

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 9 March, 1987.

Time — 1:30 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER, Hon. M. Phillips: Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . .

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'm pleased to table the Annual Report for the Municipal Board for the period ending December 31, 1986.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to table the Annual Report for the Department of Highways and Transportation for the year 1985-86.

MADAM SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MADAM SPEAKER: Before moving to Oral Questions, I'd like to draw the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have 25 visitors from all over Manitoba who are taking the Practical Politics course under the direction of Mr. Nesbitt.

On behalf of all the members, we welcome you to the Legislature this afternoon.

COMMONWEALTH DAY MESSAGE

MADAM SPEAKER: Also before Oral Questions, I'd like to inform all members that I've received a letter from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The Chair of the Association's Executive Committee has asked me to read the letter to the House on the occasion of Commonwealth Day, which is today. The message is as follows:

The Commonwealth family is a unique organization in terms of international cooperation and international living. Besides the United Nations and non-aligned movements, the Commonwealth is the largest and most representative forum of nations. With its membership today spanning six continents and seven oceans, embracing more than a third of the world's population, it serves as a bridge between races, cultures, countries and continents. This voluntary organization of nations not only serves their interests, but also contributes

towards the evolution of an international order promoting global peace, harmony and progress.

Over the years, the Commonwealth has built up a network of institutions for mutual cooperation and consultation at all levels and in all spheres. At the parliamentary level, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association seeks to promote Commonwealth understanding and respect for parliamentary institutions. It provides a forum to the legislators from the Commonwealth countries to discuss and sort out the problems afflicting contemporary society.

Today, this Commonwealth Day gives us an opportunity of pledging ourselves to rid our world of poverty, ignorance and injustice and to do our best for the promotion of world peace and prosperity. We will continue to strengthen our fraternal organization based on mutual understanding and respect in order to meet the challenges of today's society more effectively.

The Commonwealth is worthy of our deepest commitment and our strongest support."

The letter is signed by Dr. The Hon. Bal Ram Jakhar, M.P., Speaker of the Lok Sabha, India, and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

ORAL QUESTIONS

AIDS - reporting by doctors

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health.

Given the ever-increasing concern being expressed about the spread of AIDS in our province and indeed in our country, and given the fact that most American jurisdictions and all but two Canadian provinces make the reporting of AIDS a legal requirement, why does Manitoba not require doctors legally to report AIDS?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Madam Speaker, it is not as clear-cut as that. There are some concerns. But the reporting - first of all, I don't think you can legislate, force the doctors to report it. I think some have not reported it. There has been some concern apparently with the tests. We get the information anyway, and I have requested Dr. Fast to give us the latest on that. I know that she had been discussing that with the Attorney-General, and I expect an answer fairly soon.

MR. G. FILMON: Given that sexually transmitted diseases and many other diseases are legally required to be reported by doctors, why is it that AIDS is not legally required to be reported in Manitoba?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The question, in the first instance, is the same answer. I gave you the answer

and, when I get a report from Dr. Fast, I will report to the House again.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, why is it the prerogative and the decision of the bureaucrats or Dr. Fast or anybody else other than the government to decide whether or not the concern over AIDS is so serious that it should be addressed by making it a legally reportable disease?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Madam Speaker, I don't know if my honourable friend would run a government. As far as I'm concerned, you don't become an expert in everything because you're a member of Cabinet, and I rely very much on the experts and the doctors in this instance. It's not a question of grandstanding. If there's no value to it, we won't do it. We don't care if we're the only province. In the meantime, I've never said that it will not be done. This has been discussed with the Attorney-General, and I've asked Dr. Fast for an answer.

AIDS - guidelines for working with AIDS patients

MR. G. FILMON: Given that experts in eight other provinces have arrived at that determination and have made AIDS a legally reportable disease, my further question to the Minister of Health is: is there a policy that has been established by the Department of Health with respect to how hospitals must deal with AIDS, either in terms of whether or not employees have the right to refuse to work, or indeed in all aspects of how an identified case of AIDS shall be dealt with? Is there a policy for all hospitals in this province, established by his department?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, Madam Speaker, there is a policy. The hospitals are there to help in curing disease or taking care of the sick, and certainly the policy will not be to refuse anybody. That is certainly clear.

On the idea that all the experts are saying that it should be working, that is not the case. I read an article not too long ago by somebody who said exactly the opposite. This is not the way to go, and it hasn't saved one single person. So this is why we're investigating, and the recommendations of Dr. Fast and others in Manitoba will weigh heavily. It might well be that it'll be reportable.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, my question was not with respect to whether or not hospitals would treat somebody for AIDS. The question was whether or not employees legally have the right to refuse to work in contact with the AIDS virus or with an AIDS victim. Is there a policy on that?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No. If any of the guidelines for safety and health are adhered to, no, there is no legal way that any staff in the hospital can refuse care.

AIDS - guidelines for schools

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education.

Is there a policy in the government with respect to how schools should deal with an identified case of AIDS, either in the person of a student or a staff member?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, Madam Speaker, the Department of Education circulated guidelines for the processes to be used by school division personnel. They distributed the guidelines approximately a year-and-a-half ago and all school divisions, I think, are apprised of the process to be followed. I think the understanding is fairly general on what steps should be taken.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, my question further to the Minister of Education is: do either staffpersons or students have the right to refuse to attend school in the presence of an AIDS carrier?

HON. J. STORIE: I'm not sure of the intention or the direction the member is taking in his questioning.

If in fact an individual student has been identified as carrying the AIDS virus, then the concern is immediately for his health, the health of the child, and what is best in terms of the environment for that individual child. Likewise, if a teacher should in fact be found to be carrying the AIDS virus, then the same health concerns dealing with the individual are paramount.

I believe that the Minister of Health has indicated and, from all evidence that I've seen, that transmission of the disease is to be had in very specific ways. The health concern has to be with the likelihood of an individual carrier catching additional diseases, contracting viruses and so forth, that would be an immediate danger to the individual who has the disease.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, my further question is: given that the concern is with respect to people who may be exposed to a carrier of AIDS and exposed to the virus by virtue of working with or attending with somebody who has AIDS and given that recent information indicates that 35 percent of exposed people will develop AIDS within six to eight years, is there any guideline or established policy with respect to people not attending or not working in contact with somebody who is identified as a carrier of AIDS?

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, no. The issue of carriers, of course - there is a suggestion somehow that casual contact with a carrier is in fact going to result in the contracting of the disease. I've indicated quite clearly - and I believe every study of the disease itself indicates - that is not the case. Casual contact in the context of a classroom is not a danger to others in the classroom, and so consequently there is no provision at this point for the exclusion or the self-exclusion of either staff or students. The concern is with the individual carrier, the individual with the AIDS virus or the disease, and what is best for his or her health interests.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, given that last year individuals who were not vaccinated against red measles

were not able to attend school because of an outbreak, is there no concern on the part of the Minister that those who have concerns and do not want to be exposed or in contact with individuals who are carriers of AIDS should be given some opportunity to make that determination?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Madam Speaker, what is being done right now is certainly the worst thing that could happen. There is enough ignorance and panic on this that the main thing is proper education, education with the medical profession and the students. That is being done with the two levels of government and, as I say, it would be well to leave it with the experts. What the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said today about contacting the disease, as far as the information that I have, is absolutely wrong.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, has the government developed an overall strategy to deal with this matter to ensure that there are policies that govern whether or not people have the right to refuse to work in an area in contact with AIDS virus, where they might potentially be in contact with AIDS virus, other than the program which I saw the Minister had announced of a \$237,000 education program that was jointly to be administered by the Winnipeg Gay Community Health Centre, jointly funded by Manitoba and Canada? Other than that, is there an overall strategy that would govern areas such as the workplace safety, such as large areas of attendance of the public, such as our school system, such as hospitals that will have to deal with the tragedy of a victim of AIDS? Is there an overall strategy so that people can be aware of all the consequences and of their rights with respect to working or being in contact with an AIDS carrier?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, Madam Speaker, there certainly are. But, I repeat, the most important thing is proper education and making sure that the people don't panic. That's not going to help at all. There are policies and we are working - yes, the education and letting the people know what it is all about with the Federal Government is probably the best thing that we can do right now.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, given that the Federal Government has committed \$39 million over the next five years, is there anything else other than this one program that I referred to with respect to education that will help to fill the breach, and to inform people about the concerns that the Minister of Health has enunciated?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The Federal Minister, Madam Speaker, had requested the province to cooperate, and it is important that the same information should go all across Canada. That is why the Federal Government has taken the lead. There is also some research being done, and there is a drug company that is working with selected people in certain areas of the provinces, including Manitoba, and hoping that this drug will be helpful. Then, as I say, it's education in the area.

We're not going to reinvent the wheel here. We haven't got the same problem as they have in other provinces. They are taking the lead, and we're monitoring very closely what is being done in the other provinces, such as mostly B.C., Quebec and Ontario -(Interjection)- yes, we are.

Manitoba Beef Plan - feeder cattle subsidy

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

In the past, many producers enrolled in the Manitoba Beef Plan as cow-calf to finished producers, when the support level for finished animals was above the market price. Could these producers - I would like to ask the Minister of Agriculture - buy some feeder animals that they did not raise on their farm and finish them on their own farm and sell them through the Manitoba Beef Commission and receive the subsidy?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, the honourable member, I'm sure, is aware that the original intent of the Manitoba Beef Plan, as operated by the Manitoba Beef Commission, was in fact to make sure that there is a beef industry in the Province of Manitoba. It was originally intended to make sure that there is a cow-calf operation because, without the cows, there is ostensibly no beef program or beef industry in the Province of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, the honourable member's question bears some further elaboration or investigation, but in terms of any individual purchasing animals who is not enrolled in the beef plan, is not a contract holder of the beef plan, they would not be able to purchase animals and feed them through and receive a subsidy under the plan.

However, anyone who in fact does take in animals for custom finishing for a beef producer does have the stability of the beef plan in projecting his costs and, of course, can finish animals for other producers, and is able to receive those returns in a stable environment, namely, the support price under the beef program.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I would then like to ask the Minister, now when the support level is below the market price, are these same producers free to buy some feeders and finish them on their property and sell them, without the Beef Commission demanding a premium on these animals that they did not raise on their own farms?

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, there is a contractual obligation on which a producer, when entering the plan, signed in terms of the amount of animals that would be marketed. There have been occasions under various circumstances in which, whether through illness or whatever, the marketing agreement was not able to be met by some producers, and the commission does give consideration to some variation of that.

However, unless there are those extenuating circumstances that I have outlined, generally the marketing patterns that were originally agreed to by the contract holder shall be maintained.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Yes, I believe that the Beef Commission directors are legally and morally bound by the contract.

I would like to ask the Minister if he would investigate whether they are, in fact, following the contract legally and morally and, if not, if he would replace those appointed directors by elected directors, which would not politicize the system.

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, I'm pleased that now we have the Agriculture critic from the Conservative Party and the former Agriculture critic now recommending that we have a producer-elected marketing board for the marketing of beef.

If that's the suggestion that they're making, Madam Speaker, I'm certainly pleased and I will be awaiting their views on that concept. If that can be accommodated over the next period of time, we certainly are supportive of having a duly elected producer marketing board for the marketing of beef cattle in this province.

Manitoba Beef Commission - contract

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden with a final supplementary.

MR. G. FINDLAY: A final supplementary, Madam Speaker, I would like the Minister to tell the House if he will determine if the present board is legally following the contract?

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, the honourable member should be aware that, if there are occasions in which it is perceived or in fact it does occur that the Beef Commission is not following the contract, their decisions may be appealed to the Natural Products Marketing Council. That council does determine by appeal whether or not the commission is following its contract form. If the honourable member has cases in which he believes that they are not, please kindly draw them to my attention. I certainly will want to take them up with the commission and/or the Marketing Council so that, if they are in fact not living up to their obligations, we want to make sure that they do.

AIDS - guidelines for working with AIDS patients

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Thank you, Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health, because I am so concerned about some of the half-truths and alarmist language used earlier in this question period.

Would the Minister please tell me and tell the House if there is a medical protocol in our hospitals in this province which indeed does provide protection for the

medical and support staff, such as sterile conditions which are also in place for most infectious diseases?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, Madam Speaker.

AIDS - Family Life Education Curriculum

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: A question to the Minister of Education, Madam Speaker, is the Minister and his department adding to the Family Life Education Curriculum a section on AIDS which will in fact include two emphases: 1) stressing the idea of abstinence; and 2) the use of condoms for those young people who are sexually active?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. J. STORIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Yes, in fact, AIDS is part of the optional Family Life Health Program as one of the sexually transmitted diseases. I have instructed staff to begin to review the adequacy of the content in that particular section of the health program. I've also asked for a review of the options of including appropriate information in sections of the curriculum in the high school area, as well as dealing with the issue of providing information at our college campuses and our university campuses.

I think clearly this is a problem and, as the Minister of Health outlined earlier, the majority of the answer lies in having the correct information. I think the rather spurious comments of the Leader of the Opposition and the references . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order, order please. Order please.

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, I will withdraw that comment. I would use the word perhaps "unfortunate."

Madam Speaker, discussion of the questions of the AIDS and transmission of AIDS in terms of communicable diseases, I think enough is known, Madam Speaker, about the transmission of AIDS to indicate that casual contact in a classroom setting or in most other work environments should be of no health concern to the people involved. The best information we have, Madam Speaker, from the experts, from the Atlanta Centre for Disease Control and other experts, indicates that to us. I think it behooves us to be cautious about our statements and the implications that are left when we deal with something that is this sensitive.

Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition and members opposite will know that this issue has been dealt with in a school in Manitoba, and I believe the parents, staff and students were satisfied with the response . . .

AIDS - curriculum item in schools

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. I remind Honourable Ministers to keep answers to questions brief.

The Honourable Member for River Heights with a final supplementary.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Yes, to the Minister of Education, Madam Speaker, is the Minister of Education considering making AIDS education a compulsory curriculum item in Manitoba schools?

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, I think it is safe to say that the issue of AIDS and the provision of information through the curriculum may, in fact, be a requirement. The Manitoba Association of School Trustees has just written me a letter requesting a meeting to discuss this issue and how provision of information might be accomplished and, while there may be some discussions over the next while on how best to do that, I think clearly Manitobans want that kind of information provided at an appropriate time for young people, both high school students and college students in Manitoba.

Feedlot program - assurance of

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture.

A few moments ago, he stated that it's important that we ensure there's a beef industry in this province. No one would agree more than the workers at Burns Meats of Brandon, Madam Speaker, where Burns Meats has been forced to cut back on the hours of its employees, and they're considering layoffs because of a 50 percent drop in the number of cattle being killed in the past two months.

Given that Burns may be having second thoughts, Madam Speaker, about a \$2.6 million expansion which would cost some 50 to 60 full-time potential jobs, and given the fact that 75 percent of the Burns kill in Brandon is from out of the province because of inadequate stabilization and because the program doesn't extend to feedlots, and given that we on this side . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have a question?

MR. J. McCRAE: Yes, I have a question, Madam Speaker. I'm in the midst of my preamble, and I'd just like to finish it up.

Given the fact that members on this side of the House, Madam Speaker, in the last Session, through resolutions and through questions, urged the Minister to announce a feedlot program, will the Minister now be announcing without delay a feedlot program in this province?

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, I think the honourable member should recall that it was the Brandon operation of Burns that was going to close. It was the Brandon operation of Burns that was going to shut down, and it was the lack of a provincial program, lack of action on this government that, in fact, was going to allow that to happen. Madam Speaker, that was the allegation made by members on his side.

Madam Speaker, what has happened is that the base of kill in Brandon moved from an average kill of about 1,000 animals per week, and has moved up recently

to 1,700 a week, necessitating the kind of investment and expansion that is being talked about. The drop in animal kill is faced not only in Brandon, not only in Manitoba, but right across Western Canada, Madam Speaker, in terms of the numbers of animals. In fact, what one has to tell the honourable member is that the number of slaughter animals from the commission, from our own plant, has gone from 1983 of an amount of 54,000 slaughter animals to a high of last year in excess of 84,000 in those four years.

Madam Speaker, how can the honourable member suggest that somehow the provincial plan has not met its objectives? It has not gone as far as we would have liked to, Madam Speaker, and certainly we would want to encourage more on-farm finishing, but I reject categorically the honourable member's suggestion about not enough finishing.

MR. J. McCRAE: Madam Speaker, I'm not getting very far with the Minister of Agriculture, so I'll direct a question to the Minister of Labour.

In view of the fact that the Marketing Manager of the Manitoba Beef Commission says that a feedlot program is needed to keep cattle in Manitoba, will the Minister of Labour recognize the plight of beef producers in this province, as well as the unionized workers at Burns in Brandon and the people of the City of Brandon, and prevail upon the Minister of Agriculture and his Cabinet colleagues to bring in a feedlot program without delay?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, the Honourable Member for Brandon West knows - I'm sure his research has indicated. I can't lay the blame on him individually, but the Progressive Conservative Party in Manitoba in government failed to produce agricultural support so that livestock operations were going downhill in Manitoba. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture will confirm again the kind of efforts this government has taken to stabilize agriculture and animal production in this province.

Differential tuition fee - out-of-country students

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. L. DERKACH: Thank you, Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education.

Since the Manitoba taxpayer can no longer continue the practice of subsidizing the out-of-country students at the universities at the same level that they subsidize Manitoba and Canadian students, will the Minister tell the House whether he is prepared to recommend to the universities in Manitoba that a differential tuition fee, which more accurately reflects actual tuition costs, be charged to out-of-country students?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. J. STORIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Yes, to the Member for Roblin-Russell. I think the member perhaps should have spent some time discussing this issue with the university community, with university students, with many other groups associated with education in this province before he brought forward that resolution.

Madam Speaker, Manitoba has had a long-standing policy of not having differential tuition fees in the province and, while there are without question some short-term benefits, some people would say, in establishing a differential policy, universities for many reasons - and I invite the member opposite to visit the universities and discuss this issue with the presidents, as I have.

He may in fact find that, despite the solution that he has proposed, there are many, many benefits to having visa students here. Many of them do, in fact, become citizens. There are questions of their contribution to the economy, in terms of the cost of living in Manitoba for those years. Madam Speaker, it is also true that there is another province which does not have differential fees, as well as individual universities which do not charge differential fees.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. L. DERKACH: Madam Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister if he can tell the House what the total subsidized cost of tuition is to the taxpayer of Manitoba for out-of-country students?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education, briefly.

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, Madam Speaker.

I have raised that issue with the universities and with the Universities Grants Commission. The universities have indicated to me that's a rather simplistic approach. In fact, Madam Speaker, there are many, many spinoff benefits to having those students associated with our universities and in terms of their contribution to our economy, as well as the contacts that they represent when they move back to their country of origin, as well as the question of, I guess in the case of students who come particularly from Hong Kong, the reciprocation that occurs and the investment that comes as a result of their attendance at universities in Manitoba. We have had significant investment, Madam Speaker, from many of those countries.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. L. DERKACH: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would like to ask the Minister again. Since there are approximately 2,000 out-of-country students in Manitoba universities, can the Minister tell this House what the specific total cost is to the Manitoba taxpayer of subsidizing those out-of-country students?

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, I don't know what the member means by subsidized. The majority, if not all of the courses that are being taken by visa students would be offered with or without those visa students.

