

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 23, 1989.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Cindy Stanick, Ian Deg and others, requesting the Government of Manitoba to reverse its decision to eliminate the General Insurance Division of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation inasmuch as:

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

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the Report of the Manitoba Development Corporation for the year ended March 31, 1988.

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to table the Report of the Manitoba Child Care Task Force.

* (1335)

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Public Insurance Act): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation 1988 Annual Report.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I have a brief ministerial statement to make. It is my privilege to carry out a long-standing tradition—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Enns: It is my privilege to carry on with a long-standing tradition of this House, namely, to declare this

month the celebration and importance of our forests and of the forestry industry in this province. This explains the seedling in front of each of you.

The 1989 theme for Forest Week in Manitoba is "Growing Together." This reflects our need to become more environmentally aware and more cognizant of conservation practices. Whether we enjoy trees for aesthetics, as a backdrop for our recreational pursuits, for shelter belts or for our livelihood, we must ensure there our trees for our children to grow together alongside.

My department continues to emphasize reforestation efforts. Last year over 15,000 hectares were treated with some form of silvicultural activity. This represented a 16 percent increase over the previous year's program. Specifically, 7,300 hectares were planted or scarified for natural regeneration. This represents a 40 percent increase over the previous year.

As we move toward our goals and objectives of the 20-year management plan for forestry, reforestation levels are increasing and this is a positive indicator that we are moving in the right direction.

The seedling in front of you is the white spruce, which will soon become our provincial tree pending the amendment of The Floral Emblems Act this Session. The white spruce is one of Manitoba's most popular tree species and is grown in both our provincial nurseries. For those Members of northern constituencies, you may still take part in the Forest Week celebrations in Thompson and in The Pas on May 27, 1989.

Mr. Speaker, let me just conclude by saying perhaps no one more than myself, indeed so many of us, are only too deeply concerned about the importance of our forests at a time such as this when we have seen all too much devastation occur throughout this valuable resource. I am pleased to be able to indicate that this Government, this department is doing all it can in terms of redressing that problem with a very active reforestation program, perhaps best underlined by the recent agreement signed with one of our major forestry companies, which for the first time in the history of Manitoba calls for a full 100 percent reforestation for every harvested tree. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): I would like to join with the Minister for Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) and congratulate him on declaring this month for forestry industry and indeed forestry in itself. I too have seen the devastation of forest fires and, unlike what the press has reported, indeed feel that there is no expense that is great enough to replace our forests in Manitoba. In flying over the forest fire areas and looking out of the plane and seeing nothing but either burnt land or fires, it is a response emotionally that nobody would speak against. There is no money that can replace what we have lost.

I am particularly upset when we do not give credit to how much our forests are a part of our environment, and I think we are coming to recognize it more and more. I hope this Government will continue its efforts to reforest at the quickest available moment. I would take this opportunity to point out to the Minister that there are plans in the Duck Mountains to clear-cut, to burn down actually an area of the forest that was replanted in '63 that they do not like how it is growing. That is too bad when we go backwards instead of forwards.

* (1340)

I would like to point out as well the need for forests in improving our air conditions in that there is a natural filtration process that the trees go through to take the process of all the hazards in our air and clean them and put them back into the air in the best possible way. We have to look at the way that after cuts are taken that we have erosion taking place. We have soil that is being moved by the winds because of lack of shelter belts. I will certainly support any moves by this Government towards increasing the forests and the shelter belts and maintaining our river banks with forests and horticulture processes so that we have the cleanest possible watersheds.

I would invite this Minister at any time possible to come with the Opposition in working together to provide the best forests we have possible. We are in desperate straits at this time of year with the forest fires. I would also like to point out though that the amount of forest we cut down we also use up in paper. It is unfortunate that we do not have a recycling industry here in Manitoba and hope that we will see, by this Government, some process in which we have recycling taking place.

Again, I would congratulate this Government on declaring this week. We look forward to some innovative, proactive measurements in attacking the decay of our forests and the unfortunate situation we find ourselves in this year.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the NDP Caucus, I would like to thank the Minister for carrying on with the tradition of giving the Members a tree, and I think we have to reach out further and each one of us must carry on the tradition of replanting some of our forests.

In the last week, I was able to take a trip to northern Manitoba or central Manitoba where the forest fires were burning, and I also witnessed the devastation that the forest fires had caused. I want to congratulate the Department of Natural Resources and EMO on the quick response they had to the disaster that struck many members of our provincial domain. I also want to thank all the volunteers who took part in helping to cope with the forest fire damage.

We do have to re-evaluate to see that we look at the forest not only from the economic standpoint. We have to look at the role that the forest plays in the whole ecosystem, and I think that we have to carry on this tradition and see if we can promote it to a much greater degree than it has been. We cannot settle only

on a one for one; we must move on that. We also must move on recycling because I think it is extremely important, especially at this time when there is such a devastation of our forest, that this is an appropriate time to be moving into the whole area of recycling. There is an awful lot of waste there that can be utilized in those products. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

BILL NO. 16—AN ACT TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF NON-SMOKERS

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 16, an Act to Protect the Health of Non-Smokers; Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, under our rules just briefly, thank you very much. As the Members in the Chamber know, it was a Bill that we did introduce last year and it is a Bill that we would like to seek support from all Parties in this Session of the Legislature. The Bill deals with two fundamental objectives. One is to have a standard of non-smoking policy across the province. There are now by-laws in many municipalities and there are some provisions administratively, but it is to deal with some standards across the province and particularly in areas such as child care centres which we see today. We should not have to rely on 35,000 parents sending in petitions in child care centres to deal with kids with respiratory problems. We should have a standard policy across the province to deal with non-smoking policies in those areas.

* (1345)

And secondly, it is to deal with the outdated laws that we have in our land with minors in smoking, Mr. Speaker, laws that date back to 1909. I believe the fine for premises that are guilty of selling tobacco products to minors—is it \$10?—a fine that is totally out of date with the existing realities. It is almost twice the amount of money just for one package of cigarettes, and we believe the laws and the enforcement of those laws in dealing with smoking with minors must be dealt with in a way to reflect the realities of our all-Party opposition to smoking, and smoking particularly with youth, not only as a health issue in terms of second-hand smoke but also as a health issue for people who are smoking themselves.

MOTION presented and carried

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake) introduced on behalf of the Honourable Member for Elmwood, by leave, Bill No. 15, The Motor Vehicle Standards Act; Loi sur les normes des véhicules automobiles.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Would there be unanimous consent that the Honourable Member for the Interlake (Mr. Uruski) can move this Bill for the Honourable Member for Elmwood? (Agreed)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Manitoba Data Services Divestiture

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):

My question is to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). In the Speech from the Throne last Thursday, the Government announced the possible sale of Manitoba Data Services by divestiture, which hopefully will welcome Opposition criticism and input and recommendations, much more so than the divestiture of Manfor in the last Session.

Will the Minister outline for the House today the conditions under which such a sale would be made?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) for the question. The criteria in place have not been at this time fully developed, but the broad outline of those criteria will be the following: first of all, that there should be no reduction in the number of jobs; secondly, that any potential purchaser—and again it was spelled out very clearly in the Throne Speech, “possible sale.” The Government has not made a final commitment to the divestiture of MDS, but that any possible sale should use the existing strong human resource component existing with MDS as a launch to further economic development within the province. Those are the basic criteria in place at this point in time.

