government does have a contingency plan in the event of an emergency that should arise in Winnipeg such as a flu epidemic?

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie. The Honourable Minister.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, you know that question's an insult to the House. I'm going to reply this way. If three 747's flying over Winnipeg crashed suddenly, what would happen?

A MEMBER: We'd have a problem.

MR. MILLER: We'd have a problem, believe me we'd have a problem.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. GORDON E. JOHNSTON (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture. Is there any intention on the government's part to either directly or indirectly take over the administration and the physical assets of the Austin Agricultural Museum?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: That prospect, Sir, has not occurred to me and has not been recommended. I don't know where the honourable member gets the impression from.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, yesterday one of the honourable members opposite asked a question as to how it was, or why it was that a listing of regional office of the New Democratic Party appeared under a government office listing in the telephone directory. I took the question as notice and have ascertained that this error did in fact occur; that it was discovered or caught, corrected on the 22nd of November, a letter was sent by the Commercial Supervisor of the Western Region indicating that steps would be taken to ensure non-reoccurrence and also the billing of the cost of the entry is to the treasurer of the provincial riding or constituency office.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Honourable Minister of Corporate and Consumer Affairs. Does the government intend to participate in the new home warranty and insurance scheme which was proposed by the Federal Government and will the Minister be proposing enabling legislation to this House to put the scheme into effect?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. TURNBULL: Mr. Speaker, in answer to the first question, I would have to say that I have to have a more thorough look at the federal proposal and discuss with them before I could make any commitment to the House; and in answer to the second, that would be contingent on what happened during the first review of the federal legislation with the Federal Government.

MR. PATRICK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the government established a position on the recommendation of the Manitoba Law Reform Commission on warranty legislation for new homes?

MR. TURNBULL: The Commission as I understand it, Mr. Chairman, has made certain proposals and will be hearing representation from the public on their proposals, after which time I assume they will make further recommendations and we will certainly take their future report into consideration in dealing with this rather serious problem of home warranties.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. EVANS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on Friday the First Minister took as notice a question from the Leader of the Opposition regarding the latest announcement from Alberta about natural gas prices and I believe a similar question was asked yesterday by the Honourable Member from Riel. The announcement out of Alberta referred not as the honourable members inferred, did not relate to an increase in wellhead prices but rather to an increase in royalty rates which is to be backdated to the first of January of this year. It hasn't yet been determined to what extent the increase in natural gas royalties can in fact be passed on to Manitoba consumers. If the gas which comes to Manitoba under existing contracts is increased in price by the full extent of the new royalty it will put up the price by little over one cent per mcf. The resulting annual increase in the average cost of heating a home by gas therefore would be under \$2.00, that is a yearly increase of under \$2.00.

The Leader of the Opposition also in the context of natural gas prices asked about the possibility of the reality of an increase of approximately 50 percent for Manitobans. We do not yet know the full extent of the changes in gas pricing which the Alberta Government has indicated that it wishes to bring about. However, the increase in royalties which I referred to a moment ago is so far only a minor factor in the very fast changing situation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might direct a question to the Minister and ask him if they have in fact been in touch with the Alberta Government on this matter?

MR. EVANS: On the matter of the change of royalties per se? Mr. Speaker, we have not been in touch with the Alberta Government on the matter of changes in royalty increases, however there is considerable communication with various ministers of the Alberta Government with respect to energy.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY - THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Rupertsland and the amendment thereto by the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. I. H. ASPER (Leader of the Liberal Party) (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, may I begin by offering to you my personal compliments and those of the Liberal Caucus upon your having been re-elected to the highest office that we in this Chamber can bestow. It was with considerable pleasure that the Liberal Caucus joined all other members of the House last week in making unanimous your election. We know that you will carry on your duties with the distinction, the courage, the honour, and the impartiality and the fairness which is the hallmark of that office, Mr. Speaker.

It has well been said during that occasion that our parliamentary democracy within the lawmaking process of this Chamber functions well or badly depending on how effectively all of us as participants play out the roles that the public has assigned to us. The Liberal Caucus is particularly mindful of this and the very special requirements of yourself in this endeavour, because history will judge us all harshly if for expediency or if for mementary political partisan gain any of us in carrying out our responsibilities and duties do anything other than strengthen and fortify the great tradition of parliament which we all seek to serve.

In saying this, Mr. Speaker, I draw to your attention that we in the Liberal Caucus will look to you as we have in the past to take into account that while there are five members of the Liberal Caucus, the policies and the points of view put forward by our Party in the recent general election received the endorsement of some 90,000 Manitobans. With that, Mr. Speaker, we offer you our cooperation and wish you pleasure and satisfaction in your office.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we wish to congratulate the Premier and the government on its success in retaining the support of sufficient Manitobans to have returned a majority of them and in numerical number to this Chamber.

I'm sure I speak for all honourable members too, Mr. Speaker, regardless of party, when I extend a welcome into our midst to our new colleagues on all sides of the House. We

## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. ASPER cont'd) . . . wish them well and we add the hope that they will bring to this new challenge the same skill, the same dedication, the same sense of commitment that they have brought and applied to all of their other community undertakings in the past. In this regard, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party feels very fortunate indeed to have added the Honourable Member from Fort Rouge and the Honourable Member from St. Boniface. I assure you, Sir, and members of this Chamber that Manitoba as well as all of us here will come to know them well and, to regard them with the respect to which they are entitled.

Mr. Speaker, I also wish at this time to congratulate on our Party's behalf the Honourable Member from Rupertsland and the Honourable Member from Crescentwood - who moved and seconded the main motion. While it will become obvious that I don't share the praise they express for the government, I wish to compliment them on the very fine account that they gave in their initial contributions to the debate. Both of them in my view gave an excellent account of themselves and their constituencies and their personal points of view in a very interesting way, and I think all of us on this side look forward to hearing more from them in the debates ahead.

Mr. Speaker, to get to the business at hand. There are some very specific proposals in the Speech from the Throne, all of which are in accordance with previously declared Liberal Party policy that subject to what's actually contained in the specific legislation when it's come forward will receive the enthusiastic support of our party in this Chamber. But I am bound to say that those of us who eagerly awaited a declaration of what the government's new mandate would offer Manitobans in the years ahead, or even in the months ahead, feel a sense of astonishment, frustration and overwhelming disappointment at the barren Speech from the Throne that we were tortured with.

It has been the tradition of our party certainly since I became its leader, Mr. Speaker, to deal with each Speech from the Throne by identifying those programs which we believe are beneficial for Manitoba, pointing out those which cause concern or which are plainly adverse to Manitoba's best interests and where the government is silent on matters which must be attended to, to offer an alternative program. We will do so again today, Mr. Speaker, but we are at a great disadvantage because the government in its Speech from the Throne has said very little.

It had been suggested over these past seven months that the period following the election the government had used to deliberately be inactive and silent and devote that time to the preparation of a new major thrust for the presentation at this time in this Assembly -- new goals, new objectives, new paths, new ideas, new idealism resulting from a renewed mandate. Those hopes were bitterly dashed last Thursday when we saw that the government continues to be gripped by a malaise, seized in what appears to be an unshakeable lethargy and afflicted with intellectual sleeping sickness that has brought it to a halt.

During the course of the recent election we in the Liberal Party tried in every way possible to focus discussion on the major problems facing Manitoba; and the government on the other hand tried in every way to avoid discussing those issues.

It is now obvious that the Speech from the Throne is a continuation of that same sort of deliberate evasion by the government of the key issues facing Manitoba. Last year when this House heard the Speech from the Throne we took into account the fact there was only a few months before a general election, that the government could not have been expected to introduce or launch decisive action on key issues in the absence of a mandate. We were therefore patient in dealing with last year's Speech from the Throne, which contained no new programs, no promise of action and no solutions to the many problems facing the province for which this government after five years must now shoulder the blame and face the responsibility of solving. But it is now more than seven months since the government received the mandate and the people of Manitoba are entitled to action by the First Minister as well as his government.

What's particularly frightening is that if the abdication of responsibility to lead is so obvious and so evident from this, the first speech from a new administration, then Manitobans who expected much, much more have good reason to reconsider the choice they made in the election, for it is clear that the government has become smug and complacent in government, more concerned about finding ways to reward their political supporters than in launching new efforts on behalf of the people of Manitoba.



## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. ASPER cont'd)

This Throne Speech, Sir, is a monument to this government's failure to deal decisively and effectively with the problems that confront the people of Manitoba. Instead of policy, we have propaganda; in place of intellect, we have ideology; and where programs are required, we're handed platitudes. The speech gives off a sound which can only be characterized as the death rattle of reform in Manitoba.

The Honourable Member from Crescentwood in moving the speech - seconding it rather - called it "an historic document", and that it is, but not in a manner which reflects credit on its authors. What does distinguish this speech and its proposals is it appears to have been written by some very ancient, very tired and very unimaginative people. Gone is the promise of idealism, of reform, of nation building, of taking hold, of taking bold and courageous new steps to ensure that all Manitobans would prosper and enjoy a fair deal within our society. Instead we have a Speech from the Throne which promises that the government will build a few new office buildings around the province, it will complete a few roads that they have started, that it will extend some crop insurance, that it will continue building power installations on the Nelson to which we're already committed. And that's the government's view of what Manitoba seems to need in 1974.

Are these few programs, Mr. Speaker, any kind of an answer to the need for more Day Care Centres, for rural industrialization, for more acute-care hospital beds, which until moments ago we didn't have a crisis but now we have a crisis? Is this any answer to the tax weary Manitobans and for those who are choked by the escalating cost of living?

Mr. Speaker, we begin a new administration with an inventory of promises unfulfilled. When this province embarked on its first NDP administration, hopes were high. Whether or not one supported the NDP as a political party, no one could help but look forward to what the enthusiasm, the freshness of a new government could bring. Those heady days of 1969 have become the do-nothing days of 1974 through a course of conduct by government which has created problems in this province and now freely by its actions, or inaction, admits that it does not know, does not care to, and doesn't intend to solve them.

We ask this government whatever happened to the Bill of Rights that Manitobans were promised in its first Throne Speech and again promised last year, and which on three occasions has been brought to this Chamber by the Liberal Party and on three occasions been refused support by government. Whatever happened to the 1969 promise by the Premier that the political process was to be opened up and made accessible to all citizens? How does he reconcile those brave statements of '69 with the statement of his Minister responsible for the MDC a few weeks ago, when questioned on the firing of Mr. Ault from the government-owned Flyer Coach Industries, said to the public of Manitoba that he, the Minister, he would tell the people only what he believed in his sole judgment, the public ought to know.

How does the First Minister reconcile that kind of behaviour with the promise of '69 for open accessible government?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Does the Honourable Minister have a . . .

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege. I did not make the remarks attributed to me by my honourable friend.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, the Minister in question and I have fenced on this kind of thing before. I will preface my comment by saying: gave Manitobans, including this Manitoban the impressions that he would. Does that satisfy the Minister's concern?