Madam Speaker, there is also the fact that the number of visa students has actually decreased over the last couple of years. Finally, Madam Speaker, I would certainly be willing to sit down with the universities and the Universities Grants Commission to ascertain a cost-benefit analysis of the attendance of visa students in Manitoba.

Independent Living Program - funding

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. M. DOLIN: Thank you, Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Community Services.

In reference to the Community Independent Living Program, my understanding is there has been some change in financing of that program and there have been some concerns expressed by the agencies delivering the program. Could the Minister explain and assure that this program will continue and that the financing will not be cut for the support services required for those people in the program?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, prior to 1985, there were not monies available to support teenagers who stayed either in their family's or foster family's, and the Independent Living Program - really there was not any clarification as to how that would be funded. We have been working to fine tune what the family support grants would cover and have included, not the board and room portion, but the support worker and the administration portion of supporting teenagers in an independent living situation as part of the family support grant.

Madam Speaker, the agencies have been involved in developing these guidelines. Most are in support. The new guidelines were announced in February and, after hearing from some agencies that getting that guideline somewhat after they had made expenditures imposed a difficulty, we changed the date of application to January 1987.

Our overall attempt in the funding of child welfare services is to shift from the open-ended child welfare or child maintenance account that the government pays to give the agencies the funds so that they can use discretion. But, Madam Speaker, we have not done it all at one time, until the total caseload levels off and we can, in fact, have some confidence that the resources given to the agencies will be adequate to meet the need.

MR. M. DOLIN: A supplementary to the same Minister.

Considering the concerns expressed by a couple of the agencies anyhow in a recent press report, could the Minister give assurance that there will be no cutback in the number of people, in the services given to them presently and, if there is a problem, that it will be negotiated with the individual agencies?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, the expenditures at the agencies, there is an ongoing review. In the past,

a lot of reconciliations for their expenditures were made several years after the actual incursion of the expenditure. Our goal is to get where the guidelines are completely clear ahead of time, and we have computerized records of what we call committal accounting.

We are not quite there, Madam Speaker, but the method we've been using to work with the agencies and their financial situation is to review periodically. We have made adjustments this year on the deficits they're incurring and we have taken into account their current financial situation in developing our budget for next year.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan with a final supplementary.

MR. M. DOLIN: A final supplementary, Madam Speaker, just to clarify, any agency that is facing financial difficulty will be able to come to the Minister and negotiate any problems they're having to ensure that the children in Independent Living remain there?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, we are undergoing and will continue to meet with them and review these situations, but we must in the final analysis hold the boards and the staff of these agencies accountable within some parameters. So it's that desire to keep some kind of management and review of the effectiveness of the expenditure, along with giving them full discretion or as much discretion as we can, for the young people they need. But as we move into the preventive area in the child welfare system, the need is almost open-ended so there does have to be some management of how quickly they build up on that type of service.

Child and Family Services - agency deficits

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Community Services.

Can she inform the House as to how many of the Child and Family Service Agencies are presently predicting a deficit in their operations for this fiscal year? Will she rescind this directive she issued to be in effect retroactively, which one agency director called "stupid"?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I think that amount of detail is more appropriate for Estimates.

We did meet with the agencies in the city, and we have in fact made a deficit adjustment payment already. We also have added supplementary monies for the general open-ended child maintenance grant, and we have looked at their projected budgets and taken them into account in developing next year's budget. So although several of them will be carrying small deficits into the next year, unless the volume continues to escalate, we do have the financing fairly well under control.

Freedom of Information Act - proclamation of

MR. G. MERCIER: Approximately approaching almost two years ago, on July 2 of 1985, the Honourable Attorney-General indicated that The Freedom of Information Act would be proclaimed within a few months. I wonder if the Attorney-General could now indicate when that act will be proclaimed.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Culture and Heritage Resources.

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm pleased to be able to report to the House that progress has been proceeding very well in this area and that we . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: . . . are looking forward to proclaiming this legislation in one year.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister who is now fairly responsible for this.

In view of the fact that a draft copy of The Freedom of Information Act was circulating in government circles beginning in about May of 1983, following the Attorney-General's statement in 1982 that The Freedom of Information Act would be introduced that year, in 1982; given the fact I believe the Minister now says the act will not be proclaimed for a further year, could the Minister advise the House whether we members should treat that statement in the same way as the Attorney-General's statement two years ago that the act would be introduced in a few months?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: The member opposite will know that the process of record management and of compiling an access guide is a very complex process and requires considerable staff work and resources. This government, within its budgetary resources, without incurring considerable new expenses that I'm sure all members opposite would be in favour of, is working very hard within those limitations to ensure that we stick to our schedule and move as quickly as possible to the proclamation of this legislation.

The member opposite will know that, when members opposite were in government, they became aware of the state of our records, and in fact were presented with a photo essay of some of the problems and difficulties that were before all of us. We have worked very diligently since that period to ensure that we can put in place a system that is effective and responsive to both the needs of Manitobans and to our responsibilities under the Freedom of Information legislation.

MR. G. MERCIER: Just one brief question.

Could the Minister advise the House that information has not been and will not be destroyed during this period of time?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: Madam Speaker, the question really doesn't warrant an answer.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. I cannot hear the Honourable Minister.

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: This government initiated the freedom-of-information legislation. It is obviously committed to the principles behind the legislation, and we are moving as quickly as possible to put in place effective mechanisms to ensure that members opposite and the members of the public in general will be able to get responses to their requests as quickly as possible. There would be no intention on our part at any point to destroy material.

MADAM SPEAKER: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

MADAM SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet and the proposed amendment by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs has 20 minutes remaining.

HON. G. DOER: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It gives me pleasure to be able to continue on on the Speech from the Throne from last Friday.

Madam Speaker, at the last speaking on the Speech from the Throne, I was mentioning some of the items on Core II that were dealing with the \$100 million agreement that the Federal, Provincial and City Governments had settled. Madam Speaker, I just would like to reiterate, in starting my remarks in the dealing with the Core Area II Agreement, that there are four fundamental themes in the second Core Area Agreement.

That is, No. 1, Madam Speaker, that the core agreement is a tri-level agreement between the Federal, Civic and Provincial Governments; No. 2, that the core agreement again provides a balance between the social and needed training programs in a core area and the physical programs of bricks and mortar. The third fundamental theme, Madam Speaker, is that the proposal is to also lever private and public money. In the first Core Agreement, we're up to \$75 million in private money levered from the public purse, and we expect that to grow higher as the last year-and-a-half of evaluation of the money takes place. The North Portage Agreement, Madam Speaker, has levered approximately \$150 million of private money in terms of the spinoff of the \$75 million from public spending.

And the fourth theme of the Core Area II, similar to the first Core Agreement, Madam Speaker, is that this would be used as a stimulus for other major projects. In the first Core Agreement, we had the whole situation of the major project of North Portage as a spinoff. In the second Core Agreement, we have money put aside for the Forks Developments and the East Yards Development.

Madam Speaker, there are a couple of fundamental principles that this government will follow as one party in these negotiations: (1) that we're pleased that this land is in public ownership; and (2) that we believe strongly that the East Yards Development should not take place until or unless there is public input into what the vision of the East Yards should be.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

If honourable members would like to carry on their private conversations elsewhere, it would be greatly appreciated.

The Honourable Minister.

HON. G. DOER: Thank you.

That there be public input is a fundamental criteria for developing the East Yards, and when you look at a slow and mixed development in the East Yards rather than a quick edifice development in that historic site that will be returned to public ownership in this province.

Madam Speaker, in leaving the core and the comments that were raised in the Speech from the Throne on the Core Area Agreement and North Portage and the East Yards, I'd like to move briefly to The City of Winnipeg Act and the proposed White Paper that we have placed before the House.

Madam Speaker, there is no question that the City of Winnipeg review has taken some time, and received considerable input from the public over the 1985-86 period. Fundamentally, it would have been our priority to proceed with the adequate input from the various bodies of government with legislation in the 1987 year. However, Madam Speaker, it was requested by the City of Winnipeg officials and requested by the many elected representatives in the additional zone that we not proceed on a unilateral basis, but rather that we attempt to consult on some of the needed changes and reforms required for the City of Winnipeg. So, Madam Speaker, we will be proceeding only with those areas that are essential for 1987, and we have tabled a White Paper to deal with the issues that still require consultation with the city.

Now, on the one hand, the Opposition Critic informs me that we should be cooperative and proceed on a cooperative approach with the city officials. I even have a copy of his presentation to the Cherniack Review Committee, Madam Speaker, talking about home rule and talking about the fact that they only want a two- or three-page City of Winnipeg Act as the act for the City of Winnipeg . . .

A MEMBER: A secret document.

HON. G. DOER: A secret document, an unshredded document, Madam Speaker, that we have in our possession.

A MEMBER: Privileged information.

HON. G. DOER: It's very privileged.

MR. G. DUCHARME: I guess he got that from Alan Artibise.

HON. G. DOER: No, we didn't. We got it from D.I. MacDonald, Madam Speaker.

On the one hand, we hear cooperation, home rule, the philosophy of dealing with city officials. On the other hand, the critic opposite criticizes us for tabling a White Paper, rather than proceeding with the City of Winnipeg review holus-bolus.

Well, Madam Speaker, I think the White Paper is a good place to start with the City of Winnipeg. I'm looking forward to the comments of the city councillors and other people who deal with the city. I'm looking forward to the comments of the critic opposite in terms of his ideas on fundamental issues such as the power of the Mayor, the power of the EBC, the power of council, some of the proposals we have suggested in terms of the Independent Boundary Commission.

I notice, Madam Speaker, that the member opposite basically concurs with our position not to decrease the size of City Council. I agree with the member opposite. One city councillor per 21,000 residents and growing, to decrease that would be to appeal to a populist position that is unfounded in the day-to-day. I think, demand on city councillors. That's why, Madam Speaker, we have not proposed a decrease in the size of elected representatives on the City Council floor.

I look forward to the comments of the member on a great number of issues. Sometimes I believe, Madam Speaker, there will be agreements between us and I think in some areas there will be disagreements. One of the fundamental areas, Madam Speaker, that I know we will disagree on is the whole area of the Provincial Government in the planning process. In every province in Canada, there is a strong provincial say, an authority, on the ultimate planning for the particular municipality and the particular urban areas.

Madam Speaker, we believe strongly that the area of land that is surrounding Winnipeg and that may be part of Winnipeg, and also consistent with the planning that is going on in municipalities outside of the City of Winnipeg, because we have also stated in our White Paper that we have had development outside of Winnipeg sometimes at a greater degree than even inside Winnipeg and we should look at both sides of that equation, but we believe that a Provincial Government and any Provincial Government must ultimately have a say in those matters as it affects the grain space and agricultural land and the urban sprawl issues in the particular municipality.

In saying that, Madam Speaker, though, we have listened to a great deal of comment on the need for public input if the province is going to provide any changes to the proposed City of Winnipeg development plan. We have put into the proposed planning section of the City of Winnipeg that the Minister should not unilaterally sit in an office and make changes to a by-law that has been passed through public input into the City of Winnipeg, but rather any of those matters should go before a public process through the Municipal Board. We have placed that in our planning process so that we were consistent with public input through all levels and all stages of the planning process.

Madam Speaker, I would like to also touch briefly on the reassessment process that is taking place, and a section that was referred to in the Speech from the Throne dealing with Bill 57. I believe that reassessment should take place in the City of Winnipeg after 25 years. I know all of us do share that sentiment, and we believe that the reassessment process should take place in the most flexible and sensitive way possible.

There will be shifts, Madam Speaker, but there will be shifts on the basis of Bill 57, if City Council so desires to have those shifts take place within the various categories that have been established and have those shifts take place not going through the categories.

Madam Speaker, the projections in this House by members opposite and our members would be a shift of some \$26 million take place between the commercial category and the multiresidential category onto the homeowner. Now the differential mill rates, Madam Speaker, will allow those shifts to be stopped if City Council so desires by putting it at a differential mill rate.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, C. Santos, in the Chair.)

We think that makes sense, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but we believe it is the decision of the City Council that should be key in this matter, as they are the elected representatives dealing with the city. But no one should be under the illusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there won't be shifts taking place within the various categories. There will be massive shifts taking place from fundamentally the overvalued inner city housing to some of the undervalued suburban housing. Now, there are lots of exceptions to that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but that's generally the way it will go.

That is why also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, again consistent with comments that have been raised by members opposite and consistent with positions placed in our caucus, we will bring in phasing-in legislation so that the shifts that will take place, the increases that will take place, can be phased in over the next three years.

We believe that is a much more sensitive way to go, given the fact that there has not been radical reassessment in this city for some 25 years. We think that this legislation is sensitive and flexible, but it will allow the city to get to '75 values and it will allow the city to prevent shifts within classifications, but it will also allow the shifts to take place within those classifications. And that's the essence of the bill and the potential action of City Council.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have announced our funding levels to the City of Winnipeg. They are not massive funding levels and we said so when we announced them. We felt they were fair and reasonable. The funding level for the operating grant -(Interjection)- the operating level for the City of Winnipeg will be some 3 percent increase this year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the capital commitment will be some 16 percent to live up to our six year, \$90 million capital spending provision with the City of Winnipeg.

I understand, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Charleswood bridge has been placed lower on the priority list since the former Deputy Mayor has left. But you will have to talk to your colleagues at City Hall -(Interjection)- Mr. Deputy Speaker, we don't believe our funding is perfect but we do believe it is fair and reasonable under the circumstances.

But I would ask the members opposite to look at what their brothers and sisters are doing in Saskatchewan, where the funding level for municipalities has been frozen at zero percent for the next two years. I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that, for a government to spend \$100 million on a jacuzzi provision prior to the last election and then to freeze the legitimate goals

and desires of a municipality at zero for the next two years, is wrong-headed priorities, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we would not recommend on this side of the House - (Interjection) - \$1.2 billion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in deficit.

The other two areas that I would like to discuss are the two developments in this country that I think are of severe importance to all of us, and that is the whole issue of the wealth of individuals and the second issue is the wealth of the regions.

There is no question that the 13 percent personal income tax raise by the Federal Government, in combination of issues like exemptions, continuing exemptions, and additional exemptions such as the capital gains tax, is putting an undue pressure, an unfairness in terms of the tax system in this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is time we ended most of the unreasonable exemptions that are contained on page 1 of the income tax form so that the total revenue sources in this country can be fair and that we are not just hitting the individuals in the middle class with massive increases of taxation, some 13 percent increases in taxation for individuals, at the same time the capital gains tax has been allowed to rise to some \$500,000.00. I am against the proposal to put the limit up to \$500,000.00. I am totally opposed to it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am in favor of a fair taxation policy, and I am hoping that there will be a taxation policy so that the millions and millions of dollars - the Auditor General predicted there was some \$45 billion being written off in this country by wealthy corporations and some individuals - be allowed to be taxed on a fair basis, rather than that revenue being lost, Mr. Deputy Speaker, rather than that revenue being gained by the ordinary taxpayers that have had their taxes go up 13 percent in two years. The Federal Government, when they were in Opposition, promised us growth, growth, growth, and they have given us tax, tax, tax.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Pembina has a point of order?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wonder if the Honourable Minister might permit a question at this time?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Urban Affairs.

HON. G. DOER: When I finish my comments, yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'll be finished in time.

In conclusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the second issue that concerns me greatly is the whole issue of the wealth of our regions in this country. Since the Rowell-Sirois Report and many of the actions by our forefathers and foremothers in terms of Canadian building, we have had a strong Federal Government and strong regions, because of the way in which we have shared the wealth in this country to allow regions to succeed and to succeed very well over the years.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am totally opposed to a system in this country where the last predictions have been that some 90 percent to 95 percent increase in the wealth of this country is going to the Province of Ontario and specifically to the City of Toronto. I think it does not bode well for all the regions, particularly the west

when the wealth is being created in one area of the country and, at the same time, many of the regional development measures, the transfer payment measures, the wealth of individuals has been restricted in such a way that the wealth in the regions and the fairness, the sharing in the particular regions is not being shared equally in this country.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it's time that all of us speak on the issue of developing fairness in our regional development, and we should not have had a budget that decreased the amount of money that goes into regional development in the last federal budget, as we saw some two weeks ago as introduced by Mr. Wilson.

In conclusion, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have been pleased to speak on the Speech from the Throne to talk about some of the positive changes we are proposing for the City of Winnipeg, to talk about the crisis in agriculture that all of us share, and share in a very, very serious way, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I feel we have to have tax reform in this country so that individuals and the middle class that have been hit with a 13 percent increase, it will be spread to those groups who are now enjoying the \$45 billion exemptions, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Further, some of that \$45 billion I would like to see go into the agricultural crisis and to go into regional development in this country so that we just don't have a boom in Ontario and Toronto, but a boom in every part of this country.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister agreed that he would respond to a question. I believe he has time.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We've got two minutes.

MR. D. ORCHARD: When the Minister made his very forthright position against these wealthy Canadians who are avoiding the taxation system, my simple question for him is: did he clear that position with his Cabinet colleague, the Member for Transcona?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have heard the Member for Transcona consistently speak on the need for a fair tax system in this country. Ever since I've worked on the Member for Transcona's campaign in 1973, I've heard him speak on the issue of fair taxation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 1981, 60 Canadian corporations paid no income tax, and I think that the middle class should not be hit with a 13 percent increase in personal income tax as it has been in the last two years. At the same time, we're raising the capital gains tax exemption to .5 million.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know the Member for Transcona and every member of this caucus shares that priority to return fairness to our tax system.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. L. DERKACH: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am pleased to be able to rise today in debate of the Throne Speech, and I think it's a privilege for us

to be able to do this in a province and in a country that still lives by the principles of democracy.

Before I get into the Throne Speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to wish my leader and members on my side of the House much success and, by the looks of things as they're proceeding, I think we are having a successful Session on this side of the House.

I would also like to, on behalf of the constituents of Roblin-Russell, congratulate Doctor Johnson in becoming the Lieutenant-Governor for Manitoba, and also Mr. Justice Sterling Lyon.

To the members opposite, of course, my best wishes, and it is my hope that some sanity will prevail over there and, through the course of this Session, we will see some legislation that is positive and fruitful to Manitobans.

Now to the Throne Speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We're grossly disappointed in the content of the Throne Speech. For 45 minutes, MLA's and invited guests listened to the Lieutenant-Governor read a document that was supposed to represent the government's plan for the immediate future for this province. For 45 minutes, what did we hear? -(Interjection)- Wind and rabbit tracks is right. We heard a rehash of old promises. We heard bashing of the Federal Government. Now not only is this government taking it out on the Federal Government, but they have found two new victims, that being the Government of Saskatchewan and the Government of Alberta.

We heard excuses for inability to act because, all of a sudden, transfer payments were not available from the Federal Government, so therefore our programs were failing. We heard misrepresentations of facts, and there was no evidence of a plan for any vision for the future. Oh yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was a carefully crafted document, giving the impression that this government had concern and care for the plight of Manitobans.

If I were to base my remarks on the substance that was contained in that speech, my remarks would be very brief, so I must go beyond that. I must go to the concerns and the plight of people that I represent, the people in rural Manitoba, the people in my constituency.