Records Security

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a supplementary question to the Minister of Finance, the Minister in his response does not reference security. Yet Manitobans are concerned about their health records, their education records, their records with the Attorney General's office, and that those records be handled with the utmost confidentiality and security. How does this Minister intend to guarantee such confidentiality and security when these records are in the hands of a private corporation?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): It is obvious that Government is going to have to make a final assessment on that specific criteria and any other. In today's world of systems, if there is not security built in, then obviously all aspects of Government are not secure in today's presence.

So, Mr. Speaker, if security cannot be maintained or guaranteed, then obviously there will not be a sale if that becomes the deciding judgmental criterion. But again, we are just beginning in this process. The criteria are being developed at this point in time and, again I stress to Members opposite, we are talking about a possible sale.

* (1350)

Mrs. Carstairs: With a supplementary question to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker, last Session this Government was prepared to share all Manitoba

records with CSIS with no protection for Manitobans whatsoever. This year, it is prepared to give records away without even any control by those who at present are controlled by Government oath, as MDS employees are. Why is this Minister, like the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae), so quick to deal away the privacy of Manitobans?

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, nothing is further from the truth. This Government, indeed the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae), there is no Member of the executive bench who wants to provide secrets that deal with the people for public consumption. Who in their best interest, indeed in any interest, would lay before the people of Manitoba a policy that somehow would trample on the private rights and private information of people? Certainly not this Party and not this Government. So let me say again that if, through the negotiating process, it is sensed that there is some degree of security that may be breached because of a divestiture, that will have to be answered clearly and concisely and, if it is not, there will be no sale.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, it is indeed shocking that confidentiality and privacy are not the first criteria of this Government.

St. Boniface Hospital Obstetrical Capacity

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a new question to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), throughout much of the last Session, we urged this Government to address the overcrowded situation in the obstetrical unit at St. Boniface Hospital, a facility built for 2,600 patients, now servicing some 4,500. This unit is frequently closed. Indeed, it has been closed 25 times since this Minister became the Minister of Health. Can this Minister tell us what progress has been made since last we sat in December of 1988 to guarantee quality obstetrical care at St. Boniface?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, to indicate to my honourable friend, the Leader of the Liberal Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), who by the very last comment she made is saying that quality obstetrical care is not available at St. Boniface, is dead wrong. Quality care is available in St. Boniface Hospital for mothers and children, contrary to the allegations she has just made. There is a dedicated staff providing those kinds of services at St. Boniface, as well as substantive arrangements between St. Boniface and the Health Sciences Centre to accommodate those occasions wherein the obstetrical capacity at St. Boniface is used and an expectant mother is referred to Health Sciences Centre. Similar arrangements are available with community hospitals where there is capacity to deliver additional children.

That circumstance at St. Boniface is unique. It is a problem that is recognized by the Government. It is being addressed in consultation with St. Boniface and other hospitals, and I reject the Leader of the

Opposition's (Mrs. Carstairs) allegation that quality obstetrics are not available at St. Boniface.

Patient Turnaways

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, but quality care cannot be given when the patients are turned away at the door. Can the Minister explain to this House why a 31-year-old, first-time mother with gestational diabetes, early in her pregnancy, having one-minute contractions two minutes apart, was told last Thursday to get into her car and drive to the Victoria Hospital?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I would dearly appreciate the opportunity to answer that question for my honourable friend and indeed to ascertain whether someone at St. Boniface indicated that a young expectant mother in that circumstance was told to get into her car and drive to another unit. I will investigate that, and I will report to the House as to the circumstances surrounding that allegation.

* (1355)

Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend, the Liberal Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) would want to be very careful before she alarms every single expectant mother in the Province of Manitoba that the obstetric services in this province are not operating effectively, efficiently and with the best care of mother and child involved. Despite her spurious accusations, the obstetric service in Manitoba is indeed a fine one.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, this is not quality care. Almost all doctors would define this young woman as being above average in risk. When will this Minister do something to ensure that patients like this one are not turned away from the doors of St. Boniface?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated to my honourable friend, I will investigate her allegations as to that individual who allegedly was turned away last week. I will report back to the House as to the circumstances. In fact, I will be glad to report back to the House to my honourable friend.

If my honourable friend did some small amount of investigation with those who are obviously indicating to her the circumstances at St. Boniface Hospital, she would know there are discussions, negotiations ongoing between St. Boniface Hospital and the Manitoba Health Services Commission, in conjunction with the other community and the other teaching hospitals in Winnipeg, to attempt to make the most logical and rational solution to the problem possible.

My honourable friend shakes her head because it is obvious in the Liberal readiness to Government, she has the answers to every question, including those that have not been asked.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to at this time draw Honourable Members' attention to the public gallery, where we have from the Robert H. Smith School, thirty Grade 5 students under the direction of Beatrix Wolff. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs).

We also have with us this afternoon from the Red River Community College 16 students under the direction of Alice Lowdry. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD (Cont'd)

Port of Churchill Grain Shipments

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Over the past few weeks, we have all heard some extremely disappointing and discouraging news about the Port of Churchill, and how it is unlikely there will be any shipments of grain through the port this year. Just last Friday, federal Minister Jake Epp warned the Manitobans not to put too much stock in any shipments through Churchill this year. Mr. Speaker, it is obvious we have to bring pressure to bear on the Canadian Wheat Board to ensure that Churchill receives its fair share of grain shipments, this year and every year thereafter.

My question is to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay). Is the Minister prepared to immediately contact his federal counterpart, the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, to pressure him to ensure that the Canadian Wheat Board ships at least 3 percent of Canada's grain export shipments through the Port of Churchill this year?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Clearly, the Port of Churchill is in some severe difficulty right now with regard to a short crop in 1988, and probably some difficulty in 1989 with production with regard to the potential drought that is in front of us.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Wheat Board sanctity and the desire not to politicize it is very high on our agenda. I would like to tell the Member that the Wheat Board's submission is to sell grain to the highest possible bidder to the benefit of the Canadian farmer, and that is the basis upon which we will approach the Canadian Wheat Board and the Minister responsible. We have done that through the all-Party committee over the past year with an attempt to find a resolution to have grain going through the Port of Churchill.

Given the circumstances that are in front of us and the fact that the Canadian Wheat Board's sanctity and its non-political nature must be maintained, I do not think we can force the Wheat Board to ship grain through Churchill at this time.

Subsidies

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): If the Minister is so concerned about the sanctity of the Wheat Board, perhaps he should contact Mr. Mayer to talk to him about the oat situation. It is good enough to put pressure on for oats, but not good enough to put pressure on for Churchill. That is unacceptable.

My question to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) because I think he is fast aligning himself with the detractors of Churchill when he makes statements such as he did last week, that the Wheat Board has to do business and farmers cannot be subsidizing ports. Can the Minister clarify those comments? Is he trying to tell the public of Manitoba and prairie farmers that running the Port of Churchill is costing prairie farmers money, rather than saving them money, by a more efficient shipping route to eastern European ports?

* (1400)

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell this House that I am completely in disagreement with that Member's comments, that I am aligning myself with the people who do not support Churchill.

I stand on my statements of today and of the other day where I was asked if I would ask farmers to subsidize the Port of Churchill. I said no. If the citizens of Canada want to subsidize the Port of Churchill, I am in favour of that but I will not ask the farmers of western Canada, through forced sales of the Wheat Board through that port, to subsidize the port. But if the people of Canada are prepared to support it through a subsidization, I am in favour of that.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, indeed we are starting to rehear the spirit of Jack Murta in this House when we hear comments like that from the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay).