That's not the only evidence of unfulfilled promise, Mr. Speaker, we have. We have to ask the First Minister whatever happened to his government's promise while they were in opposition that there would be an independent Auditor-General who would act as watchdog for government spending, extravagance and waste? Whatever happened to the promise of participatory democracy, where citizens would be consulted, would play a role in forming the laws which govern them? Did the government listen to the Water Commission last year when it expressed doubts about the method of handling the Hydro development? Did it listen to the Environmental Advisory Council when it called for public hearings on the Churchill River diversion project? Has it listened to the Council of Self Help Groups? Has it paid any attention to the legitimate requests of the Council of Women? And was it necessary for the Province of Manitoba to be dragged to the brink of a general strike of our doctors before the government would agree to some form of consultations with that group within our community.

## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. ASPER cont'd)

What happened to the promise, Mr. Speaker, so eloquently pronounced by the Minister of Industry and Commerce in 1970, when he said words to the effect, "We will see rural industrialization in Manitoba on a scale never before known"? Can the First Minister face the people of Sprague with this Speech from the Throne as they walk daily by the closed plant of Columbia Forest Products?

And when, Mr. Speaker, will we see this government implement its now two-year old promise to convert old Grace Hospital into an extended care facility for the treatment of senior citizens? And I'll deal with that a little further, Mr. Speaker, because it now appears that the government doesn't think it has a promise in that regard.

We will be looking for the implementation of the promise that the next mayor of the City of Winnipeg would be elected by the population at large and not by the councillors of the city.

Whatever happened to this government's oft repeated pledge while it was in opposition that it would end political patronage and rampant pork barrel politics in the civil service? Mr. Speaker, how many more defeated NDP candidates and campaign workers will have to be appointed to the Boards, the Commissions, the Tribunals, the Agencies and the Civil Service of Manitoba, before this government's thirst for politicizing the civil service is quenched?

This government should have been embarrassed to say to us in the Speech from the Throne that it had helped create 900 new jobs in manufacturing in Manitoba, because 9,000 were needed. But even that's too modest a statement because the government has done better. It has created 901 new jobs - the extra one being for the former Minister of Tourism, Mr. Desjardins, who now becomes the Chairman of the Manitoba Health Services Commission. However, I want to concede that the government's concept of merit appointments is in that case well taken, because Mr. Desjardins does have the merit in the eyes of the government in that he is publicly committed that he's not going to hold the job for long, he hopes, he's only going to hold it until he can again become a candidate for office for the government should the opportunity arise. Mr. Speaker, that is symbolic, that is the hallmark of how far this government has gone in destroying the concept of an independent civil service or public service.

And whatever happened, as all Manitobans are asking, to the NDP's pre-1969 denunciation of sales tax as being the cruelest and the most regressive form of all taxation? What happened to those brave words of the present Minister of Finance when, before achieving office achieving the very office which permits him to change all that cruel, oppressive and regressive taxation collected from those who have the least ability to pay - and that's \$100 million this year? He denounced the sales tax not only at 5 percent but even at 3 percent, and he said the NDP could countenance no sales tax at all?

Why has the government abandoned its commitment to create a sane, humane and enjoyable urban system of living in Winnipeg? The Government created a City of Winnipeg . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable gentleman have a point of order or . . . ?

HON. SAUL CHERNIACK Q. C. (Minister of Finance) (St. Johns): Matter of privilege. I understand that the honourable member quoted me in relation to a tax of the nature that - may I ask that he . . . "most cruel, oppressive regressive tax". Could he give us the citation of that so that we could confirm his statement?

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, I was paraphrasing the Minister's remarks, I was paraphrasing the Minister's remarks made, I believe, in 1967 at the time of the introduction of the sales tax, and inasmuch as I don't have the quotation here with me today, I will undertake to read it to the House at a later time. We will determine at that point who's misrepresenting.

Mr. Speaker, this government created a City of Winnipeg structure three years ago and promised to develop an urban policy to make it work effectively. It promised to support that City financially for the first three years of its operation in order to cut down the impact of the forced merger on the taxpayers. That three-year period is nearly up, and unless further support is voted to the City of Winnipeg now, taxes in the City of Winnipeg next year will skyrocket to the extent where individual home ownership will become, for the average resident, unattainable. This NDP government attacked the administration before it for having created Metropolitan Government in Winnipeg and then abandoning it, yet the NDP has done exactly the same thing now.

This government has chosen to ignore its own policy commitments. It has abandoned the constituency that elected it. That's its business, and maybe it's something that best can be

## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. ASPER cont'd) . . . . settled between the NDP members of the Chamber and the members of their party, but what is not acceptable is the government's failure, as the Speech from the Throne establishes, to come to grips with 1974 reality in Manitoba.

It's the time for the government to get down to basics, the bread and butter issues, the immediate needs of the average Manitoban. The Speech brazenly says, and I quote: "1974 will be a year of continued momentum in economic growth," as if to suggest that the economic growth and performance in Manitoba over these past four years of NDP stewardship have really been satisfactory. Mr. Speaker, it isn't negative; it is merely realistic to face all facts squarely.

The fact. When this government assumed office four years ago, four and a half years ago, there were 10,000 unemployed in Manitoba. Today there are 19,000 unemployed.

While the number of unemployed under the NDP has nearly doubled, that is not the only economic indicator which should give concern and spur this government into some sort of economic action. Our population has remained stagnant. It is a fact that while Canada grew by 300,000 people last year, Manitoba's population increased by only 8,000, far less than our share of the national average.

Fact. In the past twelve months, our industrial wage composite for employment, using figures provided by Statistics Manitoba, based on 1961 equalling 100 points, that composite has declined from 120 in August of 1972 to 114 in August of 1973, and yet while our economic growth declined, our cost of living shot up at a frightening and unacceptable rate. It is also a fact that in 1972, November, our cost of living was 142.3. It has risen 13 percentage points to an unprecedented high of 155.5 in November of 1973.

And lest anyone think that the cost of living increases are confined only to the energy issue or luxury items, let me point out that the biggest rises are in the necessities of life - food and shelter. Again a fact; the cost of food in the past year has risen by 26 percent from 145.1 to 171.8. It is also a fact that the cost of housing has risen by 10 percentage points from 146.1 to 156.1 in this past 12-month period.

It's also a fact that the number of new dwelling starts for the first three quarters of 1973, this past year, declined 15 percent from the first three quarters for last year 1972. We are down to 8,861 housing starts compared with 10,018 starts in the same period last year.

And now the 1973 housing figures are in for Canada, just released, I believe, this morning. It is a fact that Canadian housing grew at 7.4 percent last year and Manitoba's declined by 4.5 percent. The decline in new residential buildings in the City of Winnipeg alone is even more alarming. It is a fact that there has been a ten percent increase in the cost of construction, and despite that, the value of building permits issued between August and October of this year 1973 is only \$21,500,000. That's 20 percent below the \$26,300,000 for the same period last year.

Only a few weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Minister of Finance warned the Finance Ministers of Canada that 1974 was the economic recession in Canada because of the impact on world markets through escalating costs, scarcity of international oil. Yet the Manitoba government doesn't pay any attention to that and proposes no programs to stimulate the economy. And if we see problems ahead for the Manitoba economy in general, then think of the prognosis for rural Manitoba where there are inherent as well as the normal kind of economic problems.

I heard an honourable member--I believe it was the Member for Crescentwood--say in this House recently that this government with its rural stay option had arrested rural depopulation. I wish it were so, but it is not. In fact rural depopulation is increasing. There have been no rural industrialization breakthroughs with this government, and many rural communities continue to move toward ghost town status. They face shortages of doctors, shopping facilities, cultural and recreational facilities. There are towns in Manitoba with closed schools, schools that have been paid for with taxpayer dollars. There are empty homes in those towns that represent the life savings of rural Manitobans. And those empty homes are being taxed, Mr. Speaker, even though there is no market for selling them. And it's not the fault of the rural Manitoban, it is the fault of technological change which has been un-

answered by this government.

Last year in the Budget Debate, Mr. Speaker, I furnished the government with figures

## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. ASPER cont'd) . . . . on the extent of that problem. Since then, Guidelines for the Seventies has been published and, in essence, the government's own studies confirm the urgency of the need for new rural industrialization programs.

It shouldn't have taken the government of Manitoba four years to develop a policy in this area, but even if there were a policy that would be better than what we have now - a mere slogan, the stay option. That involves no programs, no policies, no action, just a slogan.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that slogan will haunt this government unless it takes innovative and vigorous action. If we don't change the trend by stimulating the rural and the non farm economy we can expect the number of farms in Manitoba to decline until 1980 at the same rate as they have been declining until 1974, and that being the case, 10,000 farmers and their families will leave the farm in the next six years. The loss of those 10,000 farms, if it happens, will result in the loss of an additional 4,000 non farm jobs in rural Manitoba. And if these total 14,000 workers move, 14,000 families, into Winnipeg, the population of this city will increase by approximately 56,000 people from that account alone.

The operating costs of this city will increase as a result of that in-migration by more than \$53 million a year. And those new families, those 56,000, they will pay in city taxes only \$6 million a year. That in-migration from rural depopulation, the forced growth, will cost approximately a net of \$47 million per year in Winnipeg tax increases, and that \$47 million of extra tax will have to be borne by all of the taxpayers of the City of Winnipeg. Education costs alone, in Winnipeg, if this is not arrested, will rise by \$10 million per year of which the new arrivals from rural Manitoba will only be able to contribute \$6 million and, assuming they pay the average, that's assuming they pay the average City of Winnipeg taxes, so that the additional cost in education alone in the City of Winnipeg will be a net \$4 million per year.

We have seen one study which says that unless we stop this depopulation of rural Manitoba moving people to the City of Winnipeg, the annual operating cost for Winnipeg will rise by at least \$53 million per year and the City of Winnipeg will be required to levy taxes of somewhere between \$200.00 and \$400.00 extra per year on every Winnipeg family.

Now there's nothing in the Speech from the Throne that takes aim on rural depopulation and it is essential that we redevelop rural Manitoba if the 14,000 families are to have a genuine stay option. Apart from the social dislocation that their forced migration continues to create, they will leave behind them empty homes valued at an average of \$7,200 each. They'll leave behind them as they emigrate about \$100 million of housing that will remain empty, but new housing at a cost of over \$300 million will be required to house them in Winnipeg.

The Speech from the Throne should have dealt with this problem and since it is silent, Mr. Speaker, we will be proposing, the Liberal Caucus will propose programs aimed at providing a solution and some genuine hope for rural Manitobans.

The NDP Government in its first mandate failed to stimulate our growth in output, but it did not restrain itself on the spending side. It recognized and we recognize that if there is to be social progress government must spend money on programs aimed at improving the quality of life for our people but that spending must not reduce faster than the economy can produce. Thus government spending to stimulate the economy is also required. It now appears as we begin the second mandate of the NDP that there are still going to be vast spending programs but few programs if any aimed at moving our economic output to the point where it can produce the tax revenue required. Another fact, Mr. Speaker. In the past four years this government spending has grown at a rate 2-1/2 times faster than the average rate at which wages in this province increased. Fact: Our economic growth rate for the past four years, in constant dollars, has only been 3.28 percent while Canada's has been over 46 percent higher on average at 4.82 percent.

If this government had simply had an economic policy which had allowed our province to achieve the national average, that's all, just the national average in annual growth over the past four years, our total production in this province would have been \$800 million more, and because of this government's failure the loss in production terms to Manitoba is \$2,600 per family.