I live in a rural constituency, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one whose livelihood is almost entirely dependent upon agriculture. The small service towns that are spotted throughout the constituency service the area, service the grain producers, the livestock producers. Those small towns, those small communities, are beginning to feel the squeeze very hard, and that is going to precipitate itself to the urban areas as well. It's just a matter of time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I think there is some impact being felt already, as we have seen the impact on Versatile, for example, a direct impact from what is happening in the rural economy.

A MEMBER: What help did this government give Versatile?

MR. L. DERKACH: Oh no, this government did not give any help to Versatile, but yet they blame the Federal Government for its inaction. Yet, it was the Federal Government that made a significant contribution in helping Versatile to become viable once again. What about the jobs that were created by the ability of

Versatile to continue, even though it is under new ownership? Those jobs are jobs for Manitobans, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they were not in any way enhanced by this government. It was an initiative that was put forth by the Federal Government, the government that this group, this bunch, continues to point at and blast every time they get up to answer a question.

I would not be representing my people properly if I did not emphasize the appeal to this government for the need of immediate action to help the farmers in this province. As has been said by my colleagues, by my leader, the farm situation is in a crisis state. Unfortunately, we can't get through to the Minister of Agriculture. He has not been able to understand the plight of Manitoba farmers.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some three weeks ago, or perhaps it's a month ago now, the Minister of Agriculture visited my constituency on an invitation from, I believe, it was the Manitoba Pool Elevators Association and also some of the R.M.'s. He drove up in a government car and, on the government car, was a large sticker or a sticker on the back window that was promoting his party. What a cheap way to propagate your party, Mr. Deputy Speaker. At whose expense? At taxpayers' expense -(Interjection)- oh yes, it's fine to go in a government car. I did not say he could not go in a government car. But you did not see my leader or anybody from this side of the House drive a government car, pasting our party stickers on it. I don't think that's in very good taste at all, and neither did the people from my constituency think that was a very good on the part of the Minister of Agriculture.

Nevertheless, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the meeting went on. And what did we hear at the meeting from this Minister of Agriculture? Not very much, not very much more than we've heard here in the House. For every question that was asked, this Minister would stand up and accuse the Federal Government for not doing its share. He did not offer one single program, not one single plan of action that he was willing to undertake to help those destitute grain producers, and he left the meeting. I talk to those farmers on a weekly basis, many of whom were at that meeting, and what do they think of our Minister of Agriculture? They shrug and they say, well when is this guy going to realize what the true situation out in rural Manitoba is.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I doubt whether this Minister will ever realize what a desperate situation is like in rural Manitoba. This is the government that continues to say that they are the ones who stand up for Manitoba. All through the election campaign we saw: "This is the government that stands up for Manitoba."

How do they stand up for Manitoba, Mr. Deputy Speaker? They kind of slouch in their chairs and hope that the problems will go away. Do they stand up for Manitoba when the Member for Virden called for the Agricultural Committee to come into Session and to hear the plight of farmers from farmers, not from us, from Chambers of Commerce and from concerned Manitobans? Did they stand up for Manitobans then? Not a bit, not a single one, they all voted the same way.

For the last week-and-a-half, my leader and my colleagues have questioned the government with regard to its plans for agriculture. Why are we doing this, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Because we on this side of the House

understand what the plight of farmers is. We understand the situation out there. Many of us are farmers; we come from the rural area. But that message, that kind of understanding is not present on the other side of the House.

Every time one of the Ministers, whether it was the Premier or whether it was the Minister of Agriculture, would stand up in response to a question, what did we hear? We heard nothing but empty words or words that would blast the Federal Government or blasting the Saskatchewan Government or bashing the Alberta Government. Not once did they say, well we do have a plan. We will just have to wait till we get it together and then we'll present it. Not once did they admit that there was a hint of some good action by members from this side of the House.

There were several suggestions of how this government could act to help the farmer. Yet today, nothing has been done. The promises that this government had before the election have gone astray.

Why did Manitobans elect a socialist government? Did they elect a socialist government because Manitobans are socialists? Absolutely not. Manitobans elected this government because of the vast array of promises that were made to Manitobans under false pretenses, Mr. Deputy Speaker, promises which have not been kept, promises which cannot be kept.

I think that the cartoon in the Winnipeg Free Press showing our Honourable Premier holding a tin cup with a little sign saying: "I'm destitute, please help," is symbolic of the state that this government is in.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have the Minister of Agriculture who sees it more popular to bash Ottawa, to bash Saskatchewan, to bash Alberta than it is to help Manitoba farmers who are in desperate straits. These are typical responses that we have from the entire government, whether it is the Minister of Agriculture or whether it's the Minister of Education or the Minister of Highways, or whoever it might be. Their responses are all the same. I think they get together in their little Cabinet or their little caucus room and they say, here are the answers that we're going to use today. I think they're stuck on one answer; they've been stuck on that answer for the last Session-and-a-half.

On Friday, for example, I asked the Minister of Education about the High School Review.

A MEMBER: Did you get answer No. 1 or 2?

MR. L. DERKACH: Well, I think I got the same answer that the rest of them give.

So what did he stand up and say? He didn't give us any kind of an answer. Last year, when we asked him about the High School Review, he said, well we'll have a plan of action ready for October. Well then he said, not really October, because we can't have it ready then. We'll have it ready in December. Well December has come and gone. We're into the spring of the year, and we have seen no position paper yet.

So in sincerity, I asked the Minister of Education when this position paper was coming down. Well now we really don't have a date. We just started working on it and, whenever it happens, it will. We may or may not come up with a position paper. It kind of depends, but it's probably the Federal Government's fault in some way.

So we have a government, we have Ministers who catapult themselves from one crisis to another. We should not be surprised, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about this kind of attitude, about this inaction and about the way that the responses are coming, because somewhere in their surveys this bunch has foolishly ascertained that it is more popular to bash the Federal Government, the Opposition and anybody else to get Manitoban's attention away from the real important details that this government should be addressing.

So there is no concern for the economic plight of Manitobans. There is concern only for their own selfish well-being and the enhancement of their own ideology, which serves no one but themselves, a wicked and destructive action which will be paid for by Manitobans for several generations. I guess we'll see more of this kind of response, this kind of attitude, as we continue through this Session, because this government is broke and it is defunct of ideas. Its actions have been irresponsible and irrational and here we have a government that has no vision and no regard for its inhabitants. Even the Premier has stooped to a low ebb in the way that he has responded to questions that have been posed to him lately.

The Throne Speech had something with regard to Manitoba families. The government tries to show the people of this province how it cares. It's got a caring and sharing attitude, and all of this is a facade. They make eloquent speeches that they are committed to this ideal of sharing and caring, and what do we see?

Well, let's take a look at our day-care system. Instead of trying to be flexible and allowing private day-care centres to operate in this province, this government says no. We want to control day-care centres. We want to control everything. So what is their ideology, Mr. Deputy Speaker? State control of the individual from the cradle to the grave, that is what they're all about.

What about health care, Mr. Deputy Speaker? This is the government that cares and shares for Manitobans, and yet what has happened? We see large blocks of beds close in major hospitals. We see people being shifted out of hospitals into what? I don't know what they call it anymore. They just come and go, and you're sent home as soon as you see the doctor. You can't stay in the hospital anymore. And this is the way this government cares for Manitobans. Is it standing up for Manitobans? Is this what you call standing up for Manitobans?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. L. DERKACH: I say to this government: why don't you let the people of Manitoba be free? Instead of trying to be the player and referee both, why don't you get back on track and play the role that a government is supposed to play? I believe that Manitobans need less government in their lives instead of more government, but let's have proper government.

Manitobans need, for example, greater protection from criminals, sex offenders and child abusers. Deterrents must be put in place where offenders are severely discouraged from committing those offences again—(Interjection)—oh, and you say, more money. More money for what? For the protection of Manitobans, is that so wrong? All of us in this Assembly, I'm sure,

would support a move that would discourage offenders from repeat offences. Society needs more protection, not less, both in urban and rural areas, not like the move that was made by this government in reducing the law enforcement agencies in Southwestern Manitoba. That is not offering Manitobans greater protection, not at all. I'm sure that, even by its own surveys that it conducts, this government must realize the desire of Manitobans for a better system of justice to protect the innocent.

What about our education system, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

A MEMBER: No, don't talk about that.

MR. L. DERKACH: Well, we just heard a response from that long ago, during question period today, from the Minister of Education with regard to a straightforward question that was posed to him. He could not give us an answer, just bafflegab.

Funding for our universities and for our public school system is a concern. The condition did not occur this year. It's been creeping up on this government for the past number of years, and why? If only this government had passed along those transfer fees from the Federal Government to our universities, today our universities would probably be in a better state than they are. Why is there no long-term plan for financing our universities, for funding our universities? Why isn't there a long-term plan? Well it's kind of a band-aid situation here. You just go from one situation to the next. Why doesn't this Minister meet with the universities and discuss funding levels and needs of universities and decide on a long-term plan? Well I think that's just showing a little bit of his incompetence.

Well, what about the public school funding? This funding is in a mess, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Before I came into this Legislature, the Member for Morris raised this issue and tried to impress upon the government that this formula was not working. Last Session, we again addressed this concern and we again pointed out to the government that the formula was not working. But did they listen? Did the Minister take any of this under -(Interjection)- how many divisions, he says, are complaining this year? Mr. Deputy Speaker, obviously he has not been out to the rural school divisions or to the school divisions to see how many are complaining. How many formulas do we have today, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We're not sure. We have at least three, maybe four, and then we have some grandfathered school divisions, and then we have some that we're just kind of throwing money at to keep them quiet for a while.

We have pointed out the shortcomings of the GSE formula for a long time. Mr. Deputy Speaker. This government prides itself in saying that we have kept the foundation levy constant, and our support for schools has increased. Well, let's take a look at some statistics from Brandon School Division where, in 1984, the provincial support was about 82 percent. In 1986, that support had gone down to 74 percent. What about their special levy? Where did the special levy go? It went from 22.3 mills in 1984 to 39.9 mills in 1986. Why? And why? -(Interjection)- the Minister says, well I never changed the special levy. What a foolish answer, typical again of a Minister not being able to understand the

situation. The provincial levy goes down, so who has to pick up the slack? The local taxpayer, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I go to the funding of public schools in saying that the Premier committed himself to 90 percent funding for school divisions by 1990. Last Thursday, the Premier said that this commitment has now withered into a hope.

A MEMBER: Withered into a hoax.

MR. L. DERKACH: I think it's withered into a hoax is right.

So can school divisions expect any move towards the 90 percent funding? I say no.

What does the GSE formula do? I think it's been pointed out by the Brandon School Division, who took the lead in this attempt to get some reason and sanity into the formula, that the formula was inadequate because all it was doing was rewarding those school divisions whose spendings were high in the previous year. So if I was a school division that practised some efficiency and practised some cutbacks in spending, how was I rewarded by this government? I was rewarded by getting fewer or smaller per pupil grants for the current year. That's the way this formula works, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Yet this Minister will not change that formula to reflect the needs of Manitoba school divisions. It's just another example of incompetence.

But we will not change our approach. We will keep pressing for a change in that formula, so the burden of taxes will not be shifted to local taxpayers but will be the province's as it should be.

Even the Brandon School Division, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it asked this Minister where his long-term plan was. I'd like to read the question to you: The question must be asked whether or not there is a long-term plan or only short-term decisions which result in the creation of new stopgap formulas." That's what this government is about. That's what this Minister is about, creating new formulas as stopgap solutions.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I guess we could spend the entire time on funding, but that's not the only problem there is in education. What about the quality of education when we talk about quality of education throughout? What has this government done with regard to quality of education in our schools? I say this for the record, that after pressure from this side of the House, the former Minister finally agreed to a high school review. Then I think they were going to shelve it. They were hoping that we wouldn't touch it last year. Then when we did raise it, the Minister of Education said yes, we're going to have a high school review. But where is this high school review? What's happening with it?

The Minister scoffs; he huffs and puffs. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the high school review has gone nowhere yet. In talking to several school divisions, I haven't found one division that can tell me what the status of the high school review is. There are some meetings behind closed doors, as I understand it. There are some conflicts in terms of what the position should be with regard to the working papers. We've talked about a high school review for a long time. Parents, administrators, teachers have asked for a high school

review for years, and yet there's procrastination. There's an unwillingness to go ahead with it as expediently as possible.

HON. J. STORIE: Why don't you check some of this out then?

MR. L. DERKACH: He says: "Why don't you check some of this out?" Where has the high school review gone? I've asked him in the House where it is. He couldn't tell me. All he could do was baffle me.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm sure, if the Minister had it his way and if we would stop pressuring him on the high school review, he would sweep that high school review process under some rug and leave it there and hope that no one would ever mention it again, because he hasn't got the courage to go ahead with the proper high school review. But we won't let that happen. Just because we have an incompetent Minister, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will continue to push for a proper high school review.

How competent did this Minister appear when he proposed to keep teachers' salaries at zero percent? He was going to be the hero, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and he made the statement that now he was going to have the teachers' salaries frozen at zero percent.

A MEMBER: That was a Christmas story.

MR. L. DERKACH: Yes, that was a Christmas story.

He was going to entice them by giving them a minuscule fund that would be administered by the board and the teachers. What does this do to our bargaining process in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Yet, what did we see in other sectors of our society? Well I know, for example in the Civil Service, there was something like a 4 percent increase for this year, but yet teachers were asked to take zero percent. Well now, is this Minister prepared to intervene in the arbitration process? Where is the arbitration process now? What is he going to do with his fund when school divisions, in fact, settle above zero percent? We're going to watch with interest as to where this is all going to, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The education system in Manitoba, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is plagued with many problems, ranging from funding to programs, transportation, right through the whole array in the education field. But I'm going to leave education now for a while.

I'll leave the Minister alone, and I'd like to mention Crown corporations, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This area has been touched by my leader and my colleagues of this House, and there has been more money squandered in this area, I think, than in any other area that the government has under its jurisdiction.

We saw the MTX fiasco. What could \$27 million - and ticking higher, I suppose - do for this province? Well what could it do for our farmers? -(Interjection)- well are you proud of the MTX affair? You were the originator of the MTX affair, Mr. Minister. Are you proud of it? Twenty-seven million dollars, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what could that do for our health system? What could that do for our education system? What could that do for our farmers? But where is it? Squandered by an incompetent Minister and an incompetent government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have to publicly thank my leader and the Member for Pembina for attacking this government and for finally bringing the issue to the fore and making sure that this Minister resign from that portfolio so that there wouldn't be any more squandering of money, or at least not that much squandering of money as there was under his jurisdiction. The Premier did not have the audacity to ask him to resign.

But did he resign from Cabinet? Oh, no, because then that would mean he wouldn't have a salary, so therefore you only resign one part of it and you keep the other just to keep that salary going.

Well we go from one Crown corporation to another. Then we have Manfor. What kind of incredible losses have we had in this corporation? But regardless of the losses, this government tries to say that Manitoba is doing well under its Crown corporations. How much more time will elapse before the losses get so incredible that this corporation will also be dumped? If this Minister cannot handle that portfolio, why doesn't the Premier ask him to resign?

Instead of this, what do we find? We find that we're going to have another layer of bureaucracy. We're going to have another group of Ministers oversee the Crowns. What are they going to do with them? Well we're going to have more bungling. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say that, if a Minister is not capable of looking after a portfolio, it should be taken away from him instead of creating other layers of bureaucracy. This government is deteriorating into a joke.

What about Flyer Industries? It's been mentioned already. After millions of dollars of losses, what happened to this corporation? Did they sell it? No, they had an offer to sell it, but that wasn't politically expedient for them. So what do you do? You give it away, and then you give some fringe benefits with it. Why do you do that? Because it makes you look good to some sectors.

And the list goes on to MPIC. It's unfortunate that the Minister responsible for MPIC is not here. But what kind of management and responsibility do we have when we look at the Carman Agri Service situation? If it hadn't been for the Member for Pembina, where would this enterprise be? It may still be there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but at least there might be a glimmer of hope. We would have a livelihood ruined. We would have people put out of jobs, people put on welfare. Why? Because this Minister bungled it, because he didn't know how to do it. He is incompetent. Again, does the Premier ask him to resign? No, he just keeps staying on. We'll keep losing more.

A MEMBER: Who's he going to replace him with?

MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I shudder to think what we haven't uncovered yet and what still remains that we don't know about in these Crowns.

Then we go to Workers Compensation. Here is the new loser on the street; it's joined the bunch of losers that we have. When the Conservative Government left office, Workers Compensation was in a surplus. Now it's millions of dollars in debt. Do you know what the Minister of Highways said to us across from his seat the other day? He said, it's the former administration's

fault, because they were charging premiums that were too low and their payouts were too low. That's why Workers Compensation was in trouble. What an attitude!

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to move on, and I'd like to say a few more words about agriculture in the time that's left. Agriculture is near and dear to me, because I am a farmer, but the time has come to face the challenge at hand. I ask the Minister of Agriculture to put aside those political ideals that he has and to stop blaming the Federal Government, the Saskatchewan Government and the Alberta Government, and to face the situation in front of him.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier was in my constituency two weeks ago and, when he spoke to a school opening, he said, "I had a unique experience today." -(Interjection)- We let him in this time. But after 18 years in politics, he said that he had the unique experience of having both sides of the House agree on a bill. I expect or I would hope that this Premier could have another unique experience because, if he brought something sensible into this House with regard to agriculture, he would find how quickly we could agree, but we're waiting for that. But I'm not sure whether the Minister of Agriculture can do that.

We mentioned several programs that could be implemented, and I'm glad the Minister of Agriculture is here to hear them, because I think that some of the suggestions were genuine and I think they were meant to help the farmers, not simply to grandstand. The first suggestion came from the Member for Arthur, who said that we should implement a land conservation and family preservation plan - a sensible plan. It makes sense to us. It even made sense to some of the members across the way, and I'm wondering whether the Minister of Agriculture could really bring himself to seriously consider something like that.

The Member for Virden brought forth several different ideas. He said: "Why don't we take a look at the Saskatchewan Loan Assistance Plan to farmers?" He said: "We don't have to reinvent the wheel every time we want to implement a program," and that's what the Minister of Health said today. Let's take a look at the positive aspects of that program, and see if we can apply it to the farmers in Manitoba.

What about a fuel rebate to the farmers in Manitoba? What is wrong with assisting farmers who use fuel to put in their crops with a bit of a rebate? What about interest relief for MACC? I must congratulate the Minister of Agriculture for putting in that plan last year. There are other initiatives, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which I'm sure could be embarked on.

Can the Minister or the Premier bring themselves around to some meaningful discussion on these topics? Will the Minister call the Standing Committee on Agriculture to listen to farmers, to Chambers of Commerce and to people who may have some concern and regard for agriculture? There are monies available if we want to make them available.

What do we do by propping up the farm economy? We keep the rural communities going. First of all, we keep the farmers going and then we keep the rural communities going. Then we keep businesses open, farm machinery businesses open, and we also keep manufacturers open in the city. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it keeps jobs alive. So therefore, the economy starts to grow; the economy starts to move. It isn't stagnated.

I say, in a time of stress, in a time of total economic breakdown in agriculture, it is time for us on both sides of this House to pool our resources together, not merely to throw good money after bad, but to assist the farmers who are in a genuine dilemma and who need help at least in the short interim.