My question is to the Acting Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay). Last week, we heard the federal Minister of Transportation betray his ignorance about the Port of Churchill through his comments on his perceptions of problems associated with shipping grain through the port. It is obvious that he does not know very much about the port. It is obvious that he has a lot to learn. What is particularly troubling is that those comments were made after he had a meeting with our provincial Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), who should have been telling him how the port operates and the benefits of the port.

My question to the Acting Minister of Highways and Transportation, what action has the Government taken to contact the federal Minister of Transportation to ensure that the misconceptions which he holds about the port are no longer influencing in a negative fashion the federal Government's decision to contact the Wheat Board to ship grain through the Port of Churchill?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), I will take that question as notice.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Churchill, with a supplementary question.

Mr. Cowan: I understand it is a time-honoured tradition to take questions as notice in this House. However, there is an urgency associated with this particular question, and I would have expected that the Government would have already taken action instead of having to wait for a question in this House to explain what they intend to do.- (Interjection)- We just heard the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) speak from his seat. Perhaps he should pick up his phone, as he promised to do during the election, and make that phone call.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Government Support

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): I would direct my question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). Given the fact that Ports Canada indicated over the weekend that it will not open the port unless there is a significant shipment of grain by the Canadian Wheat Board through the port this year, and given the fact that will lay approximately 100 to 120 workers off and out of work, can the First Minister indicate what action he has taken to contact the Prime Minister to tell him that not only is Portage important to this province but the Port of Churchill is important to this province and we Manitobans want to see it open this year?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): On many occasions in this House, I have indicated that this Government is very strongly in support of the community of Churchill and the Port of Churchill. We have indicated through the participation in the all-Party Committee that has met regularly, even beginning in last Session, and throughout the course between the Sessions they have continued to meet. On Friday, the Minister

Government Appointments Contradictions

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): My question is for the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae). Yesterday, we proposed a new way of appointing provincial judges in this province, a way that does what the Minister said - (Interjection)- maybe the Leader of the third Party (Mr. Doer) would like to answer this question—a way that opens up the process to public participation, a way that no Government has done in this province in a way this Minister said he would do. The Minister criticized that proposal and is reported to have said, if the seven out of the nine Members of the proposed committee were appointed by himself or by Cabinet, the system would not be depoliticized and the public would not be reassured.

While I agree that he has not and his Government's appointments have not been impressive, the Minister's statement suggest this Government's appointees, hundreds of people, are people incapable of

independent thought. That is the natural ramification of his statement. Will the Minister please explain the contradiction?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I am not sure if buried in that lengthy speech made by the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) that there was a real question there. I do take issue with his comment that recent appointments have not been impressive. I say that amounts to an insult to Chief Judge Stefanson, an insult to Judge John Guy and an insult to Judge Judith Webster. The sentiments put forward by the Honourable Member are not shared by the vast majority of Manitobans.

With respect to the question with the issue raised about appointment of judges, the Honourable Member, as Justice critic, should have been aware some time ago that the Manitoba Law Reform Commission is actively working on this and other matters related to The Provincial Court Act. I prefer to await their report before jumping on the Honourable Member's suggestion.

Judicial System Provincial Judge Appointments

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): I wish the Minister would listen to the question before responding. The question was not about appointments to the Bench. The question was about appointments to the many boards and agencies. He has not answered that. He has not stood up for his own appointments.

With respect to the upcoming report of the Law Reform Commission, this Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) told the Canadian Bar Association at a meeting on March 10 of this year that recommendations of the Law Reform Commission would be taken into account prior to any new appointments to the Bench. This Minister broke that promise just 11 days ago when he appointed two new people to the Bench. He did not wait for that report as he said he would. Will he please explain why he broke his promise to the Canadian Bar Association made at a meeting March 10, 1989, and committed to the record and the minutes of that meeting?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I will review the minutes referred to by the Honourable Member but this is the same Honourable Member who, citing the case for judges and lawyers, said they were put to great inconvenience to have to have backlogs. I suggest the people of Manitoba are put to great inconvenience too by virtue of having court backlogs. There is a need to have people put in place to deal with court backlogs in this province.

Which way does the Honourable Member want it? Is he really serious about the inconvenience to victims, the difficulty faced by witnesses and other ordinary people who come before our courts? I too feel for the judges and the lawyers, but I am afraid my job in this place is to represent the people of Manitoba. I would put the emphasis there as opposed to the Honourable Member, who seems to be carrying a brief perhaps for those who are in those positions.

The Honourable Member talks also about boards and commissions. I remember a day in May in 1984 when one Pierre Trudeau, for whom the Honourable Member is a sycophant, announced the appointment of some 200 or more people to various boards and commissions all in one day. The Honourable Member expects people to believe him when he comes forward with depoliticization ideas for boards and commissions. I think not.

Mr. Edwards: I would dearly love this Minister to do something about the backlog. He has been promising for a year. It has not been improved one whit. This Minister has done nothing to deal with that problem, and the people will hold him to account for that.

* (1410)

Queen's Counsel Appointments

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): At the same meeting, this Minister told the Bar Association that with respect to the appointment of 15 Q.C.s, he could not wait. Why? He could not wait because of the lack of time available to set up a formal committee. Mr. Speaker, my question is, just what was the rush, given that the designation of Q.C. serves no substantive purpose in the administration of justice in this province? Why does this Minister not have the strength of his convictions?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I think, unlike the Honourable Member, the approach that I have used has been to consult representatives of the Bar Association and the Law Society with respect to Q.C. appointments as well as judicial appointments. The Honourable Member wants to use Bar Association minutes but on another occasion will turn his back on the opinions held by the Bar Association when he wants to cast aspersions toward recent appointments to the Bench, which I think has been viewed as an insult by members of the Bar Association.

Multicultural Grants Disbursement

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson) has announced plans for a Multicultural Grants Advisory Council to disburse funds. We already have a granting body through the Manitoba Intercultural Council, a council which is elected from and by the community itself. Can the Minister explain how the proposed appointed body will be more responsible and more accountable than that which already exists, and why would she want to make that change?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) for that question. I do want to indicate that just before the House opened today, I had a news conference indicating that I was requesting the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) to take some action and dismiss the critic for Culture from the Liberal department as a result of actions that

took place on Friday afternoon. MIC was having a press conference and the Member for Selkirk was in the midst of that press conference, when there was no media around, was playing blatant political politics with MIC, indicating

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am rather disappointed, and I must say disappointed with the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), who has just recently been appointed as critic for the multicultural community. There she is in there indicating that the only way that MIC should be dealing with the Minister is to attack the Minister personally. That is the Liberal Party strategy for dealing with the multicultural community. I have to say that if the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) has no other creative way of dealing with the multicultural community, then I question the Liberal motives and I question—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Mitchelson: —and I question what they

Mrs. Charles: I make no apologies for being a politician. I think it is an honourable profession.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Board Appointments

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): I am tempted to reread my question but the question will be in Hansard. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister explain to this House how she will appoint this new—she has got me flustered—granting board and why she will not make use of the existing body already in place under MIC?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): Mr. Speaker, maybe I can continue from my first answer. As a matter of fact, we have the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) speaking for her Culture critic on the weekend because she was there at the news conference. Obviously she did not make any points, and she had to get her Leader after the fact to go out and speak for her on her behalf to get any mileage, and that did not help any.