Mr. Speaker, in spite of all of the warning indicators. (Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance asks the source of the data, I'll be happy to provide it to him in detail and to the House, I'll table it). Mr. Speaker, in spite of all of these warning indicators, the government proposes programs, rather no programs to create job opportunity at a rate

## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. ASPER cont'd) . . . commensurate with the population requirement. Again a fact. In the past four years we suffered a net brain drain of 26,000 people, compared to a net brain drain of 16,000 people in the preceding four years. The escalation is obvious. The Canadian population has been growing during this administration's first term at 5.7 times faster than Manitoba. That should tell the government of Manitoba that somebody, somebody considers Manitoba less attractive than other places. This government should ask itself why, and if it answers itself honestly it will realize that through a lack of clear and progressive economic development strategy Manitoba is becoming to an increasing number of Canadians a province of decreasing opportunity.

The Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, bragged of the creation of those 900 new jobs in manufacturing last year. That, Sir, is mute evidence of the bankruptcy of the government's economic policy. This country has had the - the country, not Manitoba, Canada has had the highest rate of job formation in its history in the past four years, but Manitoba has fallen behind even here. Fact again. Between 1960 and 1968, and those are certainly not years that we brag about in economic terms, but in those eight years we averaged the creation of 4,880 new jobs each year. But during the NDP's first mandate from 1969 to 1972, we created only an average of 4,500 new jobs each year, and that's an 8.4 percent decline. Mr. Speaker, this decline is even greater when one recognizes that without many artificial, makework temporary programs and growth in the civil service, government jobs, those figures would have even been worse.

The need for an economic growth program and the damage being done to the average Manitoban through the government's lack of such a program can be seen from another fact. In 1969 when this government took office the average weekly wage for the Winnipeg worker was \$16.40 below the average Canadian weekly wage, but by 1973 these policies had widened the gap. The gap today is \$21.00 a week below the national average.

Mr. Speaker, this government should face realism, it should deal with the fact that it has through hostility and the lack of sound programming in its first administration created an economic malaise in this province. It is a fact in 1969 when this government took office of all of the capital spending on new plant in this country, 5.17 percent was being spent in Manitoba. Last year our percentage of national capital spending had dropped from 5.17 to 4.36. Mr. Speaker, if we had only maintained the attractiveness we had to capital in 69, if we had maintained that in the last four years and maintained the same rate percentage of capital spending, we would have had another \$586 million of capital spending in these past four years. And based on the fact that each \$25,000 of capital spending creates one permanent job we would have had 23,440 more jobs in this province; and that, Sir, would almost have wiped out the brain drain. This, Mr. Speaker, would have meant higher wages, higher taxes for government and greater ability for government to render service to the public.

Mr. Speaker, if we had dared hope that the government had learned its lesson, that even though it wouldn't admit it to us publicly, than in its private council it would recognize the severe damage that's been inflicted on the Manitoba economy, we would have expected that they would have come forward now at the beginning of a new term with aggressive and progressive industrialization and economic policies aimed at stimulating the private sector into creating more opportunities for Manitobans, but any such hope was dashed after hearing the Speech from the Throne. For what we are told is that the only economic initiatives to be taken by this government in the next year will be those aimed at further government intrusion into the private sector, further government adventures into business, all of which will act as further disincentive for private initiative in this province.

We are told in the speech, Mr. Speaker, that after making such a staggering success of the business venture in automobile insurance, to the extent that we, Manitoba taxpayers, must now make up an additional \$8 million to \$14 million loss, the government intends to repeat that success by going into the general insurance business. We say Why?

One can only conclude that the mania for state ownership still afflicts the NDP. Whatever happened to the Premier's 1969 pledge when he stated that the only times his government would go into the world of business would be in those cases where the public was not being well served by the private sector. Is the NDP now convinced that the private sector is not servicing the public in the fire insurance and general insurance business? What evidence will the government put before us to justify the latest intrusion? There are already a number of

## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. ASPER cont'd) . . . mutually owned, cooperatively owned and non-profit fire insurance companies operating in Manitoba. Does this government think it can do better or will we be staring at more multi-million dollar losses through government business adventures, which will be established to keep company with Flyer Industries, Saunders Aircraft and more recently Autopac. Or is there something else, Mr. Speaker? Is there some truth to the suggestion that the government's strategy four years ago, coming to fruition today, was to drive out private insurers with threats that they would be going into business, they would be forcing them to compete with government untaxed and government subsidized Crown corporations. And then having created that vacuum by forcing others out, now the government rushes in to fill it. Is this just another grab for another piece of the economy, for ideologically satisfying reasons? Is it just to create one more government outlet to create more high paying jobs for friends of the government. Is it another gadget for pre-election vote buying such as was the case with autopac where in the recent election, Mr. Speaker, there can be no doubt that prior to the ballots being cast, this government knew that it was facing a major loss in the insurance company, knew or should have known, and would be forced to raise the rates after the election but conveniently forgot to tell the people about it during the election. Mr. Speaker, we will be watching with great interest the material the government presents to this House to justify this latest business adventure.

And we will also be watching and listening closely as the government explains its desire to go into the banking business and establish a series of treasury banks around the province, for it is incumbent upon this government and any other government to establish the need for such an institution before the private sector is driven out, and before public funds are risked in further business operations.

Are we -- (Interjection) -- Aw, I expected that. I'm glad to hear that, Mr. Speaker, because I now can gather that my next point was well taken. We are obviously to be treated to an explanation by the First Minister as he has already hinted, as has been hooted across the House, that because during the great depression of the 1930's, the Government of Alberta established a provincial treasury banking system, that this kind of thing is relevant in the 1970's. Are we to believe that this government with its record of \$50 million or more loss in MDC, that other financial institution it's operating, that they'll do better in the banking business?

Mr. Speaker, we note with interest also the government's intention to further intensify its business activities in mineral exploration. We will participate in this debate very actively until this government satisfies us that it knows what it's doing and that we're not simply throwing more taxpayer dollars down the drain to keep company with the millions already lost in their other mineral adventures.

The government's entire posture versus resource industry development and exploration must receive careful scrutiny, considerable scrutiny at this Session in the light of the government's statement in the Speech from the Throne. Mining and milling from the private sector are supporting this economy, they are critically important parts of our economy and while we have said in the past, and say again, that the Liberal Party will support any government action which insures a program that will see a fair return to the people of Manitoba from their resources, we will be watchful to make certain that this government in its zeal for state ownership, state control, does not make Manitoba even more unattractive than it already has done for private sector development. This industry gives major employment opportunities in Manitoba at higher than average wages. The average wage of the industry in August of this year was \$197.90 per worker per week. That compares favorably to the Manitoba average of \$145.42. We do not wish to see any diminution, any lessening of activity in this sector as a response to government intervention.

Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding our concern over the government's intentions in those areas of economic activity and the general lack of new programming, new ideas, new directions, there are a number of policies referred to in the speech with which we can concur and which will receive our support because they are matters which our Party has urged upon this Assembly in the past.

It will be remembered at the last Session of the Legislature the Liberal Party introduced a resolution calling for denticare for children up to the age of 16. The Speech from the Throne doesn't promise denticare, Mr. Speaker, it promises "steps toward" this worthwhile project. Does this mean another study as a substitute for action?

## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. ASPER cont'd)

We see that the government is prepared as well, Mr. Speaker, to adopt and enact the proposal made by the Liberal Party last year during the Labor Debate relative to extending Workmen's Compensation to include general accident and sickness policies for Manitobans. This will certainly attract the support of the Liberal Caucus, provided that it is implemented in a fair manner and not in a way which merely establishes another universal compulsory program and which disguises taxation as a premium payment.

The Liberal Party has also advocated for three years now in this House, Mr. Speaker, and indeed made a major policy matter of it in the general election, our program to establish a home-ownership made easy plan whereby Manitobans acquiring their first homes, based on their ability to pay, would receive home-ownership assistance grants and monthly payment support of up to \$1,000.00. We were therefore pleased to see the government program in this regard in the Speech from the Throne, but we cannot take seriously, nor do we the suggestion that a ceiling of \$300 be placed on the home-ownership grant. Other provinces have granted a home-ownership grant system. NDP British Columbia, Progressive Conservative Ontario, without political difference have all implemented these kinds of programs, but the grants aren't up to \$300, Mr. Speaker, they are up to \$1,000 at least.

The Liberal Party, Mr. Speaker, filed another resolution before this House opened calling for the establishment of portable pension legislation as we promised last year. We are therefore pleased to see the government include this program in the Speech from the Throne; and subject to the specific ingredients of the legislation being along the lines already in force in the rest of industrialized Canada, we will support that plan.

And, Mr. Speaker, I previously called for legislation establishing rules of disclosure of the investments and holdings, and the avoidance of conflict of interest by members of government, members of this Assembly, civil servants and government staff who have access to classified information. Last week, before the House opened, the Liberal Party Caucus filed a resolution calling for political reform and including such a proposal. We were therefore pleased to see that the government has adopted that view as well and plans to introduce legislation to this effect during the Session.

As I say, Mr. Speaker, we awaited this particular speech, the first speech of a new government in the hope of receiving a clear policy statement of where the government wished to take the province, having regard to the special needs of this time. But it now becomes clear that the government has no idea where we have to go much less any plan for taking us there. If this government has no idea of what's needed in Manitoba, then let me suggest what the Throne Speech ought to have provided, for as I said before, it is the responsibility of opposition parties to present alternatives when the government fails to take action.

Mr. Speaker, we mention inflation as the number one priority; is the most serious and the most immediate problem facing the province. The figures I referred to earlier as to the cost of living increase for the past twelve months demonstrate it conclusively. It is also what the average Manitoban's talking about and looking to government to solve. We don't suggest for a second that a provincial government has all of the constitutional and the legislative authority to deal with the problem. In fact it's recognized that no single government, whether it is provincial or federal or municipal can alone provide the answer. But what can be done, and what must be done, is that each level of government must take those steps which are within its constitutional capacity to alleviate the problem. The Federal Government recognized that it should not be the beneficiary of inflation and increases in the cost of goods. Now it's therefore increased old age pensions and increased family allowance. The family allowance has been increased by almost 300 percent for the average family. Manitoba families with three children are now receiving \$60 a month from the Federal Government as of last month as opposed to approximately \$20 before, and while this allowance is taxable and I say rightly so virtually no one in this province will get less than they got before and a vast majority of our people will get more than they were getting before as partial compensation for the increases in the cost of living. What's more important, the family allowance has now been indexed so that it will go up automatically each year as the cost of living rises.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Manitoba must do its party. We can begin by stopping the profit the government makes from inflation. The most obvious place is in the sales tax, retail. If the cost of goods goes up by 10 percent, Mr. Speaker, the sales tax

## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. ASPER con't). . . revenue to the government goes up also. As well, the Government of Manitoba will receive windfall tax revenue this year because it will collect 42.5 percent of the tax collected on the new family allowance payments.