If we want to, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we can find the funds, and nobody is going to criticize the government if they have to take it out of general revenue in the short interim, because that is really propping up the Manitoba economy. Everyone knows that, if a rural economy is strong, the rest of the economy is healthy as well. I live next to Saskatchewan and I see the effects of those programs, and they are positive. I see the differentials in the fuel prices and I know that those programs are a benefit to those farmers.

Let's not try to be cute. Let's not put programs in place that mean nothing to anyone, such as - and I give one example - the Farm Start Program. How many people have taken advantage of the Farm Start Program to date? When I checked last with MACC, there hadn't been any.

A MEMBER: Oh, this fake program. No wonder he wouldn't tell us the other day in the House when he was asked how many.

MR. L. DERKACH: Is this Minister now going to bring in the Land Bank Program, a program which did not work before?

I challenge this House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join us in our desire to do something positive for agriculture in Manitoba. In moving the Throne Speech, the Member for Lac du Bonnet attempted to illustrate the need for support for the agriculture industry but, unfortunately, I think he was embarrassed by his move just prior to his speech because, in his move to support the action of this government, he clearly showed that he was not supporting the farmers and the farmers of his constituency. But that's not surprising, because I think the Member for Lac du Bonnet has found himself in that kind of a position before.

In closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to put it on record that the Throne Speech did little for Manitobans. It lacked in vision, in direction and substance, giving little hope for constructive action on the part of the government. This government has lost sight of its mandate, and has resorted to blaming everyone for its despicable performance.

Who stands up for Manitobans, Mr. Deputy Speaker? On the MTX issue, who stood up for Manitobans? Was it the NDP? No, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was this side of the House. Who stood up for Carman Agriculture? Was it the government? No, it was this side of the House. Who stands up for agriculture? Well, we haven't seen anything out of that bunch over there. What about Crown corporation losses? Who stood up for that? That government? No, it was this side of the House. And who has been standing up for education and funding of education and quality of education? Has it been the Minister? No, it certainly has not.

I close in the hope that some sanity will prevail over there, and somewhere or somehow there will be some glimmer of hope in what can be done by this administration for Manitobans.

Monday, 9 March, 1987

Thank you very much.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Transportation.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I take a great deal of pleasure and pride in joining in the Throne Speech Debate on this occasion, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I firstly want to take this opportunity to mention a few people, I think, who deserve thanks and compliments. I think it's true that very often members of the Legislature can vent their frustrations by standing up here for 40 minutes and berating the Opposition or the Government, as the case may be, and they get rid of a lot of their pent-up frustration. You don't see that many nervous breakdowns and difficulties in politicians, I think, because of the fact that they can stand up here and give someone heck in a very formal way with a 40-minute time frame. Not that many people can get someone to listen to them for 40 minutes, and vet their complaints and their concerns. It's one way of doing that, that we have I think that keeps sanity on this side, as the Member for Roblin-Russell was hoping would exist and would continue to prevail on this side of the House.

But I want to, before I stand up here and raise some concerns with the Opposition, and talk about a few of the programs and policies that we have put in place for the people of Manitoba that I think have benefited the people of Manitoba over the last number of years, just extend my congratulations to the new Lieutenant-Governor who has been appointed. I think he will be a worthy representative of Her Majesty in Manitoba.

I also want to extend best wishes to the former Lieutenant-Governor, Her Honour Pearl McGonigal, who I believe served that office well. I had the opportunity to act as her landlord, as Minister of Government Services, for a number of years, and she took a great deal of pride and interest in calling me her landlord every time I saw her. But I'll tell you that I believe she did an excellent job as Lieutenant-Governor in the Province of Manitoba.

I also want to express some of these compliments in a very sincere way. I noticed that the Member for Brandon West decided to go and compliment a few people at the beginning of his speech, but then I read on and I came to the conclusion that he wasn't very sincere about what he was saying. He said - and it's a selective quote - "The key to political success is sincerity. Once you can learn to fake that, Madam Speaker, you've got it made." Now I think that the Member for Brandon West, if he believes that he can fake sincerity, then he's not got the key to success, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Brandon West raising a point of order. Would the member state his point of order?

MR. J. McCRAE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, the Minister of Highways has really flushed me out, and he has shown the House what he means by sincerity when he spoke about this definition of sincerity. I wish he'd read the few lines before. I, in fact, insist that he do that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Disagreement about what's been said is not a point of order.

The Minister of Highways.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member across the way was insulting this side of the House and the New Democrats generally by saying that this is our creed; that is, that we fake sincerity and that's the key to our political success. Of course, I can see clearly that the Member for Brandon West is definitely on the wrong track insofar as his own personal political success if he believes that is the case for any politician in this House. Certainly sincerity is not something you can fake.

So, when I give compliments to people in this room and in this Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm saying that with all sincerity. I want to compliment my colleagues for the excellent work and job that they have been doing, the Ministers in Cabinet, and the backbenchers in caucus on this side of the House.

Particularly, I want to compliment our House Leader. I think our House Leader has taken steps to restore order and sanity as much as any can in this House. It's not being done by himself. It is being done in conjunction with the Opposition House Leader as well, and I want to extend compliments to both of those House Leaders, because I believe that they have demonstrated cooperation can exist between the parties. It's very important that they be recognized for this work and that their leadership carry over into the caucuses, to the other members in this House as we move forward during this Session so that we can stick to the issues, as the Member for St. Norbert is saying. He's a little bit embarrassed at the fact that he's getting so many compliments, but the fact is they are made with sincerity. I really believe that he and the Member for Churchill have been doing a great job as House Leaders in this House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to just say though that it is imperative on all of us, when we do stand up here and vet our frustrations in our speeches and bring forward our concerns and suggestions, that we do not perpetrate misinformation on other members of this House, and that we do not use misinformation and partial truths in our questions in this House and in our answers in this House, but that we accurately reflect the facts to the best of our ability.

I think that point is being missed by members of the Opposition in many instances in this House. They have used selective information, misinformation in this House on many occasions. I won't go into the many examples in their Throne Speeches, but I will mention a few that they have brought forward insofar as their questions in this House.

I guess one of the most blatant examples that I've witnessed was the one personally brought forward to my attention by the Member for Ste. Rose, coached by the Member for Pembina, when he gave the information to this House and left on the record that the bridge north of Selkirk was now going to cost 50 percent more than the estimates, and that is \$28 million. That kind of misinformation ended up in the hands of the Member for River East, who either heard it in caucus or discussed it with the Member for Pembina, as he lays his leadership plans in the Opposition caucus.

But they should realize, the Member for Ste. Rose, the Member for River East should remember that the Member for Pembina has also been referred to on many occasions as a loose cannon. He strikes out; he misses many more times than he hits. Eventually, he does strike something out of the bush, but usually he's missed all over and he's firing like a loose cannon. And those members, the rookie members for Ste. Rose and River East, should take some thought, take it seriously, consider very seriously whether they want to be that kind of a politician who is going to miss 99 times out of 100 and be known as a loose cannon, as opposed to someone who does indeed do a thorough job of research before he gets into questions and issues.

That kind of statement by the Member for Ste. Rose was, I don't think, becoming of him as a representative of that constituency. I hope that, in the future, he will stick to the facts when he brings information to this House and when he raises questions in this House and that he does not distort it.

I think it's important that when he does bring information that is misrepresentative of the facts in this House, he should stand up - he owes that out of respect - in this House and clarify that misinformation and apologize for it to this House. I think that's very important. He has not done that to this point in time.

There are other examples of misinformation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we've also seen. Of course, we've seen the situation surrounding agricultural assistants in this province and the members there have chosen - as a matter of fact, the Member for Roblin-Russell was referring to bashing Saskatchewan and Alberta, but he doesn't remember the fact that it is that side of the House that has brought forward the comparison, and said Saskatchewan and Alberta are doing all of these things for agriculture in their provinces and now we should be doing more here.

But the fact is that the information that they were using - and it was a Western Producer magazine article that they chose to use as the basis for their comparison without doing any research into the facts. So we saw a prime example there of misinformation in this House being used as a basis for their question, without them first determining whether that information was accurate or not. They seemed not to be concerned whether it's accurate, whether the people of Manitoba are getting the facts with regard to agriculture, a very important topic.

You know, Manitoba is not doing enough. The farmers are in very difficult straits. We all recognize that, and the fact is they are in difficult straits right across this country and in many places of the world. However, there is a need for greater leadership and initiative to be shown at the federal level.

Now, when we're dealing with agriculture, the fact is, in '86-'87 alone, there were \$106 million - \$106,512,000 - and in addition to that, there was other indirect aid given to the farm community of some \$53-\$54 million in fuel tax and retail sales tax rebates that they did not have to pay. So if you add those up, it's close to the \$160 million that we're referring to in one year in assistance to the farm community, rather than the \$34 or \$36 million that was referred to by the Leader of the Opposition in his questions, and perhaps by the Agriculture critic as well.

The fact is that, on a per farmer basis, Manitoba is doing very well and has to do more, and we intend to

do more in the future. But one thing that the Member for Virden should realize is that, by putting up a smokescreen and attacking this Provincial Government, he is not going to be able to change the attitudes of the farmers as to the facts. That is, the farmers know that agriculture is a federal responsibility for years. It is the same in this country as it is in other countries, the same as it is in the European Common Market, in the United States. How much does North Dakota put in to aid the farmers who are in difficulty there? The fact is, the states do not put in those kinds of figures of aid to agriculture. They don't do that in other countries. In the European community, they are very much receiving federal aid under federal programs. It is not a matter of the states or the local governments providing assistance for agriculture. And in Canada, it is the same.

But we have the Federal Government coming forward with low initial payments that are going to break the farmers, 20 percent reduction last year and it looks like another 20 percent - (Interjection) - dastardly 20 percent reduction this year that will cripple the farm community if that is allowed to happen.

That is why our Premier and Minister of Agriculture have taken some leadership and said to the Federal Government and to John Wise, the Minister of Agriculture, who is telling farmers to pay more attention to the marketplace and not rely on the federal treasury when deciding what crops to plant, that they must take leadership. They must show leadership, and they must take action during this difficult time. No amount of smokescreen from the Opposition in this House is going to change the attitude of farmers and the people of Manitoba as to the facts. They know that the Federal Government is not active.

They are not taking substantive action. Deficiency payments are not going to replace the initial prices, the low initial prices that they are announcing. They have to keep those initial prices up because the fact is, if they do not, the farm community is going to be in a very difficult situation in terms of credit and the ability to obtain credit to get the next crop in.

So those are the facts. Instead of doing something about it at the federal level, they continue to complicate further the plight of the farmers in Western Canada instead of taking action.

We can look at The Patent Act, at the farm chemicals, the fact that the Federal Government has refused to take action that would see a sharp reduction in farm chemicals in this country. In fact, what they've done is the opposite. They've introduced changes to The Patent Act that will increase pharmaceutical drugs by a tremendous amount over the next number of years, and the Keystone Agriculture Producers have recognized the significance of that move insofar as farm chemicals are concerned. As a matter of fact, the Keystone Agriculture Producers have passed a resolution to vigorously oppose proposed amendments to The Patent Act. They said that the higher prescription drug prices will result from monopoly pricing of pharmaceuticals without generic drug competition, and generic drugs have saved Canadians \$211 million in the year 1983 alone. That's taken from a commission report by Professor Harry Eastman.

They are very concerned, the Keystone Agriculture Producers, with this move by the Federal Government,

led by the Member of Parliament for Dauphin-Swan River, the same constituency that the Member for Ste. Rose is in, and he has not raised that issue in this House. He hasn't spoken out when his Member of Parliament is leading the crusade to raise drug prices for senior citizens and others by millions of dollars in this province and country. He has sat on his hands; he hasn't done anything.

Now they say -(Interjection)- I seemed to hit a hornet's nest over there. The facts are . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Right. Now this is honest. This is the truth. The fact is what they are saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker is that somehow there are going to be all kinds of jobs created in Eastern Canada. All these jobs in the chemical industries that are going to be created in Eastern Canada. We're, in Manitoba and Western Canada, supposed to pay for those mythical jobs that might be created by their actions.

Is that fair? Is that something that we should all be supporting in this province? That's like throwing in the extra dollars for the CF-18 contract that it cost the people of Canada so that jobs could be created in Quebec. Is that something we should support? It's the same thing. There is no reason why Manitobans shouldn't be speaking out vigorously, and Canadians generally, against that kind of policy that the Federal Government is putting in place.

Those members across the way, Mr. Deputy Speaker, should be leading the assault on the Federal Government with regard to that. They should be leading, because they apparently have some kind of inroads with their federal brothers and cousins in Ottawa. If they will talk to them, if they will talk to this Opposition, they should stand up and make their point known so that they don't go ahead blindly trying to stymie debate on that issue at the hearings, and holding them in Ottawa and making it difficult for people to make representation to hear the facts with regard to that issue.

Enough of that issue, but that is typical of the kind of approach the Federal Government has taken towards the patent issue, drugs, and certainly they have done nothing with regard to farm chemicals. They could be doing a substantial amount to reduce the input costs for producers, and they have failed to do that, while at the same time allowing the Wheat Board to continue to announce lower and lower initial prices.

Now you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the situation in Saskatchewan, as the members sometimes like to refer to as "the golden land at the end of the rainbow," should realize that in Saskatchewan things have gotten very very bad. Mr. Lane, the Finance Minister for Saskatchewan, recently was quoted as saying that the deficit is triple - well, he didn't say that, but he was quoted as saying that the deficit will hit 1.2 billion, which is triple as a fact of what he had first announced. For the year, '86-87, 1.2 billion in one year, three times - and the members opposite talk about mismanagement by a New Democratic Government - three times by a Tory Government in Saskatchewan! What's going on? I thought they had the secret to success, to balanced budgets and so on.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair.)

But they're going to take action there. He said he's not worried. Mr. Lane says he's not worried even though it's triple. He is going to take some action. He's going to take some action on the backs of the average working person in Saskatchewan.

Even Garth White of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business was critical of Lane and the administration. He said the government must take a lot of the blame. "The fact is Saskatchewan's deficit is out of control. We're on the brink of disaster." That is Garth White of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. That's not a union leader in Saskatchewan. That is Garth White of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. He says that the Saskatchewan Government has failed miserably, but they are going to take some action, not on the revenue side -(Interjection)- well, the fact is that the members opposite continually refer to Saskatchewan as the golden land. That's how it's supposed to be done, but look at the facts.

They are going to freeze wages there for two years, they said. They are going to cut 2,000 jobs. They are going to do all of those things that are going to hurt average people in the Province of Saskatchewan. Now that certainly isn't what the people of Manitoba want in this province, and it certainly isn't what they are going to see when the Minister of Finance brings down his Budget very shortly.

We don't want to bash Saskatchewan and Alberta, but the fact is it is those people opposite, Madam Speaker, those Opposition members, who consistently use Saskatchewan as the example that we should be following in how Tories operate. So it's good to bring out some of those facts.

The fact is, Manitoba is doing very well. You know we can look at my own constituency a little bit, and I would like to talk about the Dauphin constituency. The fact is that, in 1981, when the Lyon Government was ousted by the people of Manitoba after one term because of ineptitude, because of acute protracted restraint, because of a lack of sensitivity and because of a lack of recognizing the importance of government's initiative in the economy, we had a situation in Dauphin - I was on the town council at that time, and I recall that there was very little hope. It was doom and gloom for people in 1981.

There was difficulty getting any assistance for urban and municipal infrastructure from the province. There was no program whatsoever at that time, no assistance. Well, they have the grant-in-aid that's been in place through the Highways Department, but nothing in addition to that to help municipalities with special projects that they might want to undertake. The whole initiative was stifled at the local level. The hospitals were frozen for a couple of years. The Dauphin Hospital was a victim and the planning process began again.

There were a number of other serious concerns that were raised at that time. The Member for Sturgeon Creek, I believe, was the Minister for Business Development or something of that nature at that time, and he had an audit of the Parkland Regional Development Corporation for no reason whatsoever. They were in very difficult straits, because of the aspersions that that audit cast on their integrity. There

was the recommendation and then the closing of Smith Jackson School in the south end of Dauphin. There was only talk about the Dauphin by-pass. There was very little action on highways and roads. There was no assistance for beef producers. It was very difficult at that time in 1981.

But since that time, we have seen a complete turnaround in the attitude and in the results in the Dauphin constituency and throughout Manitoba, at least in terms of the attitude of people towards the future. We've seen help and assistance for bridges for rural municipalities. We have seen assistance for the arenas and recreational facilities that enhance the quality of life in rural areas. We've seen progress and development in health care on health care projects, on capital projects, on new schools for the communities in that area, Madam Speaker. We have seen the results all around and the people responded positively last March 18 because of that.

So we've seen results. We've seen Main Street Manitoba in places like Dauphin and Winnipegosis. We've seen help and assistance for bridges for rural municipalities. We have seen assistance for the arenas and recreational facilities that enhance the quality of life in rural areas. We've seen progress and development in health care on health care projects, on capital projects, on new schools for the communities in that area, Madam Speaker. We have seen the results all around and the people responded positively last March 18 because of that.

They did not, Madam Speaker, elect this government under false pretences. They elected - as the Member for Roblin-Russell just said in his speech, that is not why they elected this government. They re-elected this government because of the results and the example that we demonstrated over the first four years of our government, the fact that we would work for the people of Manitoba. That is why they re-elected this government, not on the basis of promises, Madam Speaker.

And we will continue, Madam Speaker, to work for the people of this province right across the province even in all of the - despite the inept representation by members across the way, even despite their lack of understanding of the issues, we will get results for their constituencies. We will get results. We will work for the people in the Member for Emerson's constituency and we will work for the Member for Ste. Rose and the Member for Portage la Prairie, despite the fact that he is not encouraging us in a positive way to do so. We will still do that, Madam Speaker.

And I can assure -(Interjection)- well, the Member for Brandon West will also be able to take some pride in the results of this government because everyone benefits from good government in the whole province. And I want those members to know, opposite, that is my intent that I would only hope that they will endeavour to bring forward the facts.

I want to compliment the new critic for Highways - he's just been named to that post - and I want to let him know that I want to wish him well and to hope that he can stay in that office for many years in the future and bring forward good suggestions and constructive suggestions in the highways and transportation area that the government can act upon. But surely, it is incumbent upon him to not continue on the wrong foot that he started with here last week when he asked his first questions about highways and transportation in this province.

Let me just mention - the fact is that I have clearly stated in this House that the North of Selkirk Bridge was located there for reasons that are a matter of record. The fact is that the R.M. of St. Clements, the R.M. of St. Andrews, the Town of Selkirk, the Selkirk and District Chamber of Commerce, the Selkirk and District Planning Board, all of those organizations asked us to put the bridge in a north of Selkirk location. We do not ignore the positions.

The Member for Emerson wants something south of Winnipeg. He thinks that's the only place where you can put anything that's worthwhile perhaps. The fact is that there are constituencies that are underserved over the years in this province, and we have to recognize their needs too. So when local governments, local planning boards and local Chambers of Commerce put forward their views, we do not ignore those views. We take them into consideration in making our decisions, and that's what was done there.

Let me say that there was ample consideration for the future traffic counts for that area. There was consideration for the need for a future bridge south of Selkirk, as well, sometime in the future. There was also a recognition that the Federal Government has a responsibility south of Selkirk, because they have the Lockport Bridge and it's a federally-operated facility.