We have the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) saying in the paper that this Government, our administration, is grabbing money from an elected body and putting it into the hands of political appointees. Well, I must say that obviously the Liberal Party is grabbing at political politics by dealing with an umbrella group, an organization

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party does not take the multicultural community very seriously and, by their actions last Friday, they are not. They are doing a disservice to the multicultural community by bringing in pure partisan politics at their

expense, and using the multicultural community for their own political purposes.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. May I remind the Honourable Ministers that answers to questions should be as brief as possible? The Honourable Member for Selkirk, with a final supplementary question.

Manitoba Intercultural Council Granting Capacity

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, it is certainly not the multiculturalism community that I think is a joke. What is the Minister's explanation of her statement that the MIC Board agreed to have their granting capacity stripped when no member of that board has that recollection? Can she explain her version of the truth?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): As a matter of fact, it was the Liberal Critic who sat at a meeting with MIC and accused this Minister of lying to that community, and I find that deplorable, Mr. Speaker, deplorable to be using that community in her own personal way when that organization is appointed or is funded by Government to ensure that they are able to give advice to Government on multicultural issues. We have the critic from the Liberal Party sitting in there playing pure partisan politics with the multicultural community.

Budget—Federal Day Care Funding

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): My question is for the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson), and I want to say how happy we all are to receive the task force report on Manitoba child care. What we would like to have seen, Mr. Speaker, is a ministerial statement with a plan of action. They have had this report for two-and-a-half months. We have known about many of the problems long before that and we have—

An Honourable Member: We did not get it in six-and-a-half years of your Government.

Ms. Hemphill: —one of the best day care systems in North America that had been established by the former Government, but we have critical issues that need to be dealt with by this Government. We have a \$5 billion cutback by the federal Government. We have a situation where 60 percent of the women with children in day care, if they lose those day care spaces, their families will be living under the poverty line. We have staff burnout. We are not training enough people. The salaries are below the industrial wage.

I would like to ask this Minister and this Government what they are doing to stand up for Manitoba, not just for Portage la Prairie, which is very important, but for the children of Manitoba, what they are doing to stand up to the federal Government to get them to put that \$5 billion back into the Budget and to meet the commitment that was made by the Prime Minister on July 28, 1988, when he said, we will implement, build

on our national child care program, the most innovative social advance in Canada since the Canadian Pension Plan a quarter of a century ago, and they cut \$5 billion out of the \$7 billion. What are you going to do about it?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): I thank the Member for that question. Only days after the new Minister was sworn in, the Honourable Perrin Beatty, I wrote him asking what was going to take place with their child care legislation. Would it be reintroduced? I have talked to him since—(Interjection)—no, I have not phoned him, I talked to him in person in Ottawa.

* (1420)

Since that time, Mr. Speaker, I have again since the federal Budget written to the Minister, the Honourable Perrin Beatty, asking him to convene a meeting of social service Ministers who are in charge of child care and to discuss with them their plans for a federal day care plan. I was disappointed, as were many others of course, that plan was not announced and seems to be either on hold or delayed for some reason or other. I am attempting to find out if it is going to be reintroduced. As I say, I have been in contact by letter and in person with the Minister and have asked him to convene a meeting of provincial social service Ministers.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Speaker, I think the children of Manitoba would like a little more aggressive action by this Government when they are standing up for Manitoba against the federal Government on this issue.

Day Care Workers Salary Enhancement Grants

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): But this Government has the responsibility themselves. We presently have our day care workers earning \$16,000.00. It is 30 percent less than the average industrial wage. They are burning out. They are leaving the profession after we have paid to train them. We had 200 less people in 1987 than were required to work in day care centres. What does this Government and this Minister intend to do to increase the salary enhancement grant to the recommendation of \$6,600, to double it retroactive to January, and what do you intend to do to increase the training capacity of the colleges to make the shortfall in 200 people trained that are needed in the future?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, the Member will recall that we inherited the salary structure that was in place when she was the Minister, so we have been building on that. We increased the salary, and we introduced a salary enhancement grant last year. All these things are under consideration in the Budget. I have had discussions with the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) as to how we can improve the numbers in training for child care. There will be announcements made after the Budget about all these matters.

Day Care Profit-based Centres

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) with a final supplementary question.

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Speaker, I did want to say that in a short perusal of the task force, it is clear that there are a number of very good recommendations and we will commend the task force on those. One of the points they make is they indicate their concern for commercial for-profit day care and their concern for quality of day care in the commercial for-profit day care institutions. Since the take-up for the commercial profit day care has only been in the range of about 25 percent and since we are losing 50 cent dollars because the federal Government is not participating, will you reallocate the approximately \$200,000 in the for-profit day care to non-profit day care so that we can have \$400,000 to increase spaces for special needs children and infants in rural day care?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I am a little unclear as to exactly what the Member means. Is she talking about the subsidies that—(Interjection)—Okay, now I understand what you are talking about. We are not subsidizing commercial day cares. I tried to convince the Honourable Members of that last year and somehow they still have not caught on. We are subsidizing children in those day cares. What the day care task force alludes to, when you have more opportunity to read it, you will find that they are talking about salary enhancement for day care centres and that they are not condemning the policy of subsidization to children in commercial centres.

Lottery Revenues Distribution Policy

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Lotteries Minister (Mrs. Mitchelson). The Minister admits that lottery revenues have levelled off, but she continues to promise more money for sports, the arts and multiculturalism, plus new money for health promotion, medical research, land and water conservation and recreation. The Minister is digging herself into a hole. She claims constructive consultations but the programs affected deny her claims. Where are the phantom millions the Minister is promising, and will she come clean and tell us which programs she plans to cut?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act): Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to inform the uninformed Lotteries critic from the Liberal Party that this Government, as a result of an extensive needs assessment that was done throughout the province, has responded to that study indicating the people of Manitoba want money to go to health care in this province. The people of Manitoba want money to go to conservation. The people of Manitoba want money to go to recreation, specifically those people in rural and remote Manitoba who find that the umbrella system does not serve or meet their needs and their purposes. So we as a responsible

Government have responded by indicating there will be money available. We have not had to cut any funding to the arts communities, to the sports community or to the heritage community. As a matter of fact, we have raised money by 3 percent to those organizations.

Mr. Kozak: We will not wait for six months until the Estimates process to ask this Minister questions.

Profit Decline

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Gambling profits go up and they go down. After two years of study and continual overloading of the lottery funding system, what is the Minister's contingency plan to wield the axe when the money starts drying out?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): Even though that is a hypothetical question, I will attempt to answer for the Member so that he has an understanding.

We have a new body, the Community Investment Fund, that is going to be an enhanced Manitoba Community Services Council for those who do not understand the process. We have the Manitoba Community Services Council now that is going to be enhanced and expanded by volunteer people throughout Manitoba, both within the City of Winnipeg and from outside the City of Winnipeg, who are going to make the decisions on where money is going to go, what projects and programs are going to be supported through the Community Investment Fund. Also, that fund is going to have what you might call an endowment fund, a trust fund and an ability to set money aside within that fund to allow for fluctuations in lottery revenues.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mr. Helmut Pankratz (La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Swan River (Mr. Burrell), that a humble address be presented to His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor as follows:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, in Session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address us at the opening of the present Session.

MOTION presented.

* (1430)

Mr. Pankratz: Mr. Speaker, it is a real pleasure for me to move this Speech from the Throne as we begin this current Session. The practical and caring initiatives outlined in the Throne Speech reflect a continuation of the responsible and responsive approach to governing that was begun during the last Session.