Mr. Speaker, to the average-sized family in this province, someone with a taxable income of \$10,000, he will be paying a 42.5 percent income tax to this province, he will now be paying \$11.00 a month in provincial income tax on his new family allowance payment. Mr. Speaker, that is profiteering from inflation. Mr. Speaker, the two increments alone that this government will achieve this year, the income tax increment through the taxation of family allowance payment and others, the capital gains payment and the sales tax rise that they will achieve, these alone give this government the capacity to alleviate the cost of living problems for most Manitobans. The sales tax, as we said during the election and as we said earlier in the House, must be removed from all the necessities of life, and serious consideration must be given to reducing the general sales tax rate. The government should find no difficulty with that proposal because it is a proposal they themselves offered before they were in office, and it's a proposal which the Manitoba Federation of Labour has approved and has urged upon them as well. Now, Mr. Speaker, if there are revenue difficulties or implications that can't be dealt with, that say we can't deal with sales tax this simply, we will propose at this Session that an all-party committee of this House be struck to recommend a complete restructuring of the sales tax so that it is made less regressive and less onerous on those who have the least discretionary income, the least buying power.

Mr. Speaker, that isn't the end of the tax relief that this Government should have talked about in this Speech from the Throne. Because, as I say, Manitoba government revenues from tax will rise significantly this year, partly because of the family allowance taxation, the new capital gains tax coming into maturity, and the cost of living bonuses that our work force is getting, also yielding new tax and that again is a tax on inflation, the government can alleviate part of the cost of living rise and it has the capacity this year to do it by a general income tax reduction.

We propose a tax cut equivalent to the government's profit on inflation, at the very least. Surely it's not too much to ask, Mr. Speaker, that a government that promotes the slogan and disguises itself with the slogan, that it is really interested in and concerned about the average Manitoban, to demonstrate this by not profiting by the fact that his average income may have gone up to meet the cost of living but is now being decreased or diminished by increased taxation. It is the cruelest kind of government which would profit by levying a tax on inflation, and we ask that this government introduce suitable income tax reductions so that the real buying power of the average Manitoban remains constant in 1974, at the rate at least that he enjoyed for 1973.

And Mr. Speaker, in the senior citizens area we see the most flagrant breach of faith by this government in this Speech from the Throne. During the last provincial election, the Liberal Party announced that if elected--and I want to stress this point because of the government's handling of it during the election--we said that if elected we would reorganize the provincial finances in such a manner as to implement a senior citizens income supplement similar to that which has been in B. C. for about two years now. And we indicated and we demonstrated how we would finance it, and we proposed a provincial income supplement for all people 65 years and up to give them a guaranteed monthly income of \$200.00 a month each and \$400.00 per month for each couple if they are both over 65. At first, Mr. Speaker, there was a strong denunciation of the capacity to do that by the government. They said it was pie in the sky, fiscal irresponsibility, a promise being made irresponsibly by a party which didn't expect to win and wouldn't have to implement the plan. But, Mr. Speaker, as public opinion developed during that election and the Premier saw there was widespread support for the program growing daily, he stopped the attack and publicly cried, Mr. Speaker, "Me too". And who can ever forget nor will we permit the premier to forget those newspaper headlines that screamed in red ink "Schreyer vows \$200.00 pension".

We don't fault the First Minister for adopting our program, Mr. Speaker, even though he had previously denounced it. That's what the democratic process is all about. It would be a poor government which did not adopt a worthwhile opposition program when it had public support. What is not forgivable, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that that "vow" has not been fulfilled. It has been breached. There is nothing in the Speech from the Throne to indicate that



## THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. ASPER con't). . . the promise will be kept. Mr. Speaker, we condemn the government for this. It brings no credit to the profession of politics - It does not enhance public respect for the democratic process and our parliamentary institution when a government can be elected on a promise which it then conveniently ignores.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we will not permit the government to ignore and forget that promise and we have therefore introduced a resolution into this Chamber which will be debated later in the Session, calling for the guaranteed \$200.00 per month senior citizen income level. But we again invite the government to make our resolution unnecessary by fulfilling its promise, and fulfilling it retroactively, and we assure you that we cannot rest and will not rest until that's done. The people of Manitoba who are 65 and over have been deprived of that commitment being fulfilled for seven months. That's long enough, Mr. Speaker.

The Federal Government increased old age pensions and supplements and the Provincial Government must act as well, but that's not to suggest that our proposal for a monthly income supplement for low income senior citizens can be masqueraded as a total program of justice for senior citizens, but it is among the most urgent, Mr. Speaker. We would have hoped that the government would have found it in its heart to implement our proposal that income tax be eliminated entirely for senior citizens on low incomes in this Speech from the Throne, as well as developing the extension of Medicare to cover their eye glasses, their wheelchairs and other medical apparatus, and we will continue to press for those improvements as the debate for the estimates of the Department of Health and Social Development are brought to the House.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of urban policy, we welcome the government's statement to the effect that it's going to assume, it's going to assist the City of Winnipeg in its public transit system. Nevertheless the assertion is so vague that we are unable to comment on it. If this is just another way of making government grants to force the City of Winnipeg to buy buses from the state-owned bus manufacturing company, as has been the case in the past, that will not pass for an urban development policy. We regret that the Premier has found it necessary to take unto himself yet another key portfolio, that of Urban Affairs Minister, for it means that the portfolio will again be neglected at a time when the City of Winnipeg and the 600,000 inhabitants of our capital city cannot afford that neglect. It's an insult to the back bench of the government for the Premier to be saying, as he apparently says, that he has no one capable of handling this important portfolio. And so, on top of his being MLA for Rossmere, Minister for Dominion-Provincial Relations, Minister responsible for Hydro, Leader of the New Democratic Party, Chairman of the Executive Council of Manitoba, Premier of Manitoba, he also must take on the Urban Affairs Minister. Mr. Speaker, what next? What next? We can only assume, we can only assume that taking on that responsibility means that he will not be able to devote the time necessary to a very crucial portfolio.

Mr. Speaker, the City of Winnipeg will be going to the polls in eight months to elect a new Mayor and Council. The Premier has promised on a number of occasions to bring in legislation to amend the City of Winnipeg Act, to insure that the Mayor is elected by the city at large. My honourable friend suggests the reason it's not in is because maybe he wants to be Mayor as well. There is no hint of any amendment in the Speech from the Throne. The Liberal Party will continue to urge that it be done at this Session. That is not enough - The City of Winnipeg is being subsidized by the Provincial Government for the last time this year under the plan, the formula that was set up to compensate for the tax adjustments that were caused by the city's merged plan. A new fiscal structure, Mr. Speaker, for the City of Winnipeg is needed now, and the government seems to be barren of ideas in this area as well. We will be proposing new tax-sharing agreements between the City and the Province so that future city governments can budget with some certainty knowing that they will have the financial resources with which to carry on their constitutional responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, I gave some very unhappy financial statistics earlier in my address. The Speech from the Throne can only be interpreted to mean that the government is satisfied with its economic performance. It is satisfied that there are 18,000 or 19,000 unemployed. It's satisfied with the brain drain figure, that's estimated incidentally, since the figures I gave, to be running at somewhere around 1,000 people a month. We would urge upon this government a program to stimulate new investment in the private sector, particularly in rural and northern communities. One of the most effective methods by which it can be done, even a method accepted by the NDP's new found economic strategist, Mr. Eric Kierans, is through corporate tax

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. ASPER con't). . . cuts for those industries that will locate in rural and northern communities. Mr. Speaker, we do not lose any revenue when we attract new industry from outside this province to locate in rural and northern communities and give them reduced taxation; rather, we gain revenue from corporate taxes that are otherwise going to be payable elsewhere that will now be paid to Manitoba and from the income taxes from the payroll of that new industry.

. . . . continued on next page

## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. ASPER Cont'd)

Now, Mr. Speaker, I hear the Finance Minister say "Ah, play beggar thy neighbour," I believe it was said. Mr. Speaker, he thinks he's working and living in an NDP Utopia of some sort. Mr. Speaker, he is not aware that this is a cold, competitive world and that there is competition in this country, in this world, amongst all the provinces, for capital spending through the tax system, and he puts the blinkers on, Mr. Speaker, and says, "We shall be pure; we shall not compete on that level." Well, Mr. Speaker, as the fires get colder, as the brain drain intensifies, as the amount of capital spending - our share of it - continues to decline, I hope the Finance Minister will be happy knowing that he has not sacrificed his purity and that he has not introduced tax incentives for industrial stimulation.

Mr. Speaker, there is no better proven way to stimulate an economy than through fiscal measures, and every Manitoban would benefit if the Liberal Party's economic development program were to be accepted by this government.

In the meantime, we are facing a problem on another front, a more critical problem, a more momentary problem. The backbone of the Manitoba economy - even Guidelines for the Seventies now says it - must be still considered the family-owned small business. Yet, Mr. Speaker, these small businesses are being swallowed up at an alarming rate by national and multi-national companies. It has been objectively demonstrated that one of the most frequently used and persuasive reasons for the sale of those businesses is the fear of death tax and the capital gains tax that arises when property is transferred within the family, either during the lifetime of the founder or the death of the owner.

Mr. Speaker, I thought I heard the First Minister say in the House last year that this made some sense to him - our proposal at that time on this. We suggest the Speech from the Throne could well have dealt with it as an incentive to retaining family ownership of these small businesses, that the government enact a capital gains tax and death tax deferral plan on the provincial portion for small businesses when they are transferred from one member to another in the same family unit, just as the Federal Government introduced last year in respect of exempting family farms from those taxes. We say that the stay option, Mr. Speaker, should be extended to the owners of small businesses as well as to rural farmers, and this is one effective means whereby it can be accomplished.

Mr. Speaker, I hear the Finance Minister asking me how big is small. I will be happy when I conclude my speech to answer any of his questions.

Mr. Speaker, in energy: we expected the Speech from the Throne to say something about this vitally important subject. The past year should have taught and has taught all other industrialized nations a very severe lesson that our energy supplies are finite, that demand and consumption is far out-pacing the development of new energy sources, and that unless a new approach is taken we will threaten, over a period of time, the very existence of the industrialized western world as we know it. Mr. Speaker, Japan, Holland, Great Britain, and many other countries in this world are in the throes of economic and social distress because of the energy crisis. We in Manitoba are blessed, as indeed are all Canadians, by the fact that it is still not too late for us to harness our resources, impose the disciplines upon ourselves that may be necessary, and to harvest from that abundance a supply which will enrich our own lives, but leaving future generations well protected.

It is in this mood of the times, Mr. Speaker, that we expected the Speech from the Throne to come to grips with long-term energy policy for Manitoba, and it is astonishing to us that the speech only deals and makes reference to further development on the Nelson River Power Development, to which we have already been committed, but not the matter of how we are to use that energy. Indeed, we in this Chamber, who have the ultimate responsibility, had to learn, not from the government but through other sources, that while this very serious problem confronts the world, and we are painfully aware of what the energy shortage can produce and what crisis it can cause, the government of Manitoba has been secretly negotiating for the sale of a 15-year supply of Manitoba Hydro power to the United States, involving 1000 megawatts of power, the total output of the Kettle Rapids generating station.

Mr. Speaker, we insist--and there is no assurance, no evidence whatever, that had the Opposition not drawn this to public attention that we would have known about it until it was a fait accompli--so we insist, Mr. Speaker, upon a debate and full particulars of this plan being made public well in advance of it being completed.

## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. ASPER Cont'd)

But more important, Mr. Speaker, we urge the establishment of a long-term energy policy for Manitoba now. This should begin by the appointment of an independent Manitoba Energy Board to deal with all the matters regarding energy supply and use. That energy board should be charged with the development of a long-term provincial energy policy which is then harmonized and rationalized with national energy policy and should be made applicable to all forms of energy: coal, natural gas, oil, hydro, nuclear, whether it's imported or exported and whether it is produced in Manitoba or produced from and exported from Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, later in this Session because of the silence of the speech on this subject, we will introduce a detailed resolution calling for the establishment of such a board, to give it sufficient responsibility and power to protect this and future generations from the misuse, waste and improper development of our energy alternatives.

Mr. Speaker, in Consumer Protection, the Speech from the Throne provides no hope for the next year to the Manitoba consumer that any further progress will be made in ensuring him protection and safety in the free marketplace, through more advanced consumer protection legislation. We would urge this government to continue the steps that were begun in this area a few years ago, by at least enacting at this session a standard home buyer's warranty, along with legislation requiring manufacturers and warehouses of goods which are sold in this province, to warehouse replacement parts of those products in this province in order to relieve Manitoba consumers from the abuse practised by out of province manufacturers who do not stockpile replacement parts within the province and are contributing to rendering these consumer goods obsolete through lack of replacement parts.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of women's rights. During the recent election the Liberal Party called for the enforcement in Manitoba of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. We would have expected an enlightened, reform-oriented government at its first session to take the steps necessary to mount an attack on the barriers which restrain women's advancement within our society, for that is one of the few great remaining social frontiers.

We now again, Mr. Speaker, call on this government to act in that area by developing a social-economic program which enables women to become more economically independent through such steps as expanding the integration of women into the Manitoba labour force, especially in the public service, by: an expanded counselling program through the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labour, which would concentrate on problems of women entering or re-entering the Manitoba labor force; an emphasis on more restraining and upgrading opportunities, academic and technical, and also methods to allow women to gain greater admissibility to work apprenticeship programs. Last year, Mr. Speaker, when we urged the NDP government to enforce its own equal pay for equal work for women legislation, in government and elsewhere, it asserted that it was being enforced despite our claims to the contrary. Now, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party's charge has been backed up by the government's own Task Force, and we ask the government to act immediately to remedy that situation.

We ask that the government begin by establishing guidelines in its own civil service for women's advancement, to act as a model and to set an example for other employers.

As well, Mr. Speaker, the enforcement of equal opportunities for women in employment must be achieved through a strengthened Human Rights Commission, and the concept of equal pay must be extended to include fringe benefits such as pensions and group insurance. This government must use the full faith and prestige of its office to encourage employers and unions to give women more opportunity for entry and upward mobility within the work force.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba has an opportunity to lead the way for the rest of Canada by introducing a provincial income tax rebate plan which would exempt from provincial taxation all child care expenses for sole support parents - an act of generosity and fairness but, as well, an act which would create a greater incentive for sole support parents to leave the welfare rolls where that applies and to re-enter the work force. In aid of that program, Mr. Speaker, we call on the government to honor its own commitment to expand the presently inadequate day care programs and establish day care standards of quality child care, with full participation by parents, users and providers of the service in establishing that policy. The time has come for the establishment of an institute of child care at one of our universities in order

## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. ASPER Cont'd) . . . . to develop new programs, new policies, new ideas, new studies in this area of great importance and growing endeavour.

This, Mr. Speaker, and much more, could have been done without significant cost at this session, and this would have been done by a government that had not lost the zeal for progress and the drive for reform, and improvement in our way of life.

Mr. Speaker, when the NDP was first elected, on another subject those of us who are concerned with our environment felt some satisfaction and hope. We got that hope from the fact that before coming into office this government had made appropriate commitments to environmental protection law, and indeed, Mr. Speaker, some of that law was in fact enacted in the early years of the first administration of the NDP. But, as I say, that zeal is gone, and the defects in that legislation are now clear and the government appears unwilling to take any further action to protect or to cure those defects that have become clear to all of us who are concerned with the area. We want environmental protection law with teeth, that allows the average citizen to protest against any tax on the environment by the government itself.

We think perhaps the government zeal has waned, and its willingness to enact this kind of legislation, because it now realizes that environmental protection to the individual citizen means that the individual citizen will be able to stop or challenge government itself, and we saw last year to what lengths this government was prepared to go to prevent the individual citizen from having access to an attack on government policy.

Mr. Speaker, the recent debate last year over the environmental impact of the Churchill River Diversion and several other government programs demonstrates that the average citizen in this province does not have protective legislation which enables him to fight the massive resources of government when his environment is adversely affected. We proposed an environmental Bill of Rights, as many enlightened jurisdictions around the world are now enacting. This would be legislation that would require government to present to the public environmental impact studies of all government programs before they are commenced, giving the average citizen the right to begin class actions in our courts to prevent government destruction of the environment in which he lives. The right to a sane, a pleasurable environment is not a licence from any government, it is a birthright of every Manitoban, and we must take steps to protect that birthright.

Later in the session, Mr. Speaker, we will introduce a resolution calling for the adoption of an environmental Bill of Rights and we hope this government will support it by recalling its earlier commitment in this policy area by supporting our environmental Bill of Rights.

Mr. Speaker, earlier in the day you heard questioning as to the state of health care in this province. We would have expected the Speech from the Throne to say something in this regard. Despite the protestations of the Minister of Health and Social Development, there does exist in this city a serious shortage of acute care hospital beds. Should any member doubt that, Mr. Speaker, let him consult his own physician. Let him consult the administrators of the Winnipeg hospitals. This shortage is caused, at least to some extent, by the fact that many hospital beds are being occupied by extended care patients because of the lack of extended care facilities in this province. We have people occupying acute care beds at \$40.00 a day when they could be occupying extended care beds at \$20.00 a day.

Mr. Speaker, we heard a shameful demonstration in this House just today on this issue, because on Friday the Minister tried to indicate, or left the impression when asked by the Member from Assiniboia, that there was no crisis, no problem, and then today he concedes there may be a bit of a problem. Mr. Speaker, for the first time today we learned of one of the steps that this government was, we believed and Manitoba believed, and the people of Winnipeg believed, was committed to take in order to alleviate this problem, was to take the, what? - 200 beds available, roughly 200 beds, in the old Grace Hospital and use them for extended care geriatrics freeing up the acute care beds of Winnipeg. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, during the Wolseley by-election of 1971 the government posture changed. It said that it was going to make it into a detoxification centre, the Grace Hospital. Then it said it will reconsider, and studies were presented that indicated that it could be best used in that way. Mr. Speaker, I see the former Minister of Health is not in the House, but I will put to him Hansard, where he told this House, when asked by me, when it would be completed, he told this House "some time around the spring of 1973". We'll go through Hansard; we'll find those

## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. ASPER Cont'd) . . . . statements; we'll also find that the candidate for the NDP in that election, in the general election, was not ashamed to say that the NDP had made Grace Hospital--was in the process of making Grace Hospital into something that was acceptable - the senior citizens extended care facility. And the NDP even published the magazine, or newspaper, and had it delivered to the homes of all the people of that district saying how they listened to the people and how they were going to develop the Grace Hospital in the light of the protest. They were going to develop it as a senior citizens extended care geriatric centre. And if that is an evasion, if that is an evasion, Mr. Speaker, if that isn't broken promise and misrepresentation, I don't know what is.

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government program for financing extended health care facilities or no--the government of Manitoba should have announced at this Session in the Speech from the Throne an aggressive program of capital works to build those facilities. The acute care shortage that's developed is the responsibility of the NDP government, because since it came to office it has developed few new acute care beds in Winnipeg. It's a situation that the government can and should still rectify at this session.

Mr. Speaker, in the Speech from the Throne we had been hopeful that another area of endeavour would be covered - Electoral and Political Reform. The recent election demonstrated the inadequacy of the Election Act that the NDP brought in. Thousands of voters were disenfranchised, election results may have been changed as a result of spoiled ballots, prolonged court action, and we are still faced with the situation in this province where either through lack of legislation, but for all practical purposes through operation of law, many qualified Manitobans otherwise able and willing to stand for public office, find themselves unable to offer themselves for public office, and we need a change in our labor legislation to cure that area of endeavour, Mr. Speaker. Electoral reform is not in the speech. We will bring it in as a resolution for debate in the Private Members section. We ask the government to consider our position.

As well, we believe that it is essential that we now take a look at the whole concept of reforming the political system. The system we are working under may have been adequate 30 or 40 years ago, but Mr. Speaker, it's time for updating and modernizing our institutions to make this work more effectively and the members of this House able to do their duty to the people.

Mr. Speaker, one last program. The government side has a distinct and a unique position. All five northern seats are represented on the government side of the House. Those members, Mr. Speaker, must feel that they have a very special responsibility to ensure that their government earns the confidence of the north as shown by developing and implementing new programs now for the north. The Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, offers little inspiration in this area. Nowhere is there reference to improved medical facilities for the north, flying medical clinics to remote regions, the abolition of long distance telephone calls from north to south.

We look to all those northern members who sit on the government side to remind their party colleagues of the pressing needs of the north. It's no secret for one thing, Mr. Speaker, that the Federal Government has offered to develop a new national park in northern Manitoba. We call upon the government to take advantage of that offer, and in consultation with the communities of Northern Manitoba, establish the location of the new park and begin construction on it this winter as a part of a winter works program. It's indeed a project which, if allowed to start now, will spill over into the spring when many of our post secondary students and high school students will be looking for work.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there is much to be done in Manitoba and I don't pretend that the alternate program I have outlined would see all of our economic and social problems solved overnight. But I do suggest that it would be a far more ambitious, a far more effective start than this government, obviously tired from the election, is prepared to make. I repeat that those policies in the Speech from the Throne which I have outlined as having been previously introduced by our party, will enjoy our support, but in spite of those few progressive measures that the Throne Speech makes reference to. We all regret that after nearly five years of government and a sabbatical of seven months following the election, the NDP is still floundering and failing to come to grips with the key issues of the day. With one-eighth of its second term already gone, and only this shamefully barren program to put before the people of Manitoba, it

## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. ASPER Cont'd) . . . . is now clear, Mr. Speaker, that this government is out of touch with the problems of Manitoba.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Portage la Prairie--Mr. Speaker, moved by myself, seconded by the Honourable Member from Portage la Prairie, that the motion be further amended by adding to it the following words:

And this House further regrets that Your Honour's Government has failed to propose measures adequate to meet the real needs of the people of Manitoba and by its failure after almost five years in office to:

- (a) propose action to soften the impact of skyrocketing living costs through tax reductions;
- (b) create the economic incentives wherein the private sector is encouraged to expand and improve the economy of Manitoba and thereby provide opportunities for young Manitobans;
- (c) honour its commitment to the people of Winnipeg and introduce an urban development policy which will give the city the fiscal capacity and legislative powers to effectively manage its continued growth;
- (d) aggressively pursue a program of regional economic development;
- (e) keep its election promise to the pensioners of Manitoba by introducing an income supplement plan which would guarantee them a minimum monthly income of \$200 each.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, may I ask some questions of the member at this stage . . . ?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister may ask now while I peruse the document.