The fact is that, sometime in the future, they're going to want to close that dam up in terms of bridge, and they will want to come forward at that time, hopefully, and ask for the province to construct a bridge and be offering to put in some sufficient monies to share in that cost. However, if we were to build a new bridge south of Selkirk at this time without having that kind of proposal from the Federal Government, surely we would have had to pay the whole thing and the Federal Government simply could have shut down the Lockport Bridge with no problem, no implication for future.

Now that is a serious consideration. We now have an additional bridge in that location. Yes, the costs escalated from the original estimate, and you know why they did? Because the original estimate was for a bridge with a 32-foot clearance, similar to the North Perimeter. You see, the engineers based it on that bridge that was there at the North Perimeter. They did not realize that there were other considerations at the time they gave the initial design and the initial cost estimate. But they found out soon that there were other considerations, that there was recreation in that area. There was a federal dredge, if you had a 50-foot mast on it, and they had to accommodate those other considerations. Naturally, the cost of the bridge went up significantly after that time. Of course, the initial decisions that were made as to go or not to go on the bridge were based on a lower estimate, which is unfortunate that happened. But the fact is the bridge is still warranted and justifiable in that area of the province.

Madam Speaker, I want to just speak a little bit about deregulation, an issue that faces this province, particularly in transportation, and one that I am very much interested in at this particular time as the Minister of Highways and Transportation. I would hope that the members opposite would do everything they can to assist this government in putting forward forcefully the views of Manitobans with regard to deregulation in this province, because it is going to take a gigantic effort

to in any way influence further the Federal Government's plans with regard to particularly trucking and rail deregulation in this country. Manitoba's voice is a small voice insofar as all of Canada is concerned. We do not have the clout, as we have seen demonstrated in many, many different situations with regard to such issues as CF-18, that other provinces have in our Confederation. So we have to band together when a serious issue comes forward, and we have to put forward one strong united voice. I believe we have the makings of that kind of consensus in the province.

We have the trucking industry, who is speaking out very strongly against the all or nothing kind of approach that the Federal Government is taking in deregulation and the fact that they wish to move so quickly that there is not a transition period, without first understanding the implications of their actions and then moving forward in a considerate and prudent way. So the trucking industry is very concerned about what is happening, and labour is very concerned about what is happening because, Madam Speaker, the experience of the United States would show that hundreds of thousands of jobs were lost in transportation when deregulation occurred. So they have reason to be concerned that there is consolidation.

Rather than more competition, what ultimately takes place is a consolidation of the transportation companies that are serving. Therefore, you come closer to monopoly situations, rather than competitive situations. Before that, during a transition period, you have hypercompetition, which is destructive competition because it leads to taking short cuts. We've seen it in air, in rail and in trucking in many parts of the United States and in Canada as well, particularly in the last few years. So they wanted to take short cuts, and safety then is sacrificed in many circumstances. We can't let that happen in Canada.

We have also to be very, very careful in Canada that the Americans are not in a position to take over and dominate our transportation sector, and they will be able to do that unless we have some safeguards in place. Yet the Federal Government, in its interest and desire to facilitate and expedite a fair trade agreement to somehow rescue the Prime Minister, he hopes that somehow this is going to catch on with the public of Canada, and it hasn't done that yet.

I just saw a recent poll this morning. It says the same number of people are skeptical about free trade initiatives as were five months ago; nothing has changed. So that is a grave failure on the part of the Federal Government, but they are trying to move forward. They haven't even put transportation on the table. They've already taken it off and given in to the Americans insofar as transportation is concerned. They're not even going to talk about it at all. They're just going to say to the Americans, we will do whatever you want in transportation. We will completely deregulate, yes. I have come forward and said, let us at least make an effort to negotiate an agreement for transportation in all modes, but particularly in trucking.

The fact is that the Minister of Transport has ignored those requests from many different sectors up to this time. So we don't even see transportation on the table. We see that already pulled off the table.

What we need is an agreement that will recognize certain thresholds of control of the transportation sector

that would be acceptable under the agreement. Perhaps transporter trucking between Canada and the United States could be 50-50 or 30-70; 30 by Canadians, 70 by Americans controlled. If it went over that, they would recognize our right to control and regulate if there was a threshold that was broken. But they haven't got any thresholds, and they don't have a dispute mechanism that would be put in place to resolve disputes in the event that there will be disputes. There will be disputes. There is no doubt about it, once all of the safeguards are taken out of place that are in place now to protect the Canadian industry.

So we're going to have a rather chaotic situation, I believe, in transportation in the next number of years, and I think the risk is there that Manitoba and Canada could lose a great deal in terms of control of the transportation sector. By losing that, we will lose jobs, Canadian jobs, Manitoba jobs, and we will also lose the ability to mobilize, Madam Speaker, the transportation sector when and if it is required in terms of national emergencies.

The fact is, if it is controlled by the Americans, they are going to say that the transportation sector in their country is a top priority if there is ever a national emergency and we will rate second fiddle here in Canada. We can't allow that to happen. That is just a basic requirement, I believe, of the future of transportation in Canada. We have to have some protection. It is not the voice of labour speaking; it is not the voice of the trucking industry speaking; it is not the voice of the shipping community speaking. It is all of those voices speaking, Madam Speaker. They are all concerned about this and they have said that in Manitoba. We need the support of the Opposition as well in this issue so that we can go forward with a strong voice and influence the Federal Government in what they are doing in the transportation sector, so that safety will not be impacted negatively and jobs for Canadians are not impacted negatively.

That is our goal. That is simply our goal. We are not saying no to change. As a matter of fact, the Transport Board in Manitoba has probably done as much with regard to revitalizing the transportation sector by reregulating, by streamlining regulations in this province over the last number of years. So we are trying to make the system work to update the system, Madam Speaker.

Let me just say in closing, Madam Speaker, that in the months and years ahead, our government will work to preserve and create jobs in this province, to preserve our health care systems and our social services that Manitobans have come to depend on and have come to appreciate and have a right to in this province. We will preserve those kinds of services. We are not going to undercut those kinds of services that Manitobans need for all people in this province, and I hope that the members of the Opposition will work with us toward that goal so that we can have a better place for Manitobans to live, to work and to raise a family here in Manitoba.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Madam Speaker, lest I gave anyone the impression that I was so engrossed with the last

speaker that I just about missed my turn to rise, as much as I would like to flatter him that was the case, that indeed was not the case. I was perhaps just recalling the number of times that it has been my privilege to rise to address the Speech from the Throne, and it is a privilege, Madam Speaker, and I do so with enthusiasm once again.

Madam Speaker, I do the customary thing by congratulating all those who have returned to this Chamber: yourself, Madam Speaker, the staff members, the reappointed staff members as well as the new staff members who have joined us for this Legislative Session.

Of course, I find it particularly pleasurable to acknowledge our new Lieutenant-Governor. It's not, I suppose, everyone's experience to have a former caucus colleague, a former Cabinet colleague grace the Chamber that we once graced together in that capacity as Lieutenant-Governor. That indeed is my privilege with the new Lieutenant-Governor, and I look forward to the public service that he will undoubtedly provide to the people of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, I offer, of course, the same kind of congratulations to a recently appointed Appeal Court Judge, a former leader of mine. Madam Speaker, I must acknowledge that I am saddened and angered at the response of honourable members opposite, particularly by the Attorney-General, at that appointment because it bodes frighteningly of what is to come if indeed their will prevails.

What was the criticism of the Honourable Justice Lyon? Not his capability. Surely, Madam Speaker, members opposite know of other justices appointed and from the political realm, people like Appeal Court Justice Mr. Huband, who I will make no comment about his capabilities, but surely there was no, as I recall, outcry from anybody at that time. No, no.

The outcry and the comments made by members opposite was very dangerous. They didn't like the political spectrum that Mr. Lyon came from, and that coming from an Attorney-General who acknowledges in his Chamber that he once was a member of the Communist Party, ran for the Communist Party. Is he suggesting that our judiciary all be of the same mindset?

One would have thought, Madam Speaker - we all acknowledge that, after all, it has been our Liberal friends in government 17 out of the last 20 years, our NDP friends here 13 out of the last 17 years - so that the question of judicial appointments, if we are talking about politics, I would have thought that, if anything, it would have been welcomed to have some balance or some other mindsets introduced to our judiciary.

I found that criticism of my former leader, our former Premier, particularly offensive and rather illuminating about how members opposite, particularly the Attorney-General, view the kind of people who ought to serve in our judicial system, all of one mindset, all to the left and further to the left. Well, that was the criticism. That was the criticism that was being offered. That was precisely the criticism that was being offered. Madam Speaker, I don't mind at all putting on the record that I personally take exception to that.

Madam Speaker, responding to this Throne Speech is a challenge. I mean that's been said by others, and because my leader has described it as thin gruel, and members opposite in more candid moments have indicated, well there really wasn't that much there

Madam Speaker, perhaps it's even best demonstrated by the fact that my honourable friend, the Member for Concordia, who I believe, if I have his Hansard here, took a bit of his time during his contribution to the Throne Speech in suggesting to my leader that, although he was listening very hard to my leader's speech in speaking to the Speech of the Throne, he indicates on page 54 of the Hansard, March 2: "Let me point out that one of the real issues which was noticeably absent from the Speech," and he is referring to the speech of my leader, "was any reference to the free trade issue." And then he goes on to speak at some length about the free trade issue.

Well, Madam Speaker, anyone that peruses the Throne Speech will find there is a noticeable absence. There is no mention of the free trade issue, which I acknowledge is an important issue - an important issue for all Canadians, an important issue for all Manitobans - and there is in this thin gruel described as a Throne Speech, no mention of that as well. And that's passing strange, Madam Speaker, but perhaps it's understandable because we do remember our Premier coming back from the Western Premiers' Conference, embracing the principle of free trade.

Madam Speaker, that is an interesting psychological question because obviously, if one keeps good company, if you are in the company of sound, responsible people like Premier Devine, Premier Getty or Lougheed, I believe it was at that time, then one can't help but benefit from that association and come back and publicly embrace as he did when he stepped off the airplane acknowledging, somewhat to the surprise of some of his party members, that as far as he was concerned the Premier of Manitoba was fully supportive of the free trade initiatives, because he was given to understand or he learned - he was educated during the Premier's Conference how important the free trade initiatives were, particularly to Western Canada. This Premier has had a lot to say lately concerning himself about Western Canada, but he had it right at that time, Madam Speaker, when he came back with respect to free trade.

Well now, Madam Speaker, what's going on? We hear nothing here in the Throne Speech. We have resolutions already on the Order Paper condemning free trade initiatives. Madam Speaker, I think it is my responsibility as an Opposition member to point out the obvious flip-flops that sometimes occur with members opposite.

Madam Speaker, let me dwell just for a moment on that question of free trade and/or a federal initiative, because I don't mind at all being put on public record that I for one do not share what I know obviously members opposite are going to be constantly reminding us of are the difficulties and the terrible actions of the Federal Government.

Madam Speaker, one would be blind, and certainly I read the polls and certainly I read the newspapers, and certainly I know of good or bad governmental behaviour. But, Madam Speaker, let that not for one moment detract from some of the courageous, forceful and most important initiatives that are being undertaken by this government.

Madam Speaker, I object to the kind of unfair criticism that is being levelled at my Federal Government. To cite just one simple example, but it's used often in terms of trying to describe the Federal Government as

one in a state of collapse and one that is in so much difficulty, they talk about the seven Ministers who have been forced to resign. Madam Speaker, that's simply not true, but that is parroted every time the media refers to the Federal Government.

Madam Speaker, people like the Honourable Erik Nielsen, after an exemplary 30-35 years of public service, obviously opted to retire from politics. We now know, with the benefit of hindsight, that he probably had a health problem. He may well and also not have been totally happy with the particular direction or policy of the government, and that surely is the honourable thing to do. Madam Speaker, we also know that the then-Communications Minister, Mr. Maase, had some difficulty with respect to election funding, which was cleared up to everybody's satisfaction.

Madam Speaker, you and I who run elections in today's modern Elections Act, know how complicated election financing can be. We have members in this House who have been charged. Some have been charged; some have not been charged; some have been investigated about it. So, Madam Speaker, let not that be a great example of a government of decay when one reports on these matters.

Madam Speaker, when one refers to the former Fisheries Minister, the Honourable Mr. Fraser, now considered by most experienced parliamentarians as being no doubt an exceptional Speaker. His was a judgment call, Madam Speaker. It was also a classic case of being shafted by a hostile Civil Service. The Minister had no reason not to make the judgment that he made. He had, on the one hand, expert advice saying that there was absolutely nothing wrong with the product. I've said it before. Not a single Canadian got even a mildly upset stomach from it. But, Madam Speaker, the Minister felt compelled to resign on his own, and he did.

The member from the fourth estate shakes her head, but that's my interpretation of what happened and I believe that to be the right interpretation.

A MEMBER: Compare that to Mackling's performance.

MR. H. ENNS: Yes, one should compare that to some of the performances of these Ministers.

My friend, the former president of my party, the national party, Mr. Coates - all right, so he allowed the boys to take him into a night club at the Army Base in Lahr, West Germany, or wherever it was. Madam Speaker, I'm sure you would have some compassion for him. I understand you do enjoy a good party from time to time. That is really all that happened. There was no great national security involved. But, Madam Speaker, the person that he is, and we're dealing with an honourable gentleman in this instance, he felt compelled to resign and resigned.

But, Madam Speaker, these are among the examples that are being cited about a government in disarray, a government in total collapse, a government uncaring, a government incapable of providing the necessary leadership of this country. Well, Madam Speaker, enough about that.

Let me acknowledge perhaps the most important area that the Federal Government is moving on and perhaps, if for no other reason, Madam Speaker, but

this reason alone, they deserve the support of every Canadian. That is the acknowledgement of the seriousness of the public debt and their attempts, and more than their attempts, their actual doing something about it in bringing about a reduction in the tremendous burden of costs that we have put upon ourselves, and slowly but surely are turning it around.

Madam Speaker, what did they inherit? What did Mr. Wilson inherit in September of '84? Madam Speaker, had that election been lost and had the election carried on and been left in the hands of the Liberals, supported by the NDP, this nation would have been facing in that year a deficit of some \$38 billion. And from whom have we inherited it? From past Liberal administrations, ably and enthusiastically supported by the New Democrats.

Madam Speaker, that didn't start with that old friend of ours, a former Prime Minister who is better known to us by the name of Mr. Trudeau. If you had to put a benchmark on where that irresponsible action on the part of the Federal Government started, you'd have to lay it at the doorstep of one Lester B. Pearson. Madam Speaker, it was his unconscionable 50 percent wage settlement of the seaways strike that put this country in the path of runaway inflation, runaway interest costs.

We should all remember - we are remembering now because of the difficulties farmers are in - but what those runaway interest costs were doing to businesses, to farmers, to everybody, to mortgage holders in those years. Ordinary people were losing their homes because they couldn't refinance their mortgages at the rates of 18, 19, 21, 22 percent and, with it, of course, the constant building up of this massive deficit.

Madam Speaker, our difficulty is how to properly bring this to the attention of those people who should be most concerned about it. The numbers are so huge. I was reminded of it by the contribution the Minister responsible for the Status of Women made with respect to this debate. Because I can remember about a year ago this time - the election was on - when a long-awaited report on national day care was finally tabled and introduced. That committee had been established to study the matter by the previous Liberal administration and reported on or about this time, give or take a week, last year.

What I can remember about that report, Madam Speaker - I do not pose myself as having read the report entirely or knowing all of its details - but I can remember the kind of global figure attached to that report in the providing of a universal national day care plan. If the government had accepted all the recommendations, the Cadillac version if you like, we were talking about \$10 billion to \$11 billion annually.

MR. C. MANNES: Twelve billion.

MR. H. ENNS: Okay. My financial critic, the Member for Morris, corrects me. He says around \$12 billion.

When the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, in her contributions, spoke obviously with some feeling, some care about the need for national day care - and that need is there - I would hope that we can evolve a responsible program. It can be done without the kind of hysterical intervention of the militant feminists when they suggest a Federal Minister says that perhaps parents have also some responsibility with

respect to the raising of their children. That's all he said. He was asked, he thought that parents still had some responsibility in the raising of children and was jumped on by our Ministers here, by everybody else in the country, for that action. But leaving that aside, it is an important issue, an issue that needs to be addressed. The committee that studied it for many years suggested that the costs could be as high as \$11 billion to \$12 billion.

Madam Minister responsible for the Status of Women, who has an interest in this and all of us have an interest in this, do you know what we are going to pay this year in interest costs alone? Twenty-three billion dollars. That provides not one single day-care place, doesn't provide a single help to the universities, not a single bit of help to agriculture or farmers. That goes to the moneylenders of the world, Madam Speaker, because we have allowed our spending to get so out of control. Well, it was more important to spend money in those 17-18 years leading up to this deficit than to look after it.

Why wasn't that looked after in those much better, economically-speaking, years of the Seventies, rather than raising \$5 billion to \$6 billion deficits those years? Just as this government is doing provincially, why not introduce some lasting, meaningful program? But that wasn't the priority, and don't talk to me about priorities. The priorities of our socialist friends, the priorities of the Liberal Party are to spend, to spend and spend themselves into oblivion, and that is just about what they have accomplished, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, our government deserves every support as they now try to bring this shaky financial ship of state back on to some reasonable course - (Interjection)- I will not have this rookie Minister attempt any of those kind of games with me, and have her chirp from her seat that anything I have said is opposed to day care. I say, it's a national tragedy that the \$23 billion we are paying to international moneylenders is not available, as it should be, for the provision of the best possible national day-care program this country needs and deserves.

Furthermore, Madam Speaker, I am confident that, under the leadership of my Federal Government, under the leadership of our Minister, Mr. Epp, we will have a day-care program that we can be proud of. I am just suggesting that it could have been perhaps a lot better had spendthrifts sitting on the NDP and Liberal benches not blown away so much of the public money in the 17 years that they've had responsibility.

Madam Speaker, I want to also, just while I'm on a roll, speak a little bit about the issue of free trade. I'm also deeply disappointed, concerned and saddened at the kind of politics that too many in this country are playing with respect to the free trade issue. Free trade is not a new issue, Madam Speaker.

It may surprise some, although not those who read a bit of history - it was in 1854, President Franklin Pierce signed the first free trade treaty with Canada. In those days, it was called reciprocity. Surprisingly, it was none other than Abraham Lincoln in 1866 who cancelled it. But during that decade, from 1854 to 1866, unprecedented prosperity was created in the Canadas and particularly in the Maritimes. Indeed, Madam Speaker, it was that prosperity that caused the Maritimes to drag their feet about entering into

Confederation, because they were concerned about the loss of that free trade and the access they had, particularly to the New England coast, the Eastern seaboard of the United States, and they have never fully recovered from that.

That's why, in the nation today, no matter what polls the Minister of Highways wishes to read, Western Canada and the Maritimes essentially support the free trade initiatives, not without an appreciation of the difficulties that will be associated with trying to negotiate a truly freer or enhanced trading arrangement, not for one moment downplaying the fact that there will be serious dislocations in certain areas. There may be lengthy periods of adjustments provided, 10 years, 15 years, with some help having been provided to those industries that may suffer some relocations. But let no one challenge the importance of a free trade issue, because one has to question their serious concern about the welfare of this nation.