We came to Government a year ago with a positive plan to create a climate for growth and opportunity which would benefit all Manitobans.

Yesterday's Throne Speech re-emphasizes our commitment and points the way to continued success in achieving the well-thought-out objectives that this Government has consistently identified.

Mr. Speaker, we have a clear understanding of the need to have every region of Manitoba involved in the development of this province if all regions are to prosper. We know that every region and every individual within that region deserves the opportunity to make the greatest contribution possible.

Our record of accomplishment over the last year has shown this regard for all parts of the province. Speaking as an MLA who represents a rural constituency, I can testify from personal experience to the gratitude rural Members feel for the many initiatives which have been put in place to help rural development.

This Government, for example, opened a regional Cabinet office in Brandon, with another slated to open in Thompson. This reaching out will establish closer bonds with areas of Manitoba that seek greater accessibility to Government.

Mr. Speaker, Thursday's Throne Speech reaffirmed our commitment to decentralization. Already we have announced the placement of provincial Government employees in Boissevain to replace those lost when the Land Titles Office was closed. It makes good sense to me to have Government offices close to the people, especially in areas that are growing. We have invested over \$200,000 in restoring the court house in Minnedosa. This Government recognizes the importance of Government facilities and agencies in rural communities where a single job carries so much economic impact and spinoff benefits. We also believe placing decision makers in the communities affected by their decisions will lead to a better Government for us all.

The Rural Development Institute which will be opened at the University of Brandon by early June is another example of our commitment to rural Manitoba. This will coordinate a wide range of agricultural land use, rural redevelopment, small town development and other topics which are important to an enhanced quality of life in the rural areas of our province. As well, an agreement has been reached with the Department of Agriculture for funding this initiative—\$100,000 a year for the next three years.

Mr. Speaker, our agriculture industry continues to be a priority. Manitoba has benefitted from over a dozen agricultural initiatives we have put in place since assuming office last year.

Included amongst these are several national tripartite agreements negotiated with the provinces and the Government of Canada to provide income stabilization for producers of beans, lambs and cattle.

Negotiations to enter a tripartite honey plan have been concluded and an agreement was signed, I believe, on May 10. Initiatives such as these go a long way toward reducing the interprovincial agricultural wars by creating a level playing field for all participants. Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's agricultural industry is in a favourable position to prosper under these agreements.

Our Agriculture Minister, the Honourable Glen Findlay, recently returned from Japan where he led a mission to expand the markets for our red meat and poultry. A committee is currently in operation with livestock associations, the meat processing sector and our Government acting together to explore every possible means of promoting the livestock industry. A revitalized approach to marketing our province's agricultural produce is an important element of our strategy.

Mr. Speaker, we are also addressing environmental issues ranging from soil and water conservation to the use of chemicals. If we are to protect our agricultural base for future generations, we cannot allow short-term advantages at the cost of long-term damage. We know that the best development is sustainable development.

Our Government has once again demonstrated our sensitivity to the concerns of agricultural producers by renegotiating loan guarantees to qualifying farm units. We are determined to ensure the survival of family farms so that young Manitobans can look forward to a future filled with opportunities in every corner of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, with this in mind, we are working to reduce the out-migration from rural to urban centres. When young people abandon the family farm, they take with them tremendous potential—economically, culturally and socially.

Our Long Distance Education Program will allow rural students the opportunity to study and still remain in their local communities. This is but one step we are taking to stem the flow of capable young people leaving their rural communities.

This Government also shares the desire of Manitobans to have their parents and grandparents near to them. That is why our new five-year capital budget in health care provides significant funds for upgrading and expanding our rural hospitals and personal care homes.

The Attorney General, Mr. McCrae, recently announced the expansion of the Unified Family Court, an effective decentralization that will give Manitoba one of the best and most comprehensive family court systems in North America. Our commitment to the well-being of rural Manitoba has been demonstrated on many occasions. We have put our words into action.

Mr. Speaker, last summer's drought, \$18.3 million in direct assistance, \$11 million for Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation, .5 million for drought proofing. A \$95 million highway construction budget last year, approximately \$10 million to \$15 million more than the previous Government.

While the previous administration was in power, we saw virtually no improvements in the roads in southern Manitoba. With thanks to the Minister of Highways, the Honourable Albert Driedger, we are now optimistic about improvements to the highways and roads in that portion of the province.

As well, the Community Development Committee, chaired by the Honourable James Downey (Arthur), Mr. Speaker, is part of an overall organizational plan, which

working in harmony with the Human Services, Sustainable Development and Management and Reform Committees, will allow departments providing common services to work in a more coordinated fashion for the benefit of all Manitobans.

We have also broadened the scope of the Department of Municipal Affairs and renamed it the Department of Rural Development. The regional development corporations are now going to be part of this new department, and allow rural developments to focus on economic development initiatives directed towards the prosperity of rural communities. The conservation districts are also within the jurisdiction of the Department of Rural Development, and more emphasis can now be placed upon the conservation of our natural resources, such as land and water. The Manitoba Water Services Board is also in the Department of Rural Development, enabling us to target our attention to the infrastructure of rural communities and to drought proofing.

These few brief highlights are, as I indicated at the outset, the kind of thrusts that are of particular interest to my own constituents. Because they lead to an overall improvement in the quality of life in this province, they are of course important to all Manitobans.

All Manitobans have enjoyed a relief from some of the financial mismanagement that occurred under the previous administration. They were, as well, spared the addition of an increase of over \$700 million to our deficit as was advocated by the Liberal Opposition during the last Session.

* (1440)

Indeed, I would like to take this opportunity to compliment, on behalf of the people of La Verendrye, all people of the province, the Honourable Clayton Manness, Minister of Finance, for the truly responsible Budget that he introduced during our last Session, a Budget that enabled Manitobans to have the lowest provincial deficit this province has seen in a decade. Such attention to the attack on our deficit will mean our children and grandchildren will be able to have the money they earn work to their benefit rather than go towards the management of an ever-increasing burden of debt. It also means we are recognizing that long-term debt costs detract from the ability to effectively service today's population.

The Premier (Mr. Filmon) has said in the past, when \$1.6 million a day goes towards interest on our debt then that is \$1.6 million a day that cannot be spent on health or education or any of the other essential services that are so important in a caring society.

A truly responsible Government has to be careful with the money that it collects and our Government has been responsible. Mr. Speaker, we have proven that to the people of Manitoba in our first year in office.

Not only did we make a significant start in deficit reduction but at the same time we were able to enhance the essential services I referred to just a moment ago. We had, for example, a 9 percent increase in Health and Community Services last year.

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

I have to just quote from one of the local papers. The Opposition Government called us a "do-nothing Government." Just two weeks ago, the Conference Board of Canada predicted that Manitoba's growth rate will be 4 percent, well above the national average and predicted, as well, that our unemployment rate would continue to decline.

We tripled the payroll tax exemption in our first year from \$100,000 to \$300,000.00. Half of the businesses who formerly paid this tax are now freed from it and can begin to grow and create new jobs again. In my own constituency, this initiative affected numerous companies such as Schmidtke Millworks, Loewen Windows, Craft Tech, and basically all businesses were exempt with the \$300,000.00.

We know that our action in working toward eliminating the payroll tax meets with the approval of the people of Manitoba because many wrote and phoned to say thank you when the effects of that measure began to reach them.