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you. The honourable member indicated he would answer questions at the end. I have two. One was where I asked him if he would please define for us a small business in relation to capital gains tax and death tax deferral. I have another question which I should ask now - it's unrelated. It is also a question as to, short of cancelling the joint Dominion and Provincial Tax Collection Agreement, short of that, on what basis does he indicate the province can introduce a provincial income tax rebate plan which would exempt from taxation child care expense, since it in itself is not a tax?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, referring first to the question of the definition of what constitutes a small business. Mr. Speaker, I don't think it matters for today what definition I assign to that; I will say that that's the kind of thing that would be the appropriate subject of debate. Obviously each member, each person would have their own view. However for several purposes in law today that term "small business" is defined. The Federal Income Tax Act for example implies that a small business is a business which earns less than \$50,000 a year, in another way they indicate that a small business is one which has in aggregate net worth so to speak surplus of \$400,000. And incidentally at that point, Mr. Speaker, those businesses which were previously called "small businesses" lose all their federal tax incentives once they achieve that level of earnings or level of retained surplus. The small business is defined in other areas in different ways, in the industrial development laws and regulations. I don't think it really matters which definition I assign, but if the Minister of Finance would like my own personal definition of it I'd be happy to frame it for him and present it to him. But the issue is the principle, the issue is the principle that not which constitutes a small business but what we will . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I believe the gentleman has answered the question, now he's starting to debate the issue again. --(Interjection)-- The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party state his point of order.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, there's two points of order. The first is that I've only answered the first question, there's a second one.

MR. SPEAKER: If he cares to answer the second question I'll entertain that.

MR. ASPER: The second point of order, Mr. Speaker, is that the question was not one that admitted of a yes or no answer and as I observed yourself ordering frequently ministers or people who are asked questions in the House are given the widest latitude in answering them. I'll try to constrain myself to that definition in my second answer.

The second question, Mr. Speaker, was how would we, short of cancelling the federal-provincial tax sharing agreement, institute a tax rebate plan for day care centres? Mr. Speaker,

## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. ASPER Cont'd) . . . . that is about the simplest question I've ever had and it disturbs me that the Minister of Finance can seriously ask it, because we've had tax rebate systems throughout Canada before. We know how to do it. --(Interjection)-- Mr. Speaker, I think the Finance Minister may have heard me wrong. What I suggested, what I suggested in the speech was that - well I'll give you the exact wording - but what I suggested in the speech, Mr. Speaker, was that Manitoba could lead the way for the rest of Canada by introducing a provincial income tax rebate plan which would exempt from provincial taxation all child care expenses for sole support . . . --(Interjection)-- Mr. Speaker, it's plain, whether the Minister understands the wording of what I said, what I am suggesting is this: The person, the taxpayer, would simply come to the rebate office and say that I wish a deduction that is not otherwise available to me for my total child care expenses because under the present law they're limited. Then he would say to the Province of Manitoba, Look because I was not permitted a full deduction under the cost tax sharing agreement I have therefore paid this much tax to the Province of Manitoba, I ask for a rebate of that tax. And, Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Finance doesn't know how it works all I can do is recommend that he look at the Saskatchewan death tax rebate plan, the Alberta death tax rebate plan and simply introduce a similar plan, provincial tax rebate plan for Manitoba the same way.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Public Works.

HON. RUSSELL J. DOERN (Minister of Public Works)(Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, I would like to wish you well in the year ahead, I know you will have a difficult task in controlling the House and maintaining decorum but I know that you will meet the challenge and keep everyone in reasonable good order and spirits.

I would like to deal basically with two points. One is the importance of the City of Winnipeg in relation to the Province of Manitoba, and later on I would like to address myself to this Legislature and to some of its members somewhat in the style of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it's important that when we focus our attention on the problems of Manitoba that we attempt to treat the province as a whole rather than to focus too much attention on any one region or to focus too much attention on any particular weakness in the province. I think that what we have to do is concern ourselves with the weaknesses and try to rectify them but we must almost reinforce strength. Manitoba's population has been expanding over the years at a slow rate but nevertheless it has been somewhat steady. In comparison our sister province of Saskatchewan has suffered a net loss over the past 20 years, and it is my thesis, Mr. Speaker, that it is the existence of the City of Winnipeg which has maintained Manitoba's population in comparison with our sister province where there has in fact been a net loss due to the fact that their major cities are unable to compete with other portions of the nation.

Winnipeg has been in very stiff competition in the post war period. When we look at the booming growth of other cities in the west like Calgary and Edmonton and Vancouver or return to the giant metropolises of Toronto and Montreal we can see that we're in a very tough league indeed. We certainly have advantages, however, that I think have to be made very clear to everyone in the nation, and those I think in particular are our cultural and recreational resources. I think when we compare ourselves with what is available in the other western capitals we either come out ahead or are second to none. In terms of our relative strength to the eastern cities we have a lower cost of living, our houses are cheaper, I think it's a safer and more pleasant place to live and I think there is less pressure in the City of Winnipeg.

That, Mr. Speaker, is my thesis but I think there are myths and there are statements that are made in other parts of the country or impressions created not new to our government, impressions that have been going on for at least the last twenty years if not longer. For example, I was thumbing through McLeans magazine recently and came across a review of a book by Heather Robertson called "Grass Roots". Life and Dust in a Prairie Town is the sub-heading and the editors in introducing the article say that Miss Robertson is a contributing editor and then in brackets they say "Who grew up in Winnipeg and stayed", as if that was unusual. And it is unusual in one sense, namely that there is this chronic problem of the fact that we have in fact lost many of our talented people over the years.



## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. DOERN Cont'd)

There was a recent survey taken by the Financial Times, a survey of business opinion in which various executives were asked which cities they felt they would most like to live in, and not surprisingly I suppose the cities with the greatest attraction were Toronto and Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton. Montreal fared very poorly in that particular survey and Winnipeg and Regina were in fact not mentioned. I know that some of my friends in the opposition will say, well you know it's because of the government and it's because of the fact it's a NDP government, but I have to point out to them immediately that Vancouver which was in a strong second place is of course a city in a New Democratic province. So it's that kind of comment I think and that kind of impression which we have to counter.

A final example is a publication put out by Canada Cement this summer where they dealt with a special issue of their publication called, "The City". And there they took the major cities of Canada, a page on Ottawa, Canada's capital city; Canada's three major cities, Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver and then Quebec City and Calgary, two contrasts in urban architecture and Toronto was described as Canada's most spectacular development and Montreal was well received, etc. Winnipeg in that publication was grouped in a category called four distinctive Canadian urban communities, and these were as follows: Halifax, Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Victoria. Mr. Speaker, I regard that kind of estimation of our city as something that should be met head on and something that we have to bear in mind as legislators and Manitobans in relation to the importance of our city and the need to develop it and the need to explain it and promote it from coast to coast. It's quite clear that urbanization is a worldwide trend; it's not unique to our province, it's not unique to Canada or the United States, it's worldwide. I suggest that we must strive for growth in the province as a whole but we can only maintain a continuous rate of growth provincially if, and only if, Winnipeg continues to grow. That growth will come about in three ways. One of course will be by rural migration from Manitoba, from Saskatchewan and from other parts of Canada. There would be urban migration from other cities. And third, immigration, namely new Canadians who must be attracted to our city. Our growth over the past few decades has been slow but steady. If we look at the city around us those of us who study its changing face and its skyline, it's quite evident to anyone that there was a lack of major developments in the 1950s and the 1960s. I think there was a more spectacular growth in the late 1960s and in the early 1970s, and I think that a lot of that credit must go to this government. I wouldn't take everything away from the members of the opposition because there were a number of projects that were developed in their last years in office, but I think that it is really from about the mid 1960s on where we really started to catch up. I can point, Mr. Speaker, to examples of the Convention Centre and the buildings that were triggered by that, the whole Lakeview Development and other projects adjacent to that centre, to our new office building, to our developments in public housing and so on.

Mr. Speaker, I think that there is a fair amount of confidence on the part of people in the construction industry in terms of the policies and actions of this government. Mr. Keller who is the President of the Winnipeg Builders Exchange recently gave his estimation of Manitoba's construction picture in 1974 and the sub-heading from the Journal of Commerce, January 7th of this year is "Health and Stability Evident". And he said that because of the industry's general health, Keller is forecasting an 8 to 10 percent increase in Manitoba's construction dollar volume during the coming year. Of this about 4 or 5 percent will represent true growth while the rest will be a reflection of the current inflated cost of building materials, etc. He pointed out again that in terms of national trends that our growth is moderate but that nevertheless it is steady and that it is useful for people in the construction industry.

Mr. Speaker, some people are concerned when one talks about the likelihood of the City of Winnipeg increasing further. It's now at some 535,000 in population and I think that it's not going to be too long in the future when the city will reach 600 and then 700,000 in population. Some people are alarmed at the prospect of Winnipeg becoming another New York or Detroit or Chicago but I think we'd have to allay their fears and say that it's unlikely indeed. We obviously draw from the surrounding environment our population, there is natural population growth in the city. We draw from the adjacent province, from our own province; I think that the growth of the city is obviously limited to the growth of the province as a whole. We have a million people in the province, I think it's unlikely we're going to wind up in ten or twenty years

## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. DOERN Cont'd) . . . . with two or three million people living in Winnipeg. I mean where are they all going to come from. We will obviously be limited by our base and our base is as I say our province and our attractiveness relative to the other cities in the country and our attractiveness to people who come from abroad.

I think that one of the most encouraging developments perhaps in the past decade in relation to the future of our province is in our strength vis-a-vis energy policy and potential with the prospects of further significant hydro developments with the possibility of exporting power, with the possibility of attracting new industry to Manitoba because of cheap and plentiful electrical power resources, I think that Manitoba's future is bright indeed. There is in a sense no limit to the amount of energy that we can develop and continue to use. It is a non-depleting resource, and whereas Saskatchewan may be in trouble in eight or ten years and Alberta will eventually face the bleak prospect of running out of oil reserves, Manitoba can continue to sell electrical power. --(Interjection)-- I have a word for you very shortly.

A MEMBER: I've got my key, Russ.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, one of the important developments that have come about in this Legislature in regard to urban policy is the fact that there was a redistribution, perhaps reluctantly entered into by the members opposite - I think it was one of the factors for their downfall and I'm sure that there was a lot of very long faces indeed when the map was redrawn and the writing was on the wall. I think that the Legislature of this province has, for many years overdue, been rurally oriented, at least until 1969. I think the amount of time allocated to urban issues was inadequate and I think that is something that we will look forward to in this new session with some new members, is whether or not they can focus more attention, more suggestions, more criticisms, more ideas, on the problems of our capital city. Mr. Speaker, this is Winnipeg's centennial year and I think this is an opportunity to focus on the --(Interjection)-- I'm wearing my pin. How come you're not wearing your pin?

MR. J. R. (BUD) BOYCE (Winnipeg Centre): I didn't get one.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I think that given the fact that it's the centennial and that people in Winnipeg are going to sort of go through a period of looking back at what has happened in the past century and looking ahead to their second century, I think this is a time for people who want the province and the city to grow to get together and to work to building a better and a stronger city. So I said I think it's important that we develop northern Manitoba, that we strengthen the rural areas, that we attempt to assist the cities and towns and villages, but we must not, in spite of that, forget our capital city and its vital role in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we're now into the first session, really into the first hours of the 30th Legislature. I think some of us are wondering just what we can expect of this new session. There are some new faces and there is the possibility of some exciting times ahead. After the Throne Speech was read just the other day we were all set for a new beginning. Everybody was here; we were all dressed in our Sunday best. The judiciary was present; the galleries were full; the press was eager. Every one of them were eagerly awaiting what would happen; the Throne Speech was read, and all of a sudden the Member for Morris got up - and then there was an immediate deterioration, an immediate deterioration. Once he entered the debate, once he began to participate in the comings and goings of the session, Mr. Speaker, things started to slip.