Madam Speaker, these facts are known to all people. Prior to the European Common Market being formed, our trade with the United States was significant, but not anywhere near what it is today. It ranked about 55 percent of our total trade. We were doing 17 percent of our total foreign trade with Great Britain, but then Mother Britain went and joined another family and those trade opportunities were closed to us. That trade, in a few short years from 1964 to 1984, a 20-year span, dropped from 17 percent to 2 percent.

Madam Speaker, for the Member for Kildonan to suggest, as his resolution suggests, that the government should be pursuing trade with all nations, etc., etc., of course we're going to pursue trade with all nations. But the truth of the matter is, the answer is that Europe doesn't want more trade with Canada. In fact, it has attempted to place obstacles against Canadian exports by several non-tariff barriers. Canadian meat, for example, was hindered from entering Europe due to a phony charge that some of our packing houses were not sanitary enough for them. The Japanese, as much as we like to trade with them and we do trade with them, regrettably mostly in our raw resources, but Japan is a very hard market to crack. They buy essentially from themselves.

But, Madam Speaker, the figures speak for themselves. We now trade 76 percent with the United States and only 6 percent with Europe. To suggest that we find the other balance or increase it markedly with Third World Countries or with Latin America again - don't let the Minister responsible for the Status of Women or anybody else to take this out of context - I'm certainly supportive of our role in foreign aid but, when we're talking about enhancing trade opportunities with many of those developing and underdeveloped countries, we cannot afford a mere transfer of resources. We'll do our share through programs like CIDA, but we should also not be artificially building up industries in this country on the strength of a foreign aid or credit program that could change from time to time or indeed, as those countries become developed, don't require our products and our resources any more. That of course is, to a large extent, what's happened to us agriculturally in so many sectors, Madam Speaker.

So, Madam Speaker, I find it particularly discouraging that on two issues of such vital importance, the fiscal management of our affairs and on the issue of free

trade, we have the kind of opposition being generated for crass, political reasons - political reasons that are often generated because they have stuck their finger up in the wind and have found that being anti-American is popular in this country, regrettably. That's, in essence, what proponents of resolutions like this are talking about.

Let me read one passage from a study that was done by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives that recommends a tough regime of protectionism and controls in the Canadian economy to increase self-reliance, and calls for new input controls, price controls, foreign exchange controls and public ownership of key corporations in major industries. Madam Speaker, such language betrays an astounding lack of understanding about economic realities and an alarming surplus of demagogic bombast. Perhaps the explanation lies in the fact that the study was written by a Mr. Jim Turk, (phonetic) Research Director of the Communist-oriented United Electrical and Radio Machine Workers' Union. You members want to take that with some disdain, but the opposition to the free trade initiatives of the Federal Government are suspect because they cannot be intellectually supported.

If anybody is concerned about providing job opportunities for future Canadians, they have to be concerned about the free trade initiatives of this government. If anybody has to be concerned about how this country will be able to generate the wealth for the programs that we now have and the programs that we would like to introduce, including day care, have to be concerned and wishing that our trade talks go well with our major trading partner.

Madam Speaker, one cannot just find these dollars. One has to generate them, and that is what the Federal Government is trying to do. Let me just again remind honourable members opposite, the Premier had it right when he came back from the Western Premiers' Conference a year ago, and what's happened since?

MR. D. ORCHARD: The unions have got to him.

MR. H. ENNS: A pity, Madam Speaker, because if those trade talks falter, we will be the worse for it. People like the Member for Concordia, the Premier, indeed all New Democratic Party members by and large, can add that to their list of accomplishments with respect to the sound development, economic development in this instance, of this big country of ours. Well, Madam Speaker, that was a serious omission from the Throne Speech.

One thing the Throne Speech did not omit, however, was their concern or this government's concern about the problems of natural gas. Now, Madam Speaker, before I come to that, I should say a most serious omission in the Throne Speech, because I did take the trouble to reread what was said in last year's Throne Speech, and we're referring to my friend - the Minister of Energy is otherwise engaged. But last year, the Throne Speech talked about "this government's commitment to the planned and orderly development of our natural resources to the benefit of all Manitobans that led to the success of Limestone and the Northern States Power Sale." Well, we know about that, Madam Speaker, but then it goes on to say: ". . . has resulted

in three more export agreements with six utilities operating in the United States."

Well, Madam Speaker, we're accustomed to the language in the Throne Speech sometimes being somewhat ambiguous, not always being precise, but the English language still is relatively easy to understand and, on important issues and on important documents, that says without any ambiguity that the discussions, that the actions taken by this government have resulted in three more export agreements with six utilities, I believe is perhaps a most serious omission with respect to any comments at all in this Throne Speech. We will be asking a great deal about that.

Madam Speaker, Manitobans have every reason to be tremendously concerned about just where we're going with our hydro development. The one sale that we have with Northern States Power surely can't be looking any better today than it did a year ago. Madam Speaker, you'll recall - and I know that you take a great interest in these matters having yourself served on a board of the utility - that the principal component of the sale of the United States Power is tied to the American price of coal. Coal, Madam Speaker, like energy, petroleum fuels, fossil fuels, generally has gone in one direction. Furthermore, Madam Speaker, we also know that part of the complex pricing formula was also attached to the cost of a thermal plant that the American utility was building, known as Sherco 3. We understand that came down considerably below budget.

Madam Speaker, the concern that was expressed by us prior to entering into those arrangements, the concerns that we continue to express, are more valid today than ever, because we are selling our power to the United States, not based on what it costs us to produce it but based on what it costs the Americans to replace it with relatively cheap coal.

Madam Speaker, the fact that the Throne Speech says nothing about this whole area should create a great deal of nervousness among all Manitobans who will foot the bill, because we are building. The concrete is pouring, the price tag is there, and we have to foot it. I find it very disturbing that there isn't even a mention. You would have thought that, if there was something there on the horizon, that within this thin Throne Speech they would have put it in. Madam Speaker, are they again caught in this kind of contradiction that I described a little while ago between the Premier and his party? Because, you see, while the Member for Concordia was drafting this resolution and sticking it to the Americans, the Minister of Energy and Mines was in Washington hoping for free trade access to continue the electrical power sales that we so desperately need.

You can't have it both ways, Madam Speaker. In fact, Madam Speaker, from time to time we suggest it's only the Opposition that can have it both ways. We say that with tongue-in-mouth.

Madam Speaker, we will be watching what this government plans to do with respect to the surplus of power that is soon going to be coming on stream. Madam Speaker, we have a bad history behind us of an NDP Government building for building's sake. Sure, it created the immediate economic benefit, but we were left with the bills, and we saw our hydro rates increase by some 140-150 percent in those short years. Every resident in Manitoba today is paying 50 percent more

for his hydro bill than he ought to. He's doing that because that's the price tag of keeping that group of bandits in office.

Madam Speaker, what do they say about natural gas? Well, Madam Speaker, natural gas has received a fair bit of notoriety. I can recall the Premier using the subject matter in, what I assume to be, an enthusiastic address at the recently held convention of the New Democratic Party last January or February.

Madam Speaker, what does the Throne Speech say about it? The Throne Speech has some rather strong language. The Throne Speech says my government expressed concerns that the agreement in place, the average gas consumer - he's talking about the agreement with Inter-City Gas - at the mercy of private-utility monopolies which were charged with the responsibility of negotiating prices on behalf of consumers. Well, Madam Speaker, let's understand firstly one thing. It was this government, this very same Minister, that signed the agreement that supposedly now placed the consumers in jeopardy.

Madam Speaker, the Throne Speech goes on further to say: "My government will not accept a situation in which the consumer is expected to pay more for gas than Americans or large industry. My government will announce policies to protect Manitobans from excessive natural gas prices, which monopoly utilities are seeking to pass through to their consumers."

Well, Madam Speaker, that's an interesting observation, and I wonder what this tired administration is going to do about it. Madam Speaker, we'll have an opportunity to discuss what some of their problems are. They have an agreement, a long-term 20-year agreement, that they've signed. We have a firm, a company, that has monopoly rights to the distribution of gas in this province, Inter-City Gas. Madam Speaker, that firm has a large multimillion dollar infrastructure to provide that service.

We know what this government would like to do. We know what their average delegates instructed them to do. They wanted them to become more activist, to become more socialist, and we know what previous conventions called for.

But, Madam Speaker, I want to, first of all, know if indeed the problem is that serious; and secondly, if we are being overcharged by what the Throne Speech says we are. Then I want to make sure, if this government does anything, that every Manitoban gets the benefit. I want to see the farmer, the smaller towns of Souris, Killarney, Woodlands, Warren, I want them all to have that service, Madam Speaker. But, Madam Speaker, has this government the will, has this government the resources to do that?

Madam Speaker, let me remind you, it seems to be my job from time to time to remind you of yesteryear, what other governments, Conservative Governments, did when they were faced with a situation where a service was being provided to the fortunate few in the larger centres, but it was deemed that it ought to be provided to all Manitobans. That was the situation with telephone service back in 1906. So Mr. Rodman Roblin, a Conservative with vision, Madam Speaker, held a referendum in the Province of Manitoba to see if the general public wanted a telephone service throughout the province. Interesting enough, only 54 of the then 123 municipalities backed the proposal, but Mr. Roblin

accepted that and accepted the challenge and bought out the private telephone companies at that time, principally Bell, and in the year . . .

A MEMBER: At a fair price?

MR. H. ENNS: Yes, for \$3.3 million. On January 15, 1908, the Manitoba Government Telephone Company was established. Madam Speaker, a few short years later, this fledgling Crown corporation faced a particularly challenging problem because the boundaries of the province were massively expanded by the addition of what was then known as Rupertsland. That happened in 1912, four short years later, when the territory of Rupertsland was added to the Province of Manitoba.

But, Madam Speaker, the province and the government of that day had the courage, had the wisdom and, perhaps more importantly for today's events, had the resources even in those days to adopt a policy such as this, which I'll read to you. "All parts of the province that are accessible are to be supplied with the service, regardless of the fact that supply of telephone service to rural and distant areas will, in most cases, be so supplied at a loss, but that other areas and services of the system will charge such rates as will enable the Manitoba Government Telephones to avoid financial losses." That was responsible leadership and, Madam Speaker, I suggest to you that, if this government wants to do anything like this with respect to natural gas, they had better look hard at it.

Madam Speaker, bringing us up-to-date a little earlier into time - and I have always acknowledged the fact that our Liberal Government of the then D.L. Campbell, when he undertook, right after the war years in 1945, to introduce to the province a rural electrification program in scale, in scope, in terms of what the province faced in bringing hydro lines to every farm home throughout the width and breadth of this province, was every bit as great, if not greater, than the challenge of bringing natural gas to every farm and to every hamlet in the Province of Manitoba.

But, Madam Speaker, my concern is - Madam Speaker, are you warning me?

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member's time has expired. I have given him his three-minute warning.

MR. H. ENNS: Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't see that little light. I wish just to wind it up, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have leave to finish his sentence?

The honourable member has leave to finish his sentence.

MR. H. ENNS: Madam Speaker, the point I was trying to make during these remarks is that my friends opposite have contributed to the pillaging and plundering of the public treasury to such an extent that their options are severely limited at this time. Madam Speaker, it grieves me, because socialists aren't happy unless they can pillage and plunder. If there is nothing to pillage and plunder, if the cupboard is bare, then we've got grumpy looking, mean and ornery looking socialists, yourself excluded, Madam Speaker.

But that is the problem facing this government. They have no will - they perhaps have the will, but they have run out of their resources. The only options open to them will be introduced to us on March 16 by the Minister of Finance, and then we truly end up with the worst of all things, higher taxes and lower services, and that is what Manitobans have to look forward to.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Employment Services.

HON. L. EVANS: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would like to join in this debate. I haven't spoken for some time in the Legislature, of course, because of the - I don't know whether I hear the words from the men of wisdom across the way or not. I don't think I got all that. I haven't had an opportunity, of course, to speak in this Legislature for some months, as indeed none of us have, being on a recess, but I do look forward to a rather productive Session and hopefully together we can do great things.

I want to begin as usual, Madam Speaker, to wish you the very best. I know you have a very difficult task to chair this group that becomes, from time to time I might add, a bit unruly and a little unreasonable. It is indeed very very difficult. So I wish you the very best. You're doing a good job and I know, with a little bit of tolerance, we can carry on for the next few months and get some positive legislation passed and some new programs put into place.

I would also like to congratulate our new Lieutenant-Governor, Dr. George Johnson. I don't know Dr. Johnson that well, but I do know him as a very fine person, very kind individual, and one who I am sure will fulfill the responsibilities and duties of a Lieutenant-Governor with distinction.

I have a number of things I want to talk about, not necessarily controversial. There are a number of things that concern me as Minister responsible for our welfare system, but also as Minister responsible for our employment programs. I wanted to say though, in answer to a comment made by my friend, the Member for Lakeside, who I always enjoy because he is very entertaining - I don't usually agree with very much of what he says. Usually I can agree with maybe 5 percent or 6 percent, but most of it I can't agree with. I have been trying to figure out from the member . . .

A MEMBER: That's your problem, Len. You could never agree with common sense.

HON. L. EVANS: I am trying to figure out from the honourable member's remarks just where the present day Conservative Party of Manitoba is going in terms of many major philosophical questions. Is it moving to the right? Is it moving to the left? From some of the speeches, I had thought that the Conservative Party of Manitoba was now taking a firm position further to the right than it had in the last few years and was sticking by that position.

On the other hand, I just listened to a speech, a very good speech as usual, by my friend, the Member for Lakeside, where he talks in glowing terms about the setting up of a major public utility in this province by a former Conservative Premier, by a former

Conservative Government, and boasts how a national or rather a province-wide public enterprise was good and was of value to the people of this province, whether they live in the city or the country, north, south, whatever, but here was using the instrumentality of government, of the public purse to do something for the people.

The fact is, Madam Speaker, when the Member for Lakeside talks in that vein, he talks along the lines of the traditional national Conservative Party of Canada because, if you go right back to Sir John A. Macdonald and come right through the 19th Century and indeed right into R.B. Bennett's times, you can listen to many speeches and you can see many policies of the national Conservative Party that involved public sector, that involved public spending, that involved public investment.

It's the new philosophy of the present-day Conservative Party in Canada that I maintain, Madam Speaker, is not in keeping with the traditional position of the Conservatives, going right back to Sir John A. Macdonald, because now we seem to be in what they call a neo-conservative era where you are really back into market economics, where the market economy shall always prevail, the less government the better. That is the old small "l" liberal economic position which the Conservative parties in this North American Continent of ours, including the Manitoba Conservative Party, seem to have adopted. I maintain that is not in keeping with the traditional position of the party, but so be it. I guess philosophies and policies change from time to time.

The Member for Lakeside did refer - this is a footnote, I suppose - to the horrible situation of the Canadian public debt, and he referred to some of the figures and he said, look at the public debt charges, and I think he quoted a figure around \$27 million or \$28 million. This is where I understand the public debt charges from the federal budget documents tabled on February 18 of this year. The public debt charges were forecast to be in the area of 27.3 billion in '86-87 and 28.2 billion in '87-88.

Then he went on and talked about all this waste of money. I asked the question at that time from my seat but nobody answered, well where is the money going to? Where is all this interest money going to? We talk about public debt charges as though there's some huge waste of money going on. The fact is, Madam Speaker, that well over 90 percent, probably close to 95 percent of the public debt of the Government of Canada is held within this Canadian country of ours, within the Canadian boundaries. Very little of it is held outside of Canada. I'm talking about the Federal Government's debt, not our debt, not Saskatchewan's. I'm talking about the federal debt, because this is what the Member for Lakeside was referring to. He said that \$27-28 million was being wasted and then, later on, he was referring to the moneylenders getting it, etc., or some sort of large corporations that were beneficiaries of this.

The fact is, Madam Speaker, that the public debt of Canada is held essentially by Canadians. So when there are interest payments made on that public debt, they are being made to Canadians who hold that debt, people who own Canada Savings Bonds or companies who may own Government of Canada Bonds. The Member for Minnedosa should know this. He's been a banker for some years; he should know. He should

know very well that the effect of paying out interest on the public debt is essentially an income transfer process whereby . . .

MR. D. BLAKE: What about foreign borrowing?

HON. L. EVANS: Well the Member for Minnedosa says, what about the foreign borrowings. He was not listening perhaps at that point when I said that over 90 percent, probably close to 95 percent of the Federal Government's debt is held within the Canadian boundaries. It is not held offshore. A very small percentage of it is held offshore. So the main impact of paying interest on the federal debt is a transfer effect, just as the Federal Government transfers money to families with family allowance cheques. When a family allowance cheque is received, it's a transfer from the federal Treasury to those who have children and to those people who qualify.

A MEMBER: At a cost to the taxpayer.

HON. L. EVANS: Well it certainly costs the taxpayer. But regardless, the fact is you're dealing with the same phenomenon when you're talking about paying out interest on the national debt. You're transferring money from the Treasury to Canadians, Canadians who happen to own Canada Savings Bonds or whatever other kind of federal bonds they may be holding.

So I say that this is the tragedy of 1987, that the Federal Government talks about curtailing major social policies, social programs in the name of the public debt, and is prepared to make what may be serious cuts that might affect our economy and certainly affect various social groups within the Canadian society adversely, all in the name of the public debt.

I want to hasten to add that, if you're talking about a provincial situation, it is different. Because when you talk about the provinces, you're talking about a great deal of debt that's held outside of the province. It is a serious concern and it is a different situation, and I'm not pretending otherwise.

But I'm referring to the federal budget or the federal debt situation, because this is what the Member for Lakeside was zeroing in on. I just wanted to make that point that money is not wasted. It is a transfer payment to people who, for whatever reason, happen to hold part of the national debt. You might say another way of looking at - there's a national debt or a federal debt, but there's also a national credit that's equal to that national debt.

I'd like to say a few words about the Manitoba economy and what's happening and so on. Surely, none of us here will ever be satisfied as to the level of economic activity or the level of unemployment or whatever. But having said that, I think we have to take some satisfaction in knowing that the provincial economy of Manitoba is doing relatively well compared to most other provinces. I guess only the Province of Ontario, to make a generalization, is probably doing better than the Province of Manitoba. In a relative situation, you can look at all the figures but, taking information supplied by the various major banks of Canada, the Bank of Nova Scotia, the Bank of Montreal, the Bank of Commerce, the Royal Bank and the

Conference Board, which is a major private forecasting agency together show Manitoba's rated economic growth for 1987, if you take them together, you average them out, they indeed exceed the Canadian average. Manitoba's expected to have an increase of growth in 1987 of about 2.9 percent. This is in real terms when you take out inflation, compared to the Canadian average of 2.1 percent.

If you look at other forecasts in other areas, employment-unemployment, by the same agencies, it paints the same picture. The rate of employment increase is expected to be higher in Manitoba than the Canadian situation in this year of 1987. Again, taking all of these major banks plus the Conference Board, you get an average increase in jobs in Manitoba of 2.3 percent, compared to 1.9 percent forecast for the whole country.