We have created a tax holiday for new businesses so that they too can grow and create new jobs.

We have reduced the education tax on farm land, enabling farmers to continue to view farming as a job worth retaining. Also, in the interest of tax fairness, we have updated rural tax assessment techniques. Now rural Manitobans can feel confident that their tax assessments are accurate and reasonable.

We have made significant improvements to our Crown corporations. The Crown accountability legislation we passed requires Manitoba Hydro and Autopac to join the Manitoba Telephone System in bringing all rate increases before the Public Utilities Board. We have introduced fairness and consistency, freed from a lot of Government interference, to our Crown corporations. This businesslike approach has meant that the corporations can concentrate on providing the highest quality service at the lowest possible cost to Manitobans, not only in the short term but also in the long term.

Half of all the drivers had their Autopac rates in 1989 either decreased from the previous year or saw their rates remain the same. Good news. Mind you, we did not hear a lot about this from the Members opposite.

In our first year, we have brought professional management to the Workers Compensation Board and have not increased rates for the first time in eight years.

I know that as our full record is examined—no increase in personal income taxes last year, unqualified approval of the province's bookkeeping for the first time in five years, Crown corporation accountability legislation, tremendous expansion of private sector investment in Manitoba, the lengthy list of businesses which have chosen to expand operations in this province because of our more businesslike approach to Government, the substantial budgetary increases to health and social services that we put into effect last Session—as this record is examined, we will continue

to hear individual Manitobans phone our offices to say thank you, as they have done so frequently this past year, and this is encouraging.

Not only has this Government proven its ability to govern wisely and well, it has also been open and accessible in its approach to Government. We have extended this openness to the Members of the Opposition Parties. Recently this Government divested itself of Manfor and, in the process, was able to conclude a \$132 million sale and the establishment of hundreds of new jobs as well as securing of hundreds of others, 1,250 jobs in all, plus a commitment to 100 percent reforestation from the new owners, a tree growing for every tree harvested so that our resources will remain renewable for the generations to come.

This was an excellent agreement for all Manitobans. It was also the fulfillment of an election promise, one which was desired by the people of this province, one for which the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) and his capable team of negotiators have been widely praised.

The Minister of Finance expressed a willingness to share the broad terms of the agreement with the Members of the Opposition, and so he called meetings expressly for the purpose of acquainting the Opposition with the deal. This was to be done before the agreement was consummated, which was a new example of openness by our provincial Government. It was unfortunate to see how the Opposition reacted to this opportunity to be included. For 14 hours, the Finance Minister patiently answered question after question, but the Members opposite would not listen. Their main purpose for attending the meeting appeared to be only to harass and harangue. For political reasons, they tried to hang up the committee so that after 14 hours of repetitive and trifling debate the meeting was finally halted.

It was most disappointing to all of us on this side of the House to have such an opportunity for a positive and constructive exchange lost to gamesmanship and headline seeking. This exercise really opened my eyes to the need for cooperation amongst all Parties, Mr. Speaker, on issues of importance to Manitobans—Mr. Deputy Speaker, pardon me. When Members try to block things without apparent justifiable rationale, the people are not served. I know that the public deplors such political posturing. I am sure that many Members, even those in the Opposition, would prefer a more constructive approach to dealing with the issues.

Because the plans outlined in the Throne Speech are in the best interests of the people of this province, it is important that the Opposition Parties put the people first and let the needs of the people be their first priority in voting on this Throne Speech motion. This is not an occasion to simply vote against a motion because you do not want the Government to do well. We have an obligation, each of us, to see that the Government does do well. The Throne Speech should be accepted or defeated on its merit and not because it has been introduced by any particular Party.

* (1450)

Last year, the Mover and the Seconder of this motion to accept the Speech from the Throne referred to the

need for all MLAs to adopt a spirit of cooperation. I would like to quote from the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), who said, "the people of Manitoba went to the polls. Mr. Deputy Speaker, they have charged us with the responsibility to govern. I hope that all of us, whatever political stripe, accept that charge in the days and weeks and months ahead and not pursue only our short-term political interest. I hope that we, as Members of this Legislature, do not disappoint the people of Manitoba and get on with the task of governing that they charged us with."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) said, and I quote: "In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I wish to emphasize my commitment to a unified House. I read in the media about the supposed rural, urban and northern polarization that exists in our Legislature. I believe that all MLA's should work towards an understanding of the unique problems faced by citizens of the North, faced by citizens who live inside the Perimeter Highway and citizens who live in the area that I represent. Indeed, I believe that all Members want to work towards that goal."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the point that those two Members made last year remains valid. The people need good Government and they are getting good Government. It is incumbent upon all MLAs to ensure that the people and their needs are not used as pawns in political games, not used to score political Brownie points, not used to get headlines in the local papers, not used to force an early election, not used, in short, for purposes that suit the MLAs, but are rather seen as opportunities to see that the people are served to the best level possible at the fairest cost possible.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Throne Speech addresses the needs of the people in a responsive and responsible manner. It deserves to be supported by all in this Assembly who put the concerns of the people of Manitoba first. Thank you.

Mr. Parker Burrell (Swan River): First of all, I would like to congratulate the Speaker on his first year as Speaker of this Assembly. During this time, he has established a reputation of impartiality and fairness.

I would also like to congratulate my colleagues, the Honourable Harry Enns and the Honourable Gerrie Hammond, for their appointment to a very good Cabinet.

I would like to also mention the Opposition Party and the Second Opposition Party for their performance in the House and their contribution to our first Session.

I am indeed honoured to be seconding the Speech from the Throne, which furthers our plans to work with Manitobans towards a better, more prosperous Manitoba.

Last year we began the process, setting out our agenda for responsible, responsive Government. We said we would bring good management back to the affairs of the province. We promised to bring Government spending under control. I congratulate the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) on his successful efforts thus far.

As promised in last year's Budget, Manitoba's '88-89 deficit is the lowest this decade and even lower than first estimated. Fiscal responsibility is not an end in itself. By spending wisely, we control our deficit. By controlling our deficit, we began to control the growth of debt. By controlling our debt, we control the costs of servicing that debt, making more money available for vital services, services like health, health care, and education.

As Government, we know that these services are important to Manitobans. In our last Budget, we increased funding to day care, to education, and to health care, initiatives like the Parklands Regional Mental Health Council which is the first of eight councils to be established as part of the Minister of Health's (Mr. Orchard) ambitious approach to improving mental health care services throughout Manitoba.

We are providing support services for essential components of the health care system, components like ambulance service. Last year, Manitoba ranked the lowest in Canada, providing just over \$3 per capita in ambulance service funding. An injection of \$3.8 million will bring Manitoba's subsidy to \$7 per capita, slightly above the national average. Every ambulance service in this province will receive more funding. More training will be available to ambulance personnel, and long distance transportation costs to rural patients will be reduced so that patients travelling from Swan River to Winnipeg will have his or her costs reduced from almost \$600 to \$215.00.

Our Government has also undertaken an action plan to ensure quality health care for Manitobans. The Health Advisory Network will address issues facing our health care system and prepare for the challenges in the decade ahead.

Our Government is working and consulting with Manitobans to ensure that plans we pursue today will serve the future need of Manitobans. Good management makes good Government and good management includes encouraging the economic growth and job creation which will provide the wealth to fund these essential services in the future. Our Government has actively pursued new businesses and expanded existing ones, removing barriers to investment and encouraging growth. Nearly half those employers paying the payroll tax are now exempt. New small businesses have been given a tax break. We have held the line on personal income tax.