You know, he reminded me a great deal, reminded me a great deal when he got up and there they were, everybody was seated here; nobody wanted to debate him because of the circumstances of the occasion, and he sat there or stood there rather like a preacher who on that one Sunday - I don't know if it's Christmas or that one particular time when the church is packed - he's going to have his day and he's going to give his sermon and they're going to listen to it no matter what. And that is exactly the method and the manner in which the Member for Morris operates. He talks about his great knowledge. We've heard of his experience, how he actually went to Ottawa, the great capital city, and came back - a little the worse for the wear - came back to enliven the debate and to honour us with his presence in the House, how he knows the rules and he knows the traditions and he respects the rules, respects the traditions. For what purpose, Mr. Speaker? To violate them. A man who knows all the ins and outs simply to abuse them, and I think that is the technique that he tends to use.

His problem is very simple and that is that he recalls the good old days of 1958 because

## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. DOERN Cont'd) . . . . that was the time when the member's mind, when the member's mind was fixed. That was an existential moment. Those were the heady days, the heady days of the Diefenbaker landslide. In '57 they got their foot in the door and '58 they chopped down the opposition, including members of our Party, and I bear the scars of that period. And the member, of course, he has the mental outlook, the good old days sixteen years ago: boy we really made it; we really made it big! But you know, Mr. Speaker, that was a long time ago. Sixteen years is indeed a long time ago and the Member for Morris was at that time, you know, the man who could say to anybody: shake the hand that shook the hand that shook the hand of the Prime Minister. That was his relative--he could shake Mr. Hamilton's hand and Mr. Hamilton could shake the Prime Minister's hand and by shaking his hand you had that connection.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that was a long time ago and, you know, I must say that I regret that the Member for Morris has fallen on hard times. He really is kind of like a potted plant that was once placed in a place of honour in a livingroom in a home near the other giant plants and is now down in the basement out of the way, in the dark, and whenever somebody flicks on the light occasionally he thinks it's the sun and he gets all excited. He thinks it's 1958 all over again and his spirits are heartened and then out goes the light and it's 1974 all over again.

The Leader of the Liberal Party once made an accurate statement. He was describing a former --(Interjection)-- One or more? He was describing the former Member for Thompson and he said that when the press gallery is hard up, when they just don't have anything to write up, when they have to go back to the offices and say nothing happened today, they used to run to the former Member for Thompson and ask him a question, and as the Leader of the Liberal Party said, they would say to the Member for Thompson: "Joe, what do you think about popcorn?" And then he would give an answer and they would have a story, and it would be all over the place, and that really reminds me of my friend the Member for Morris. No matter what you ask him, no matter how trivial, no matter how insignificant, he will give you a blustering statement full of sound and fury, nostrils flaring, signifying nothing --(Interjection)-- Yes, sound and fury signifying nothing. But always done in the same manner, always done in the same manner. No matter what it is, there is that strong statement, that indignation, that righteous indignation thundering forth on the television tube about pencils or washrooms or whatever that great statement is that he has to make today; they're all treated in the same manner.

Mr. Speaker, strong government requires a strong opposition and that is something that we would welcome in this House. We would welcome a stronger opposition to make the government stronger still. We have to look basically to the new members; we have to look to those handsome, smiling, well-dressed young men across the Chamber. In our own case, in our own case, Mr. Speaker, I think we have elected a new contingent of good solid members. We have also re-elected the government, and I think that the people of Manitoba are to be congratulated in that regard.

Mr. Speaker, I must say that it is with some regret that I lament the loss of a number of members of this House. There are some that I can't say I do regret but there are a number who were defeated that I think are a loss to this House and I would have to single out the two ministers of the Crown who were defeated and the Member for Fort Rouge, just as illustrations. We lost two ministers but the Conservatives, they lost two ministers too. I recall very well how on a particular day the Leader of the Official Opposition introduced the Member for Fort Rouge and the Member for Fort Garry as two of the ministers in the next government and in the next cabinet and so on. Well, they lost two of them. I mean one went right out and the other one, of course, made it but didn't make it into the Cabinet.

The Conservatives have said that they won the election. I mean there are actually people over there, Mr. Speaker, I know you don't believe me but it is a fact that there are people over there who have said they have won the election. There was only one of them, though, one of those members - and I must find out who that was at that time - made a pretty good comment. He was speaking to Frances Russell of the Free Press in a particular column of September 4th of last year, he made a very shrewd observation. He said, "While we lost the election we won the campaign." And then he said, "When I'm an MLA and I'm sitting on the opposition side, that tells me I didn't win." So whoever said that was right on. Earl, that could have been you, I gather. That looked like you.

## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. DOERN Cont'd)

Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate that the Leader of the Official Opposition isn't here but I really think, I really think that he bombed out yesterday. We were looking for his contribution and we were really rather interested in what he would say in his official remarks on the Throne Speech. All we really got was a lot of talk. We got that tremendous demonstration of the books and his deputy leader in handing those books up reminded me of Laurel and Hardy, you know. It was a tremendous act and I think it was appreciated, but it was strictly out of those old comedy teams of yesteryear. We enjoy - don't misunderstand me - we enjoy the Leader of the Opposition. We like him, and we're willing to put up with him for as long as you are. If you want to re-elect him we're willing to take him all through the 1970s and the 1980s. We're satisfied with his performance and we're willing to support the Leader of the Liberal Party for as long as he wants to stay. --(Interjection)-- Well there's always one dissenter in our party.

Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party desperately needed reinforcements. You know, this party is still based in southwestern Manitoba. They're still rurally oriented. They don't have policies or people who can speak for Winnipeg or can speak for the north. This is a problem that has plagued them for at least the past decade. I spoke of the need for good urban policies and we have developed many, and we're looking forward to the leadership of the Premier to provide more policies and new directions in the development of Winnipeg and the province. But the Conservatives are sadly lacking in that particular area. I mean here's an opportunity for the Member for St. Boniface and the Member for Fort Rouge to really shine. It's not going to take much because the field is wide open. We have waited, Mr. Speaker, for five years for my honourable friend the Member for Sturgeon Creek, the urban spokesman for the Conservative Party, and really we're still waiting. We're still prepared to wait, we're still willing to give him a chance, but so far we haven't had very much.

The Member for Fort Garry has been relatively silent on urban matters. The Member for St. James, I suppose, is the one that we must turn to, the new member. And all I can say in regard to him is, we'll see. We'll give him his day; we'll look forward to his comments. We'll give him five years too. We're willing to wait that long.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to deal briefly with the Liberal Party which was briefly dealt with by the electorate. I just got him back. I wanted to make one comment to him. I wanted to say to him that it is my suggestion - and I just gave you the tremendous compliment that we're willing to support your leadership for the next decade or two. Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that he had better watch himself. He knows and we know that there are people all around him with long knives and it might be advisable for him to relocate his seat in the back row and in that way he would be able to better defend himself.

The Liberal Leader, the effervescent Leader of the Liberal Party, was a little sanguine in his prediction of the election. I remember on one particular day when he was asked as to how many seats he would take, and he gave his estimate at 28. Well he was a little out, but nevertheless we do have some new members. A little sanguine in his prediction. And I would like to welcome the two new members from St. Boniface and for Fort Rouge. I want to draw to the attention, though, of the Member for Fort Rouge that his predecessor, I think in all fairness, was an effective member of the House and he will have to, I think, see whether he can make a contribution that would be equal to hers. I would also point out to him the cruel lessons of political life, that in spite of the fact that someone may do a good job in the Legislature or in the constituency, they can still go down, and I think this is something to be borne in mind when one ponders one's fate.

I am concerned, however, about the political philosophy and the drift of my honourable friend the Member for Fort Rouge, because he started life as a Liberal. I don't know whether that goes back to Grade 1 or just at what point in time, his mother's knee perhaps, when he started out as a Liberal. I read with some alarm the fact that in the United States where he went for post graduate training that he was described, I believe, accurately--I'll let him answer this at a later point--as a founder of the SDS. Now if that is true, that is one of the most radical, dangerous student anarchist type groups that has ever come forth in the United States. Those were --(Interjection)-- those were in the days though, however, when he was a student. When he came back from college, he was fired up with all that small "l" liberalism and he joined the New Democratic Party.

## THRONE SPEECH

A MEMBER: No.

MR. DOERN: No, he didn't join it, he worked for a member of the New Democratic Party. He voted for a member of the New Democratic Party. --(Interjection)-- Pardon? --(Interjection)-- Well, then I'm afraid, Mr. Speaker, that on that count my information isn't correct, but I understood that when he was down east that he actually went out there and knocked on doors for David Lewis, which I think was a very, very intelligent thing to do.

At any rate we know that he started out - that he started out as a large "L" Liberal, became a small "l" Liberal; maybe he was a little enamored with the New Democratic Party but now he's gone back; he's moving right, and I'm concerned as to where he's eventually going to wind up. I caution him about considering going to the right and eventually winding up with the caucus under the leadership of my honourable friend, or even taking the place of the former Member for Rhineland as the Leader of the Social Credit Party.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that I have spoken long enough. I'm sure that my honourable friends would agree to that. I look forward to a brief and productive session, and I leave to my colleagues what few useful critical comments were made by the Leader of the Official Opposition and Leader of the Liberal Party for them to demolish.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON (Gladstone): I'll thank you, Mr. Speaker. I see we're again approaching the hour of 5:30, and once more it's a privilege to see you on the Speaker's Chair, Sir, and I am sure that you will carry on in the manner that you have shown, and the same refereeing style that you have shown in the past four sessions.

I would also like to at this time give my congratulations to the mover of the Speech from the Throne, the Honourable Member for Rupertsland. He had a very well prepared speech and a very well delivered speech. The seconder, the Honourable Member for Crescentwood, also did a credible job, but I would suggest that possibly he could try his acupuncture out on the speaker that just finished, the Honourable Member for Elmwood, it may cure some of his illness.

I'd also like to extend greetings to the other new members of the Legislature, also to the two former elected members, the Member from St. George and the Member for Osborne in their appointment as Cabinet Ministers. I think there will be times possibly that the Honourable Member from St. George will wish he was back looking after his turkeys, but that remains to be seen.

We as rural members also, Mr. Speaker, would like to pay our respects to the City of Winnipeg. We recognize the fact that over one-half the population of Manitoba is situated in the city. Consequently we look forward to sharing in the centennial celebrations and participating and doing our bit to try and make it a success.

Getting to the Speech from the Throne: of course, my constituency is rurally oriented. This will be one of our priorities. We find it is very difficult to locate industries in the rural constituencies. We are continually losing - over the past four years we have lost our two major industries in Neepawa, and apparently there is no way of stopping this drain. We hear the story that it's because of the markets, non-availability of a pool of labour, etc.