Similarly, our unemployment rate is expected to drop in '87 on average. It was 7.6 percent in 1986 and it's expected to drop to 7.2 in 1987, still well below the Canadian average which is forecast by the same agencies to be 9.5 percent for 1987.

Similarly if you look at other areas, retail sales and so on, you see that Manitoba, generally speaking, is doing well within the confederation of provinces. There is an outlook provided by another agency, namely, the Social Sciences Division of the University of Manitoba Research Agency, which shows Manitoba's population increasing not only last year faster than the Canadian average, but this coming year is expected to be well above the increase in population for the country as a whole.

Our labour force, therefore, is anticipated to rise much faster than the Canadian average. Our retail sales should be higher in '87 than in '86 and so on. Our manufacturing shipments are anticipated to be double the rate of increase in 1987 compared to 1986. In 1986, the estimated increase was 1.2 percent. By 1987, this is expected to be 2.5 percent.

Similarly with housing starts, the rate of increase is supposed to improve in '87 over '86. Generally speaking, as I said, all of the economic indicators, all the economic statistics we have show a relatively favourable position.

I'd like to address some other questions that confront us as legislators, and that is, well what about the distribution of this income among our population? Who is benefiting and what's happening to the poor? What's happening to women in the workforce? What's happening to our social allowance recipients? I might add, Madam Speaker, that from the information we have from a national agency that looks at questions of welfare and poverty in the country, generally Manitoba improved its situation with regard to the percentage of people in poverty compared to the rest of the country. The proportion of families with incomes below the poverty line was 5 percent lower in Manitoba in 1985 than it was in 1981. At the same time, the percentage of people below the poverty line in Canada increased by 11 percent. In other words, in that period of time, '81 to '85, while we were blessed with the shrinking of the number of people below the poverty line by 5 percent, the Canadian situation showed an increase of 11 percent.

So I think we should all be satisfied with that, and I believe the reason for that can be attributed to many

things. It can be attributed to the fact that we didn't have the massive unemployment that was experienced in certain provinces like B.C. and is recently being experienced in Alberta, and also because of some of our social programs that provide assistance to people who, for whatever reason, are disadvantaged.

I'd like to speak a moment about women in the labour force. We talked about employment; we talked about unemployment. I'd like to say that I'm pleased to note that women are continuing to enter the labour market in increasing numbers. In the past five years - that's the years, 1981-86 - the information we have is that female participants in the labour force have increased by 30,000, up to 233,000. That's an increase, Madam Speaker, of 14.8 percent.

I think the challenge, however, is to ensure that there be fair and equitable treatment of women in the workforce, and that we do everything we possibly can at the government level to ensure that equity is provided. Whether that means providing pay equity and affirmative action policies in the place of employment, whether it means effective education or training policy to meet the needs of women, or whether it means accessible and affordable quality child care, we have to ensure that all of these things are addressed in order to provide that equitable treatment that I spoke of.

I might add, Madam Speaker, that under our major training program in our government - that is, the Job Training for Tomorrow Program - we do have a special category, a special component in the program entitled Women in Non-Traditional or Technical Occupations, which is designed to encourage employers to hire women in those occupations that tend to have a higher quality of career path opportunities, and certainly higher financial rewards. That information is being distributed to employers and hopefully we will be able to encourage a greater number of employers to hire women in what we consider to be non-traditional occupations.

One of the challenges that we have, Madam Speaker, in being concerned with some people who may be disadvantaged, for whatever reason, is to look very closely at the group of people who, for whatever reason, fall into our welfare programs in the province or indeed at the municipal level. The challenge, particularly when unemployment is relatively low, is to do whatever we can to provide opportunities for people to leave the welfare situation, the social allowance situation, to get whatever training, whatever counselling, whatever assistance is necessary and available, to provide that to these people so that they can become independent and indeed have a much higher level of income.

I'm pleased to mention in the House that over a year-and-a-half ago, at a Federal-Provincial Conference of Ministers at which the Honourable Jake Epp was present as the Minister of National Health and Welfare, I proposed on behalf of the Province of Manitoba that we have a special fund to provide monies to hire people who are on welfare, who are on social assistance. This is not necessarily a new idea, but Manitoba pressed very, very hard about a year-and-a-half ago. I'm pleased to say that it finally translated to what is today called the National Diversion Fund. It's not exactly what we wanted, not exactly what we suggested, but at least it's a step in that direction. It does provide some monies for the provinces of Canada who want to participate, to provide various kinds of counselling, training programs and work experience opportunities.

I'm pleased to note that, on January 31 of this year, a couple of months ago, Manitoba and Canada signed a new agreement on what we refer to as the Employability Enhancement for Social Assistance Recipients. What we did is establish an agreement with the Federal Government whereby we contributed, on a 50-50 basis, \$6 million each, for a total of \$12 million available for the next two years, designed to help approximately 1,000 social assistance recipients per year to obtain stable employment.

The ideal, Madam Speaker, is for these people to be assisted to get off welfare and never look back, that they become self-supporting, independent individuals, independent families. That indeed is an ideal that we all share. I might add that we will be working with various sectors of the Manitoba economy, of Manitoba society, in order to make this program successful.

We will have, and are now in discussion with certain municipalities, to engage in job opportunities for some of our municipal assistance recipients. We think that we can, perhaps at the same time, do something useful in municipal improvement, environmental improvements, by cooperating with some of the municipalities in our province who may be interested in this. So that will be one component of this federal-provincial fund.

Another component relates to disabled people. We're providing \$800,000 of this money for pre-employment counselling, training, work experience and placement and support services for about 100 people who are disabled, for whatever reason. In order to do this in a responsible way, a way that involves the community, we will be in communication with various disabled associations, associations representing disabled people, to see what we can do to use this money to take these people off welfare.

I might add that the two-tier system that we have in the province today, Madam Speaker, means essentially that the Provincial Government is responsible for people who are long-term recipients - and generally, they tend to be disabled people - as well as people who are in the Mothers' Allowances category. So we're very interested in seeing what we can do in providing opportunities.

I think the fact that we had a recent visit by Mr. Rick Hansen, who I think stimulated a great deal of interest in those who are disabled and opportunities for people who are in wheelchairs and so on, I think that here's an opportunity for us to meet some of that challenge to provide an independent living for such people.

The other category - we refer to it as a Job Transition for Youth - whereby we intend to work with a group of people in the 18-24 years category, people who have a difficult time for many reasons that I won't go into, in getting their education completed even at the high school level and getting work. So we're hoping that we might be able to help the particular hard core group of youth obtain the adequate counselling, education, training and work experience under this program.

Last, but not least, another component relates to Single Parents' Job Access. We did begin a pilot project on Single Parents' Job Access in Winnipeg and Brandon last year. There was some criticism that we didn't make it available to other cities and towns, but indeed it was a pilot project. We did it jointly with the Federal

Government, and it appears successful. We're using that pilot project as the basis now for a province-wide program for single parents, sole-support parents who wish to participate in the program. It's voluntary, but we will provide the very supports necessary, including child care support and other kinds of support, in order to enable these people to obtain some training and work experience.

It's going to depend of course on the cooperation of the private sector, on employers out there in business, small business, large business and some of the non-profit organizations, nursing homes, day-care centres and so on. But we think that here's a splendid opportunity for people to get the work experience, get the training and, hopefully, never go back. That's the ideal, Madam Speaker, so that ultimately this program, if it's done properly, adequately, will cost the taxpayers no money, ideally if it works perfectly. I'm not suggesting it's going to work perfectly but, if it worked ideally, there should be no cost whatsoever to the taxpayers, because what we've been paying out in welfare or would be paying out in welfare in the next year or two will disappear because these people - at least these people that we're dealing with - will no longer be on welfare. I can't speak for the changing levels of people on welfare. That's going to depend on unemployment, on federal policies and the like. But, nevertheless, this is a program that is forward-looking, and is one that we're quite excited about.

I might add, Madam Speaker, that we have other programs that are currently under way to help people obtain work. I might just make brief reference to our major program, our Job Training for Tomorrow Program, which we implemented in the fall of '86, whereby we offer wage assistance to private businesses, institutional organizations, community non-profit groups and so on. The monies, the \$10.1 million that's authorized, should provide close to 3,000 job opportunities for Manitobans in this year. As I said a little earlier in my remarks, we are trying to zero in on certain categories, giving a little special attention, including women, to promote non-traditional occupations, and certainly to promote some opportunities and give employers some additional incentives to hire people who are 55 years of age or over.

We are finding, because of technological displacement, a number of people who are in their 50's are having a difficult time in getting another job. Yet they are nowhere near retirement age. They're not interested in retiring, and we think that we have to do something to help those people. So we are providing private employers and non-profit employers in Manitoba special incentives under this program if they wish to hire someone who is over 55 years of age.

Having said that, probably the greatest number of people to be helped under the Job Training for Tomorrow Program will be young people, because essentially this is where our biggest unemployment problem is, those who are under 30 and certainly those under 25 years of age.

Well I could go on talking about some of the other programs we have. A lot of this is detailed perhaps for the honourable members but nevertheless, for those people who are being helped, it is quite significant. For example, we are continuing with our New Careers Program, which is an adult career training program,

one of the finest you'll find anywhere. In the current year, we've got 375 people being trained on this particular program. It's a two-year program, and 99 percent of the people who complete that program end up with permanent jobs, good jobs, useful jobs, rewarding jobs.

Madam Speaker, rather than go on discussing this in any further detail, I would like to comment briefly about a couple of points made in a speech by the Member for Gladstone last week. I wouldn't have commented on this otherwise, but I believe the Member for Gladstone made some reference criticizing the Manitoba Government for not passing on the CPP, Canada Pension Program disability benefits on to social allowance recipients. The criticism was that we decided to consider the increases in the CPP disability benefits as income to be deducted from social allowance benefits. She went on, in her remarks, virtually to assume that we made an arbitrary decision to consider these benefits as income.

The fact is that she may have been misled by reading remarks by the Honourable Jake Epp in the newspapers, because Mr. Epp did criticize us for not doing this and suggested that, while they were increasing these benefits by a certain percentage, Manitoba was not passing it on. I think Mr. Epp is going to have to be referred to his own legislation, in his own Canada Assistance Program, because our understanding - I'm advised by all our officials that, if we are to abide by the federal cost-sharing program for social assistance, we are bound by the regulations under the Canada Assistance Plan to - and it states this explicitly, that the Canada Pension Plan disability benefits must be treated as income and therefore deducted when you're calculating your social allowance rates. So it's not as though we're acting in any arbitrary fashion. We and all the provinces in this country are doing what we're supposed to be doing. I'm writing, incidentally, to Mr. Epp, drawing this to his attention that, if that is what he wishes, then we should be told so and those regulations should be changed.

Mr. Epp did write to me on August 21 of last year, urging myself and all provincial Ministers involved in welfare to do two things. He, first of all, asked us to ensure that disabled persons who no longer qualified for welfare because of higher CPP benefits do not lose supplementary assistance for exceptional needs. This is referenced, I guess, to the health cards that we issue for various kinds of health care, dental care and so on that is provided. He asked us to do this, and I responded positively. We said, yes, we will not penalize people who for whatever reason now will no longer qualify for welfare. We will ensure that they do not lose their supplementary assistance.

He also asked that we do not compel older social assistance recipients to draw the early CPP that is now available. Now you can draw it as early as 60 years of age with some penalty built in. There's a formula for it. He urged us not to require people to draw this, those people who are now on social assistance, so that they could maybe be taken off of our rolls, either in whole or in part. Again, we responded positively. We said, we certainly will not be forcing anybody to do this, as indeed they are doing in some provinces. I might add, Madam Speaker, that in some provinces this is going on regrettably.

So we accommodated Mr. Epp. We did exactly what he urged us to do in his letter of last August 21, and that's why I was rather dismayed to read in the papers a couple of weeks ago his criticisms that we haven't passed on the increase because there was no reference in his letter, no suggestion and, as I said, I've got expert advice that we can't do so under the existing regulations. So we are in correspondence with Mr. Epp, and we'll see what his response is. But, regrettably, the Member for Gladstone picked this up and started to criticize us about this, not really knowing the facts of the matter. So that's why, Madam Speaker, I have taken this time to try to set the record straight.

I might also add that, at the conference of Social Service Ministers that was held in January in Ottawa, Manitoba urged and supported the establishment of a comprehensive national disability insurance plan to protect employed workers' incomes in the event of disability. As well, we suggested an extension of the existing OAS GIS income support system to the severely disabled. In other words, we are saying that our system of disability protection is not adequate, and what we need is a national disability program where the provinces would cooperate with the Federal Government in putting this in place.

I'm pleased to advise, Madam Speaker, that there was unanimity among the provinces and the Federal Government that this matter should be studied. A task force has been struck, and is now currently working on this particular matter. It is possible therefore, sometime in the future, we will see a comprehensive national disability insurance plan in effect which will be far more comprehensive than anything the Canada Pension Plan now offers, far more comprehensive than anything that perhaps is even available with private insurance.

The Member for Gladstone also made some criticism of Manitoba not signing the agreement with Ottawa on the National Diversion Fund that I spoke of a short while ago, Madam Speaker, sooner than we did. The fact is we didn't sign as quickly as Saskatchewan - this is true - but we don't think Saskatchewan got as good a deal as we did. We were not satisfied with the terms that some of the provinces were putting in their agreement. I'm satisfied that, having taken a little more time, we have a much better agreement. We have something that we think is far more effective than what is going to happen in many of the other provinces, including Saskatchewan.

I guess there was another criticism too by the Member for Gladstone, that we did not give any credit to the Federal Government in the Throne Speech. She says: "The Throne Speech implied no federal commitment of funds under the new agreement to enhance employability of social assistance recipients." I beg to differ with her. This is simply not true, Madam Speaker. The speech specifically refers to a new joint cost-shared fund, and states that this fund will direct \$6 million jointly. Certainly we had a joint news conference, and we've had joint press releases. So I don't think anyone should be - at least we're trying to tell the people that it is a joint effort.

Madam Speaker, I'd like to talk about some of the other social programs we have made some improvements in recently. I'm not sure how much time that I have though.

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member has four minutes remaining.

HON. L. EVANS: Four minutes, okay.

As I said, there are many things that we must do to help those who are less (sic) disadvantaged than others among us. It's a constant battle and we certainly don't live in an island unto ourselves. In other words, we can have some of the best employment programs, the best training programs, to try to get unemployment down to zero and to try to provide the best benefits for all those who are unable to work, but we don't live as an island unto ourselves. People do come into Manitoba and our population is expanding, so it's a never-ending challenge.

But we have made a number of improvements in our social allowance programs. We'd like to see many more. Last year, just beginning of January 1, of this year, we provided a 4.4 percent increase in the social allowance rates paid by the province. Of course, as we all know, we took a major step forward last year in providing a doubling of income available to those in low-income categories who are 55 years of age and over. It used to be referred to as the Manitoba Supplement for Pensioners. We changed the terms of it; we've broadened the terms of it; we made it more liberal. We now have virtually all people, 55 and over, who are in this very low income category able to get assistance that now is approximately \$100 per quarter, give or take a few dollars. I can tell you, Madam Speaker, even though this doesn't sound like a lot of money, we've had many very heart-warming letters from people all over Manitoba, particularly rural Manitoba, but from all over Manitoba thanking us, thanking the government, for bringing this program forward and how it meant so much to them to enable them to manage to live and to exist at a higher standard of living.

I'm very pleased that we're indexing it and, of course, every year it will be indexed as of April 1 in accordance with the increasing costs of living as measured for the province by the Consumer Price Index, as calculated by Statistics Canada.

Well, Madam Speaker, I've rambled on, talking about many things: employment, training opportunities and employment challenges. I've talked about women in the labour force, the need to do even more than we have done for those who are disadvantaged among us. I'm satisfied, however, when I look at the array of programs that we are operating and the improvements that we've made in these programs over the past few years, that Manitoba stands out as a beacon in this country of ours, as one who is concerned about human justice and to improve the human condition of our citizens of our great Province of Manitoba.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Springfield.

MR. G. ROCH: Merci beaucoup, Madame l'oratrice. Je suis bien content de me lever aujourd'hui pour parler du Discours du trône.

J'aimerais peu commencer féliciter le nouveau lieutenant gouverneur et offrir mes meilleurs vœux. C'était un choix excellent par le premier ministre et je

suis certain qu'il va servir, dans sa nouvelle office, aussi bien qu'il a servi dans le passé comme un membre de ce Parlement.

Je suis content aussi qu'il a choisi d'un membre, d'un groupe, d'un très petit groupe - les Islandais. Comme vous le savez, Dr. Johnson est d'origine islandique. Et je le dis non seulement parce que j'ai été appointé critique de la Culture, Patrimoine et Loisirs, parce que moi-même mon ancêtre est d'un petit groupe minoritaire - celui des Suisses qui sont moins nombreux encore que les Islandais.

J'aimerais aussi souhaiter une bonne session à tous mes collègues, à tous les membres des deux bords. J'ai plusieurs autres commentaires que je veux faire en français, mais je veux les faire plus tard. Car j'ai certaines choses à dire que je veux être certain que les membres du gouvernement comprennent.

Translation will appear in subsequent issue.

I would like to congratulate my colleagues who have already spoken, and those that will be. It is refreshing to hear positive contributions, as opposed to members opposite, whose main focus is to feebash. A feeble attempt, Madam Speaker, a feeble attempt to cover up their ineptness, their incompetence, their mismanagement. You know what else, it is disheartening as well to watch government backbenchers clap on queue like a bunch of trained seals. Mind you, the Ministers do too, especially when they ask planted questions in a futile attempt to make their Ministers look good, with the exception, of course, of the Member for St. Vital, who is able to think and talk for himself and to properly represent his constituents, as we on this side are doing and rightfully so, for that is our primary purpose as elected members.

The sad reality is that this government is, as my leader has stated, a tired, a very tired government, a government unable to act positively on behalf of Manitobans, because of the crippling self-imposed deficit that they have inflicted, not only on themselves, Madam Speaker, but unfortunately also on the backs of every woman, man and child in this province. A government run by political grouping that is neither new nor democratic, and hardly a party in any sense of the word.

Remember Ed Schreyer, remember him? He distances himself today from all of you, there's a few tokens left. His brother-in-law has quit the party. He was a good man, and you know why? Because he went publicly often and said, "I'm no socialist." This group here is a bunch of socialists, and that is why he distances himself today. There is not even a remote connection to the party that Ed Schreyer led to that motley crew that sits there now. They used to be the base . . . now they're like a bunch of sheep.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair.)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I joined this party over a decade ago and I have no regrets. And I am even more pleased that I was able to knock over one of their Ministers. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is why they must resort to feebashing, to cover up their bungling, their mismanagement, their ineptness and, yes, their incompetence -(Interjection)- I almost forgot, Marty, but I didn't. As well, there's a feeble attempt, unsuccessful

I might add, to cover up their litany of broken promises, and there are many, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There are very many.

I'd like to touch upon a few. I won't attempt to go through all of them, there isn't nearly enough time in the whole Throne Speech Debate. Well if I get leave, I will deal with all of them, and it may take many days. I would however put out a few, especially those which specifically affect my riding of Springfield. Take, for example, the sewers that were promised in the East St. Paul-Birds Hill area. A Minister of the Crown, speaking on behalf of the government, promised the people that they would be getting grants so that they could have sewers for their new developments. What happened? "Oh well," they said, "not in 1986, maybe in 1987." Yet this government was returned with a majority, a very slim one, I agree, but with a majority. What happened to the promise to the people of East St. Paul? Broken - that's what.