We are making responsible decisions. The Lake Winnipegosis fishery is an important industry in my constituency. Three years ago, the summer fishery was voluntarily closed to help restore depleted pickerel stock. This year the fishermen laid off from the summer fishery also had a poor winter fishery. In order to help supplement their income, we introduced a winter perch fishing season. Our Government is helping Manitobans help themselves.

For the past several years, rural Manitoba has faced a declining farm economy. As a Government, we have pledged our support to agriculture. We have acted on our commitment to ease the tax burden on farmers by first reducing the education tax on farm land by 25

percent. Then, after a regional Cabinet meeting held in Swan River earlier this month, a further 10 percent reduction was announced. The move comes at an important time for the rural economy with Manitoba farmers already suffering from the effects of a severe drought and low grain prices.

We have entered various national tripartite plans to help stabilize the incomes of our red meat, bean and honey producers and to help our farmers more fairly compete with producers in other provinces. A check-off provision has been established to help farmers support a unified policy voice for farmers. We have provided \$18 million in drought relief, including programs to help livestock producers maintain their basic breeding herds.

While drought plagued much of the province, our Government also came to the aid of landowners and municipalities in the Swan Valley area who suffered from destructive spring flood waters. The flood in my area of the province last spring and the drought in southern and central Manitoba only underlines the importance of protecting our land and water resources.

We are responding by developing a long-term strategy including soil conservation, wildlife protection, and a water policy framework which includes a 10-year drought proofing plan for the province.

The land and water strategy is only part of our commitment to protecting and enhancing our resources for future generations. In the Swan Valley and elsewhere in the province, we have had stark reminders of just how fragile our resources are. The fires which have destroyed farm land, forests, and threatened our communities underline our vulnerability.

* (1500)

Last year, our Government adopted sustainable development as our approach to ensuring that as our natural resources are developed to encourage economic growth, these resources are also protected and enhanced for use by future generations. I think a good example of that can be seen in my area of the province where the divestiture of Manfor to Repap includes measures to protect the forestry resources there. A five-year cutting plan being developed with input from local people will ensure a planned harvest with minimal effects on the wildlife and habitat.

Under provincial legislation, other environmental concerns are also protected. Before Repap can proceed, the company must obtain a licence from the Clean Environment Commission. That involves taking the appropriate steps which could include public hearings. The Manfor-Repap deal is an exciting economic opportunity for The Pas, Swan River and Manitoba as a whole. The forest industry will receive a \$1 billion boost. The 850 existing jobs at The Pas are secured. Another 350 to 400 permanent jobs, including up to 250 jobs in the valley, will be created.

The sale of the provincially owned pulp and paper operation also removes a burden from the taxpayer. Over the years, Manfor has cost the Government coffers over \$300 million. The divestiture of Manfor reflects

our commitment to cleaning up our Crown corporations and returning them to their original mandate of service to Manitobans at cost. Similarly, the money-losing Manitoba Oil and Gas Corporation was sold. In a few short years, ManOil cost Manitoba taxpayers \$16 million.

Overall, we have brought greater accountability to Manitoba's Crown corporations. The Crown Corporation Accountability Act requires that rate increases for Manitoba Telephones, Autopac and Manitoba Hydro be reviewed in a public forum. Crown corporations will be more answerable to the public and less vulnerable to political interference.

We have brought better management to the overall operation of Government. We have employed a strategy to control the costs of debt. We have, in our borrowings, adopted a strategy of reducing our vulnerability to fluctuating foreign currencies. Wherever possible in our borrowing, we switch loans in foreign currencies into the North American currencies.

We have also introduced an issue of Hydro Savings Bonds which will allow Manitobans to invest in Manitoba. Not only will Hydro be able to get some of its capital requirements at home, but investors will also receive an attractive rate of interest.

We have also initiated an overall review of Government spending, accounting policies, management practices and organization structure within Government. The review has pointed out ways to get better value for the dollars spent. We are committed to pursuing our agenda of better Government as outlined in our plan of action yesterday. With the cooperation of our colleagues on the other side of the House, we can work together in providing responsible, caring Government.

I have heard criticism from the Members of the Opposition that we are merely a caretaker Government. The reality is we are a minority Government, and good Government in a minority situation relies on the cooperation of all Members of the House.

As we start this new Session, I would like to comment that I hope we can work together to make the most of our time in the House to debate issues important to Manitoba. I recall the many hours spent in the last Session debating issues which were beyond our jurisdiction. While issues like free trade are certain to affect our Government and our province, I think we are sometimes led to long debates on these matters when our time could be better spent working on issues over which we have direct control and jurisdiction.

I trust our duty to those who elected us will guide us in ensuring that our time in the House is well spent, working in the best interests of Manitobans. Thank you.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE CHANGE

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), on House Business.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): To the Economic Development Committee, I move, seconded by the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development be amended as follows: Pankratz to fill an existing vacancy.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (Cont'd)

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to welcome back the Members to this Legislature and extend my best wishes to each and every one of them as we begin a new Session. I particularly want to welcome you back, Mr. Speaker. We all enjoyed your administration of this House during the last Session and we look forward to that same level of high administration in this Session.

It does indeed promise to be a lively Session as we have experienced over the last two days, particularly as the Government this time will be held accountable for their lack of action for the past year. It is always difficult to hold a Government new to power accountable on the policies and initiatives of a previous Government. However, no longer are they to be held accountable for previous initiatives. They are to be held accountable for their own lack of initiative.

Le printemps est de nouveau arrivé au Manitoba tout comme une nouvelle session de l'Assemblée législative. Nos reportages sont remplis d'informations sur la lutte du peuple chinois réclamant des droits fondamentaux de liberté et d'assemblée. Je crois que je parle au nom de tous les membres de cette Chambre en rappelant qu'il est fort rassurant de pouvoir participer librement et ouvertement dans ce climat démocratique.

(Translation)

Another spring has come to Manitoba as has another Session to the Legislature. Our news is filled with the struggle of the Chinese people to obtain the fundamental rights of freedom of speech and assembly. I rejoice, as I believe every Member of this House will, that we can participate freely and openly in this democratic environment.

(English)

Mr. Speaker, last year saw the birth of fledgling politicians. Indeed, they would be fledgling if they should follow in their parents' footsteps. For example, we saw the birth of children to the Members for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), Wolseley (Mr. Taylor), Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr), St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). I am pleased to say that tradition is going to continue, and that we are waiting in our caucus room for a phone call from one Ann Edwards who will inform the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) that he has once again become a father.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Carstairs: These and all other children of Manitoba are the ones for whom we have been elected to serve, and we will accept nothing but best effort performance on their behalf.

That is why it is with some shock that I learn from the Premier's own speaking notes to the closing of the Environment and Economy Conference that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) of this province considered his own speech, to use his word, "mundane." Ordinary and routine are not words one usually uses with pride. They are used as words that denote lack of action, motivation, inspiration, innovation. These words surely are properly descriptive of this Speech from the Throne, but not words we expect the Premier to use with regard to his own speech and the abject failure of his Government. We are pleased to see that even he recognizes that his speech was mundane.

Let us return to July 21, 1988, his first Speech from the Throne. What did the Premier promise? Well, he promised us a vision. It certainly was a black-and-white vision, the vision of which reports and studies and analysis are made and not of the technicolor type of which dreams are made.