Now getting back to the Speech, Mr. Speaker, there is the land lease program, I believe, is one of the first things that is mentioned in the Speech. This has created quite a lot of furore, and it possibly is not that bad a piece of legislation. The only thing that we would like to question a little bit - I don't know whether it has been announced - is what happens when this five-year lease period is up. What is the resale value of the land? Is this going to be at the price of the purchase stage? Is it going to be arrived through a mediator, or what is going to happen here?

Another factor that has been quite a catch phrase. I think it was designed to lure a considerable portion of the rural population, was the stay option. I think, Mr. Speaker, we would definitely have to take quite a long hard look at some of the programs that this government have promoted, and they are supposed to be contributing to stay option; I feel that they have fallen very short. First I think we could mention that one of the first things that happened last year, or one of the things that happened, was the removal of the five percent sales tax on grain storage. I think it's a known fact, Mr. Speaker, that we as farmers have built storage over the past few years out of our own pockets. We have stored a resource for the people of Canada, and

## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. FERGUSON Cont'd) . . . . the only time that we have had one as it looked fairly successful year coming up, the first thing the Minister of Finance does is knock the five per cent sales tax off. The Province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, still retains it, even if it is a socialist government.

Another thing we would have to look at, and this has been mentioned many times, would have to be the hog deal to Japan. I realize that this has been hashed over and hashed over, but the Minister of Agriculture has skated around this deal. It seems awfully strange that when Alberta made their deal that there was no hangup on announcing what the price may be, but here we have a government that with an elected board, that asks them to take oaths of secrecy if they're going to see a contract. Well to me this just stinks, Mr. Speaker. There's no way that - what do you have an elected board for? Is there something sinister in the fact that possible Mr. Hofford and the Minister of Agriculture have some little collusion deal going somewhere? So why is he so frightened of announcing to the public what it is?

Another thing, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to mention at this time - the Minister of Agriculture is not in his seat - but during the earlier part of the winter we attended a meeting of AI technicians in the City of Portage la Prairie where there were over 300 cattlemen present. Mr. Uskiw had an invitation to attend; he did not show up. The Deputy Minister had an invitation to attend; he did not show up. There were representatives by one of the former technicians, Skip Keeley, and the reason for the whole meeting, Mr. Speaker, was the fact that - and I'll read the letter that was sent out to the Manitoba Animal Breeders, I'm sorry: "Our next truck is coming up fast and the board depends on your cooperation with Mr. Keeley in this delivery of semen and nitrogen. No doubt some of you may be encouraged to hurt MABC, but if we fall into this category, be prepared for the inevitable consequences."

Well, Mr. Speaker, these people are the people that have been involved; when this bill went through the Legislature, they were here; they promoted their cause. At that time we tried to put through an amendment to the bill whereby the government would not become the sole distributor. This was thrown out because these people continued to get their semen from free enterprises, they are issued a letter about this under the signature of Mr. John Lee, the Chairman. Under questioning at Portage, Mr. John Lee admitted that he had not written the letter, it had been written by Dr. Keith Robson. Now this kind of thing, Mr. Speaker - and you can call it a stay option, an open government. Well to me it certainly is not.

Again, we'll go into the fact of the . . . This was again a fight of the free enterprise marketing system against quite a formidable opposition. Full page ads sponsored by the Minister of Agriculture. The three pools actively involved in promoting. However, Mr. Speaker, the vote carried, not by too great a percentage, 52 to 46, I believe, but just what is wrong with a free enterprise system competing against a compulsory marketing system. I feel that the rape people, the people that are actively involved in the production and sale of rape, the Rapeseed Association of Canada, have done a splendid job in promoting sales, and consequently I feel that though they did take more or less a neutral stand I think they did favour the free enterprise system which has done a very good job, as far as I am concerned, and I would like it to certainly be known, Mr. Speaker, that I am all in favour of the commodity exchange handling rapeseed, and I certainly - I'm not altogether just hung up on some of Mr. Lang's policies when it comes to oats and barley either.

Again, we come to Autopac, but I'm not going to dwell at too great a length on this. Again we are faced with the fact that when Autopac came in many of our agents, though they stuck it out, they're not being replaced by young fellows. In the towns of my constituency I would imagine that there will be ten families that will be phased out during the course of the next few years. They are now down to, I understand, the five percent commission, and there's no one that's going to take over this. And with the, I think, the waking up to the fact that this great and glorious socialist venture is about \$14 million in the hole, and what they're wanting to get into the fire insurance for I certainly have no idea, but if this is going to be a money maker like Autopac, why I can plainly see I guess why they are trying to get into it.

The Mineral Tax Act, another thing of course that I guess you'd have to connect with the stay option. Now in many cases - it has been brought up in the question period the last few days - there were many elderly people, senior citizens, who have held mineral rights all their lives. They have either leased their land or they have sold it, in many cases retained the mineral

## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. FERGUSON Con't) . . . . rights. -- (Interjection) -- Well, the Honourable Minister of Finance asks, why? Well I would say that --(Interjection)-- hope kind of springs eternal in the human heart, Mr. Speaker, and I think that there's always a little bit of gambling instinct in everyone, and in agriculture land in the Province of Manitoba, I'm quite sure that the percentage of minerals under that ground is not going to be very great. You get a little further north and I can understand this, but in agricultural land, there's no way that this is going to have any bearing, it's just strictly again state control of the mineral resources. And the people that have developed the land, have retained these rights, I believe, should still be allowed to retain them. The Minister said the other day that it was due to sloppy opposition the bill went through. His statement - well, more or less something like that. --(Interjection)-- The rate of - and his statement in Hansard more or less stated that the tax to individuals would not be imposed.

Again, the Minister is - I don't know just what his hangup is on the fact that he wants to retain these rights, but I would suggest to the honourable members opposite that rather than have the great influx of bills over the last few days of the session that we have had in the past two years, that if they would come in at a more orderly manner, that possibly we could get through the bills without having to run into a considerable hangup at the end of the bills. We aren't endowed with quite as many lawyers as they have over there; in many cases we have to take our bills out to lawyers so consequently we would appreciate if the bills would come in a little quicker.

The question was brought up this morning re the Fertilizers Investigation and Enquiry Board last year, and the Minister's answer was that there would be a statement forthcoming. Well, that's a year ago, Mr. Speaker, and we're into an altogether different set of circumstances this year than we were last year, so consequently the report from last year is going to basically mean nothing this year, or very little, so as long I guess as you keep a year or two years behind in the reports - well, it supplies another job possibly for another couple of fellows, and it's quite a good deal, but it's not very informative or very good for the farmers that are worrying about the fact that fertilizer is not available and why the prices are skyrocketing. We are quite aware of the fact that there are shortages in phosphate that have to be imported, etc., but I understand still that in many cases in the United States that fertilizer is selling cheaper than it is in Canada, consequently this is what the board is appointed for and we would like to have something tabled as soon as possible.

We are now again also going to be, I guess, faced with a vote on the cattle end of the livestock, strictly as a promotional issue. This again was brought in as a Private Members' resolution I believe a couple of years ago, and was thrown out. I think at that time it was suggested by the Member for Ste. Rose that the deduction be given to the Farmers Union to disperse, to promote the livestock industry. Well, I don't think that that would hang very good with the big . . . of the livestock industry, and we have had quite a --(Interjection)-- Oh, I'm sorry.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable gentleman have a point of privilege?

MR. ADAM: Yes, the member attributes statements to me; I wish he would read the Hansard that I made those statements.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. FERGUSON: That's okay, Mr. Speaker. I'll look it up and I'll certainly show the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose where he said it.

But again, I would wonder where our Minister of Agriculture - I'm sorry again that he's not in his seat - where he was last August when we had our big break in the cattle market. This was due of course to meddling with the market in the United States, the price freeze, then the embargo from our own Federal Government, and it just goes again to show that it was not something that was going to do the country any good, it was simply that some place along the line there had to be a goat, and the livestock industry was used, for what reason I don't know, but it has certainly disrupted it, and I think if the thing had of been left to operate in a free and normal manner that it would have levelled off and that we would certainly not be in the position that we are today.

The state tax - I don't know, I was - in looking through the Public Accounts - again, Mr. Minister of Finance - it would appear that if you take 1973 it is \$1,536,000, the year before 1972, it was \$4,944,000; 1971 was \$4,898,000.00. What is going on here I don't know, whether money is leaving the province, whether people are being forced into the position, into farms

## THRONE SPEECH

(MR. FERGUSON Cont'd) . . . . and small business whereby they have to form limited companies to protect themselves. I would expect that this is probably what is taking place.

Another thing that we are going to be facing next year is going to be rail abandonment. This of course is a very serious problem in the rural areas and I don't think that there is any way that we can go around this or avoid the fact that many lines are going to be abandoned. I would feel though that possibly some of the federal funds that have been used as subsidies to these railroads would be put into the road systems in the areas whereby lines are being abandoned. I think this would be a good arguing point possibly that over a five year period they might be glad to get out of the business and consequently that would be a write-off when the five year period was up.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I will have to bring up the fact, I bring it up every session, it gets about the same place every year. But the night lighting of deer - this again has become more serious as the years go on and I contacted the Conservation Officer in my area on the weekend. They feel by estimation and observation that the deer population is down at least 50 percent. Again the major problem - I asked who the culprits were and he said that there were at least four Indian Reserves represented in the area practically every night. Now I'm not saying that all of the native people are involved, but this Act of 1929 whereby Indians have the right to take food under any circumstances I would say now is something that is just possibly a little bit out of date. In those days the people did not have new cars, telescope sight rifles, up to date spot-lights.

MR. GREEN: I wonder if I could ask the honourable gentleman to identify the Act, the Statute that he is referring to.

MR. FERGUSON: It's in the Natural Resources, its in the Act of Canada. Well here it's caption 1030, An Act Respecting the Transfer of Natural Resources of Manitoba and it's 13, section 13. --(Interjection)-- Pardon? --(Interjection)-- Provincial Government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have no hangups particularly with this Act whatever but I do feel that if our native populations were held to the daylight hours it would certainly go a long way towards overcoming a lot of the problems that are existing. In many areas I know that there are committees being formed to combat rustling and it gets kind of tiring. I'm not saying that these people are involved. I don't think that they have been at all but the deer population is reaching a point where it is going to be non-existent in another year or two practically and the inclination then might be to probably move into other fields.

I was glad to see the interest that the Honourable Minister of Mines and Resources is showing. I would hope that possibly this year that some move might be changed. The only thing that I would be asking is that they would possibly work with the Federal Government to limit the night lighting of, or limit the hunting of big game animals to the daylight hours. That would be the only thing I think that the people would ask for and I don't think it's being very unfair.

I would also like to ask its support in the fact that I do believe that with the snowfall that we've had, we'll probably be back in the flood conditions again very shortly, in my area probably about the 6th of April, and I would hope to have his indulgence at that time.

Mr. Speaker, I think I have taken up my share of the time allocated to the members. I know there are many members that want to speak, I understand there are three new fellows on the other side that are all ready to go and our fellows are too, so I would like at this time, Mr. Speaker, to thank you for your indulgence and . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I shall recognize the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose. Shall we call it 5:30 and give him a better opportunity to go? It is now 5:30, I am leaving the Chair and I shall return at 8 p. m.