What about Landmark? What almost happened there? The sewer system was in place, they needed connectors. At the last minute, the grants were almost cancelled for the connectors. Mr. Deputy Speaker, how do you run a sewer system without connectors? You can't. Thanks to the members of the council of Tache -(Interjection)- I hear a funny story there. It's not even a funny story; it's a ridiculous story. But anyways, it's thanks to the members of the council of Tache and myself who intervened to make sure that the community of Landmark had its connectors and, therefore, was able to have its sewer system in place.

And what about Provincial Road 405, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from Lorette to Ile des Chenes? -(Interjection)- That's right. They had to put stakes there across the field of a good NDP supporter out in that area. They were going to enlarge it; they were going to pave it - promises, all kinds of promises. It's easy to put up stakes during an election campaign, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What happened since the election? The stakes disappeared. No improvements have been made to the road; nothing has happened. Yet a Minister made those promises on behalf of a government which was re-elected, but no, another broken promise.

What about Provincial Road 207 from Dufresne to St. Anne? It was supposed to be upgraded and paved. It's just a small amount of people who live there. Nothing has happened.

MR. H. SMITH: Who gets the gravel?

MR. G. ROCH: Oh, the Member for Ellice, with his usual intellect says, ". . . the gravel." Does he know what gravel even looks like? He knows how to grovel. We've seen his House Leader put him down, and he grovels. That is not gravel, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

There are many more examples that I could point out as far as roads. Throughout Springfield, new road construction, new road expansion that has yet to be delivered, that was promised, but whose plans have yet to see the light of day. But how can you when this government has raped and pillaged the Highways Department budget?

A MEMBER: Raped and pillaged.

MR. G. ROCH: That's right. There's plenty of money to construct the Sam Uskiw Bridge, the infamous bridge

to nowhere, which is in very close proximity to the Premier's riding. Is that a coincidence? It's probably just a coincidence. And, of course, there is even a possibility of relatives of the Minister of Highways benefiting from the construction of this bridge. But no doubt that is purely coincidental too, relatively speaking.

There is money for oil construction in the constituency of Dauphin, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Highway's constituency.

And in the constituency of Lac du Bonnet, is the double-laning of Highway 44 a priority over the double-laning of Highway 75, Manitoba's major artery from the United States to our province? It's in deplorable condition. It's another one of the many -(Interjection)- oh there's the Member for Kildonan saying, "Let the Americans pay." They come here to spend their money in our province, we benefit from it, and he says, "Let the Americans pay." Build the road. That will encourage them to come and, through their spending here, they will pay for it -(Interjection)- you've got two ears and one mouth; listen twice as much as you talk. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the condition of that road is one of the many, many reasons that Canada's tourism statistics have consistently been lower, much lower than previous years, month after month after month, for practically all of 1986 and so far all of 1987.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it appears that it is only those ridings in which people exercise their democratic right to elect P.C. MLA's which are suffering from John the Slasher's cutbacks in road construction. That's the way it appears. These people are being denied their fair share of what remains of the plundered Highways budget, never mind the many other areas of government expenditures.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us continue with more examples of this NDP government's broken promises. This would be of interest to the Minister of Natural Resources. The Cooks Creek diversion project is still only a half-completed project. What good is half a diversion? What about the future of the value-added crops? Officially, it's called a postponement, but in fact, I believe, as do many members of the Cooks Creek Conservation District, and indeed most people in the area, both farmers and non-farmers, that it has been cancelled due to another department, in this case, Natural Resources, that has been plundered. Plundered, I might add, by strong Ministers who take away from the weaker Ministers who can't stand up for their departments -(Interjection)- who gets the money, a colleague of mine asks. A lot of it goes to communications personnel - we know that - the propoganda people.

What distresses me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, despite the commitments that were made to those people in that area that the diversion would be built, and despite the fact that \$2 million of federal money has already been spent - they can't bash the feds here - they've taken all the money. They have spent it all and then, once it was all spent, it has been postponed indefinitely. It's like building a house, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You start building it and you decide from year to year whether you are going to add a wall or not. It doesn't make sense. There is no plan, nothing.

Yet, despite this NDP Government's cutbacks in fundings and its broken promises to the Cooks Creek Conservation District, the Department of Highways

expects the same conservation district to build unnecessary expensive bridges when there are affordable and reasonable alternatives available. Remember, unless you are prepared to put up the bucks, they haven't got the money to build them. They have a very limited budget. Remember, Springfield doesn't get the same considerations as does the Selkirk area. There is no fair sharing here. Where is the money supposed to come from? Highways or Natura Resources? I think they should listen to the members of the Cooks Creek Conservation District, the board members, when they offer reasonable alternatives.

The Minister is a reasonable man. He has been to the Whiteshell; he has been to Tache; he has been to my community of Lorette. He listens. I don't know if he'll act yet, but he listens. Listen to them. They will propose alternatives to what the Department of Highways is suggesting.

And what about the Medika drain, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It is still only half completed as well. Still citizens of that area, every year a bridge was promised there many times ago by a former Minister of this government. It's yet to be built. There's money for bridges elsewhere, but not for the people of Medika.

And what about the broken promises to the youth of our province? I'll take, for example, the Youth Business Start Program. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's a program - oh, look at this - from the Manitoba Jobs Fund - working with Manitoba's youth starting new businesses. What happens, though, when people apply? Oh, I'm sure they will point out a few areas where they've approved projects. There are many more which have not been approved.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair.)

I'll just take one case in point here, and I quote: "A careful assessment of your proposal and cash flow indicates that your projects are unrealistic, with reference to your estimated value of sales." It says a little bit more, but it ends with: "Good luck in your future endeavours." -(Interjection)- Who said that? I won't say who, but it was a person on behalf of the Employment, Development and Youth Services - very encouraging for that person. That person was also told: "The advisory board brings expertise and knowledge to the assessment process and ensures objectivity in the review of all applications. The board felt it was unlikely that you could consistently achieve the high volumes of sales indicated in Sections A and B of the cash flow portion of the application, particularly considering that you would be a new business operator in an area with a relatively small population."

Madam Speaker, she could have appealed that decision. Maybe she should have gone to see the Minister responsible for the Status of Women to see if there was not discrimination involved. But she wrote back. What she said was that she felt it is not worth all the hassle that she had already gone through when she just spent hours in their office, to file a claim. This was another farce that the NDP Government brought in to get extra youth votes. This is how the young people are feeling.

I'll just read one more sentence here: "I hope that at the next election the young people of today will realize which party they should vote for."

Madam Speaker, is this typical, or does geography and politics have anything to do with it? This project did not fail. This young lady went on, despite the so-called assessment of the incompetent boors on this board, and she went on and she built up that business and, to date, despite what this board said, it's going, it's operating and she did it without any government money whatsoever, in the true spirit of free enterprise. Maybe it was a blessing in disguise.

Talking about young people, Madam Speaker, what about education commitments, specifically this government's promise to fund 90 percent of education costs? What happened to that promise? Broken, that's what, another broken promise. The other night, a few nights ago, the Premier was on television on two different stations, unequivocally and publicly broke the promise on the air. He once again cut the Minister of Education off at the knees. On one hand, we have the Premier saying that wasn't a commitment; that was just a consideration. Then they show the next tape, and there's the Minister of Education saying that it was a commitment. Who do we believe?

Do you recall those bermuda shorts we were talking about a few days ago? If he gets cut off at the knees many more times, they'll go over his shoes.

Madam Speaker, we laugh a little, but it's a serious matter, because in the Speech from the Throne, under the fancy title of Maintaining High Quality Education, it says: "My Government will continue to support and expand programs which will improve access to educational opportunities for all Manitobans, increased equity in the public school system and maintain a high standard of education for all Manitobans. Support to rural schools will be maintained; new technology will be used to deliver and increase a variety of curriculum options to areas of the province in which they have not previously been available." That's what they say, but take the example I brought up on first day after the Speech from the Throne - Falcon Beach School. Whoever writes these speeches for the Premier, for the government, while they were writing this, this very same government gave a 20-month notice to those people that they were going to close down their school. First they try to kill their ski slope; now they want to kill their school.

Madam Speaker, if it hadn't been for the Member for La Verendrye and myself, that ski slope would be closed, and you can bet your bottom dollar that we're not going to let them close that school either. Those people are there year-round. Summertime when the tourists come, we have the business operators, the RCMP, the Parks people; summertime when the tourists come, we're glad to have those people in place, but they're there year-round. Their children need a place to go to school. They can't be expected to be driven one-and-a-half to two hours every day just to go to school.

You want to cut fat in education? Cut in the administration part and make productive use of those dollars by putting them into schools and programs.

About agriculture, Madam Speaker, which affects most of us in the rural areas. In 1986, Alberta spent \$515.6 million, Saskatchewan spent \$1.64 billion, and the Federal Government - as we all know - over \$1 billion in support of farmers. What did Manitoba spend? Less than \$36 million in support of our farmers. This

government has not done anything to assist farmers with low-cost operating loans or fuel rebates or anything else that is truly meaningful and practical.

No, Madam Speaker, despite bashing Alberta, Saskatchewan and Federal Governments, the facts are little has been done by the NDP, compared to PC Governments elsewhere. They like to brag about the so-called Family Farm Protection Act, but what has it done? What is it doing to the farm community? It was opposed by farmers, by farm organizations, by credit unions, as well as the banks. What it's done is cut off credit to many farmers who needed it, increased the cost of credit to those who are still able to use it. It's been one of the worst possible things that could have happened to farmers. That is why we on this side of the House elect more farmers than those over there.

I wonder how many desperate farmers have the MACC foreclosed on? I recall in the last Session laying out a case, and I have many, of farmers who had loans from MACC who were driven to bankruptcy because they were assessed as not being viable.

When will the education tax on farm land be removed? We, the Progressive Conservative Party are committed to eliminating it. We'll begin with removing 50 percent of that very regressive tax shortly after we form the government. -(Interjection)- Jim, you say, when will that happen? You may take comfort in the polls, but I've bucked the odds before; I'm not afraid to buck the odds again.

Problems are surfacing as well at an escalating rate at the poorly managed Workers Compensation Board. Both working people and employers are being penalized because of that mismanagement. Madam Speaker, I have a whole file on one working person, a whole file. This person's been going through - well, I can't use the word, it's not parliamentary - but the point is, Madam Speaker, that employers or the job creators have faced whopping increases in the premiums that they have to pay. But the working people are not getting their due justice when they have a legitimate claim. Those increases in Workers' Compensation premiums are on top of the 1.5 percent tax on jobs, not to mention the many other costs involved in operating a small business, not only in terms of dollars but in terms of time. It's very frustrating to be a small business operator in Manitoba, Madam Speaker, very frustrating, indeed. What about this government's dismal record on the issue of child abuse? It was our concern about the innocent victims of child abuse, Madam Speaker, and our initiation of an emergency debate on this serious matter which resulted in an independent review of the child welfare system.

What did the interim report of the external review team say? Madam Speaker, let me quote from a paper that I prepared for some constituents of mine which summarizes the highlight of that report. The report confirms that the system of delivery of protection for children is difficult because of: (1) the number of different systems delivering care, for example, provincial, tribal, non-mandated, private; (2) the number of reporting agencies but mainly the Child and Family Service agencies, the City of Winnipeg Police Department, medical child abuse units, schools and day-care centres; (3) the differing levels of expertise and programs available under the different systems and within the six Child and Family Service agencies;

(4) the lack of clear service standards and practices within the system and the agencies; (5) the difficulty in coordinating so many individuals, groups and organizations, government departments and institutions participating in the system.

The interim report recommends a wide range of changes in staffing, training, financing and operating procedures. On November 28, 1986, in a government news release, Community Services Minister Muriel Smith said that the report would be a valuable aid to both the government and agencies in working out improved methods of treating and preventing child abuse. She further stated: "We want to talk about the agencies and their needs in the areas relating to training and to multi-disciplinary child abuse response teams so that together we can work out the best way to implement those recommendations while respecting the agencies' use."

I further wrote, Madam Speaker, "As a member of the Official Opposition, I feel that our initiation of an emergency debate in the House following the death of three abused children within months of each other this past summer was a very responsible reaction. We hope that the resulting report will bring about the necessary changes required to benefit both the deliverers of the services and the children and families that they help and support."

Madam Speaker, this interim report is a prime example of effective and constructive opposition. We intend to continue being such in achieving results despite the NDP's refusal to act in the best interests of Manitobans, such as when they recently refused to allow emergency debates on the crisis in agriculture and on the plight of Winnipeggers facing huge assessment increases.

The emergency debate on child abuse resulted in positive concrete action, beneficial to Manitobans as a whole and especially to child abuse victims and potential child abuse victims. But, Madam Speaker, in doing so it pointed glaring shortcomings of this government as well as its ineffectiveness; therefore, it embarrassed them. That is no doubt why, Madam Speaker, and despite the potential benefits to Manitobans that the NDP have denied us the right to have the emergency debate we requested recently.

Talking about emergencies, Madam Speaker, let's take a look at the crisis situation that this government has put our province in. With the estimated current provincial deficit of \$587 million; \$587 million, Madam Speaker, it's a shame. A recent article in the Free Press made some interesting and I might add frightening observations. It said that the deficit is so great that a three-year plan is needed to remedy the imbalance between government revenues and spending. Will they act on such a three-year plan? We haven't seen any kind of plans yet.

I dread March 16, I really do. They say a 1 percent increase in the sales tax is quite likely, and I wouldn't be surprised if it goes up 2 percent, a tax which many years ago this government, this party, attacked as being regressive.

Madam Speaker, this article further says if the province had not been burdened with deficits over those three years the interest saved on servicing debt would have gone a long way toward financing health, education and social service programs. There would have been

an extra \$150 million in cash flow available for these programs in the upcoming budget. The \$50 million for servicing the 1986-87 debt alone is six times higher than the \$8 million increase provided over the past year to universities and community colleges. The anticipated \$587 million deficit for the year ending March 31 represents 15 percent of the current year's government spending. It places a debt burden of more than \$2,000 for each Manitoba family of four.

Madam Speaker, that's terrible. If the Minister of Finance and his Cabinet colleagues do not address this crisis situation soon, our vital and essential services will indeed be threatened, will possibly even be destroyed, not to mention the many other services people have come to expect in cultural matters, in recreation, in sports and so on. They're being let down by this government, Madam Speaker. When debt servicing alone gobbles up \$50 million of our tax dollars, it is a crisis, it is an emergency, and it's one of serious and immense proportions.

Take a look at what has happened to Britain's health care system. Britain is a good example of socialist deficit financing. The whole system there is collapsing. It was supposed to be universal. What's happened? We have a two-tier system. There is such a long waiting list for people who want to go in to see the doctor, to see the hospital. Only those with money, who can afford to pay a doctor after hours, to go see them, can afford to see a doctor.

MR. J. DOWNEY: That's where we're headed.

MR. G. ROCH: Madam Speaker, as my colleague from Arthur has indicated, yes, that is where we're headed. It's happening. Despite what the Throne Speech says, I believe it's on Page 12 - it says Manitoba's health care system is among the finest in the world and it's preservation and enhancement presents one of the greatest challenges and opportunities for the future.

Well, Madam Speaker, what is really happening out here? What is happening in our health care system? It's cutbacks and availability of hospital beds.- (Interjections)- Ask my colleague from Brandon. What's happening in the Health Sciences Centre, as the Member for Lakeside says, and many other places? It's a lack of sufficient treatment facilities. People have to go out of province; they have to go to the United States, to other provinces to get treatment. There are cutbacks in services here, people who should be in personal care homes or in hospitals to get much-needed beds.

There's presently a lack of emphasis on preventative health care. Although the Throne Speech does make reference to "Disease Prevention And Health Promotion Services" - will the government keep its word, or is this simply another pious promise that will end up joining the NDP's lengthy list of broken promises? Madam Speaker, for the sake of all Manitobans I sincerely hope not.

Preventative health care is not only desirable from a fiscal point of view, but it is also especially desirable from a people and health point of view. Action, not inaction, is needed now in this area, and I sincerely hope that such action does emanate, Madam Speaker, but given this government's record, I am not very optimistic.

And there are other areas, Madam Speaker. For quite some time now, constituents in the additional zone area of Springfield, indeed as well as the additional zone area in all of Winnipeg, have asked this government, previous Ministers, to be included in the Winnipeg Toll-Free Exchange. Never could, never could, it didn't have the money they said. Last July, I believe, and unfortunately I don't have the reference in front of me, but I recall questioning the previous Minister, and he indicated that they couldn't afford it at this time. When I referred to MTX he said it was a good investment for Manitobans, that it would bring us many benefits in the future. A month later, Madam Speaker, he was talking a very different tune.

The people in Springfield would think nothing of a rate increase, if included in the Winnipeg toll-free area. It is kind of surprising that when it comes to costs, whether it be assessment, whether it be permits, whether it be anything else in the additional zone, it would have to be included with the City of Winnipeg. When it comes to telephones, long distance, we have to pay long distance. We would think nothing of a rate increase if it included being in the Winnipeg toll-free area.

I would like to point out something. On March 3, 1982, at that time the Minister who was responsible, the Honourable Member for Brandon West, advised, and this is a quote: "MTS deliberately does not consider a toll-free service for these communities adjacent to Winnipeg or Brandon, such as, the Dugald Main Exchange, since these communities present a special set of circumstances." What is a special set, Madam Speaker? We're practically a suburb, the additional zone, practically a suburb like Transcona, St. James, Charleswood, Headingley were. Why then can we not be included in the same area?

Again, on March 3, the same Minister, said that "the MTS officials offered cautionary views of the toll-free or extended-area service program format." Why was that, Madam Speaker? Who were these officials? Were they the same people involved with MTX? It was very hard to believe back then that this service could not

be extended. Now that we've found out what has happened in Saudi Arabia, we don't believe it anymore. We used to talk about \$20 million, now it's close to \$30 million, and how much more, Madam Speaker. We don't know. I see my light flashing here, how much time do I have?

MADAM SPEAKER: The honorable member has two minutes.

MR. G. ROCH: Two minutes. Well, Madam Speaker, it's unfortunate, unless I have leave for unlimited time, I had many more . . . Madam Speaker, I even had the translators over, I had a good portion of my speech to give in French and I was hoping . . .

Mais puisqu'il reste très peu de temps, tout ce que je peux dire d'abord c'est qu'on aura plusieurs autres occasions et plusieurs autres affaires que je veux discuter, que ça soit au courant de la discussion du budget, que ça soit au courant de d'autres discussions durant les . . . de différents départements. Madame l'oratrice, je croyais que j'aurais de la misère de parler 40 minutes et je me vois maintenant que j'ai déjà plus de temps.

Translation will appear in subsequent issue

I would just like to add that I am very very happy to have spoken on this Throne Speech Debate. I look forward to participating in the Budget Speech Debate and I am glad that I am sitting on this side of the House, and I have no regrets.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Given the time, I am wondering whether there is an inclination to call it six o'clock.

MADAM SPEAKER: The hour being six o'clock then, I am leaving the Chair and will return at 8:00 p.m.