I think it is important before I address the Throne Speech of Thursday to look at the path of those broken promises in the Throne Speech of last year to understand why he himself admits his failure in referencing his second Speech from the Throne. He promised a new period of openness and accountability. Let us examine the record of this wonderful open and accountable Government.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

* (1510)

Mrs. Carstairs: First of all, we will look at the foster parents fiasco. Foster parents were not allowed to meet with the Premier. They were not allowed to explain to him that the work they did was one of the most important in our entire province, that they were prepared to take children that had been frequently rejected, frequently abused, and they were prepared to take them into their homes. Our Premier did not want to meet with those parents. They did not want to talk to people who deliver that kind of service. They even went a step further than not wishing to discuss it with them. They decided to deliberately put a wedge between the foster parents and their association with a poll that was commissioned by that Government that tried to put that wedge. It did not succeed, fortunately, because the foster parents knew that they had been well represented by their assistants and by their association.

So they brought this Government to its knees where the Premier (Mr. Filmon) eventually had to override his own Minister and had to meet with the foster parents, and to finally solve their crisis. It was not completely solved because, even when they were supposed to get increases in past April, that increase did not appear on the cheques going out to foster parents.

We were no sooner rid of that particular example of openness and accountability when we had to deal with the Attorney General's signature on a CSIS agreement, a CSIS agreement that had no protection, no control for Manitobans whose information was to be given by our Attorney General to CSIS. Indeed, in CSIS's own annual report they indicate that there is no protection. They indicate that there is no way they can monitor the data, and yet our Attorney General has no concerns whatsoever about giving that very data to CSIS.

Then, of course, we learned of the untendered contracts to friends. Stevenson Kellogg has done extremely well in untendered agreements and Thorne, Ernst, Whinney has had so much business from this Government that we are finding it difficult to even keep tally of the hundreds of thousands of dollars which they have been given. Then they pride themselves on the divestiture of Manfor, again examples of openness and accountability. If you were an American, you could get the information from the Securities Commission in the United States, but if you were a Manitoba legislator you were denied that very same information by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) who said you could not make that information available, that it might jeopardize the contract, but there was absolutely no difficulty to have that information available to any American who might request it.

Then, of course, when they were embarrassed that long evening by being informed that such information was available to them, what was their reaction, in the spirit of openness and accountability? Mr. Speaker, their reaction was to move out of the committee room, to take the Chairperson of the committee with them and to refuse to sit with the duly elected Members of this Legislature and Members assigned to that committee—unprecedented in Canadian parliamentary history, and it came from a Government who, in its Speech from the Throne, prided itself on openness and accountability.

Mr. Speaker, those are not the only issues. We have the Minister of Culture (Mrs. Mitchelson), of course who says for weeks and weeks and weeks that she is waiting for a needs assessment study, but that does not stop her from making announcements about a casino without, presumably, ever having seen this needs assessment study, nor does it prevent the Premier (Mr. Filmon) who, when he sat in this chair, said it was absolutely necessary to have public input—we must have public discussions—but in this new spirit of openness and accountability, were we given the opportunity for openness? No, we were denied, despite the fact that some 3,300 Manitobans signed an ad in the paper indicating they wanted just that kind of public information.

They did not even want to have a Task Force on Meech Lake. Even there they had to be talked into it. After we watched that wonderful flipflop between the 16th of December, described by Lowell Murray as the best speech given in Canada in defense of the Meech Lake Accord, we watch from the 19th of December through January, through February into March—no, they cannot have a Task Force that could establish a Manitoba agenda. Finally after requests from the Liberals, requests from the NDP, from the pressure of

public opinion and the media, finally this Premier decided that he could take the bull by the horns and he could call a Task Force on Meech Lake.

That was simply one promise they made, openness and accountability. Let us go to the other promises they made in that fateful speech of July 1988. They promised, Mr. Speaker, to build a stronger economy. Now let us look at the record. Plant closures: Canada Packers, 90 jobs; Ogilvie, 89 jobs; Wescott, 180 jobs; Marr's in Brandon, 37 jobs; Toro in Steinbach, 28 jobs; Marks and Spencer, 45 jobs; Molson's, the figure is not even in yet; Wardair—plant closures from one end of this province to another is not an example of a stronger economy. The retailers in Manitoba have had their worst sales slump of any province in this country, not example of a viable stronger economy.

They promised us, for example, new energy deals. They lost the Alumax sale because they did not even bother to negotiate it. According to the Premier (Mr. Filmon), of course Ottawa will listen when we have a firm proposal, but they never took a firm proposal because for months they did not even take up the phone and phone the president of Alumax, while Quebec of course was negotiating like crazy.

In terms of their stronger economy measures, one would have thought perhaps that employment would have been up but in fact unemployment is the figure that is up and it is above the national average for the first time in decades.

Private investment, instead of increasing as one would expect in a stronger economy, has decreased. Housing starts, which we would think would have increased under a stronger economy, have declined and of course once again our net migration figures are up with people leaving this province because they know it does not have a stronger economy, and they know that they cannot find employment opportunities in this particular province under the Conservatives.

They failed, Mr. Speaker, to meet their commitments expressed in the Throne Speech on a long-term development strategy for the North. They failed to bring us improvements to our highways. They failed to bring us advancements in research and technology. They did not even open the office in Ottawa which they touted last year, and of course we get it back this year in terms of another promise which probably will be broken. But perhaps the issue that causes me the biggest chuckle, because this speech was indeed a big chuckle, was they promised improved relations with Ottawa, Mr. Speaker. Let us look at those improved relationships with Ottawa. The refrain, "Tory times are tough times," can certainly be used as an apt description of the relationship between this provincial Government and their Tory twins in Ottawa.

What have we experienced in the Province of Manitoba as a result of improved relations with Ottawa? We have had the closure of the Portage la Prairie air base; we have had the announced closure of the Kapyong Barracks; we have had ERDA agreements which have not been negotiated, and terminated as of March 31 with a loss of up to 1,400 jobs.

* (1520)

We have word of a loss of the high tech avionics package for CF-5 which was supposed to be the sop for having lost CF-18. We have seen cuts to health care and post-secondary education. We have watched cuts to Via Rail announced with the possibility of 300 jobs. We have heard the federal Government announce that the grain-rate subsidy to Manitoba farmers will be cut, that there will be increases in fuel taxes to Manitoba farmers, that branch-line upgrading programs will be terminated, that Manitoba will now have to pay 25 percent of the crop insurance payments, that one-half of the drought-aid package should be paid by Manitoba.

They announced cuts to the Western Diversification Fund. We have heard threats by the Secretary of State to the Société franco-manitobaine and silence from the Premier (Mr. Filmon). We heard that the Centre for Sustainable Development was still a laudable goal, Mr. Speaker, but there is absolutely no indication in the federal Budget that there is any funding for the Centre for Sustainable Development. The Laboratory Centre for Disease Control seems to be on permanent hold with the Minister announcing at a committee meeting last week that it would not likely take place in the mandate of this Government.

We have the failure of the federal Government to address the acid rain problem by its unwillingness to provide funding for Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting. We have heard nothing about the Centre for Aging, and we have Churchill. Of course the Premier (Mr. Filmon) announced the Prime Minister has taken a special interest in Churchill and has promised quick action. He certainly did promise quick action and we got quick action. There will be no grain shipments through Churchill as a result of this wonderful relationship between the federal and provincial Governments. If these are good relations, Mr. Speaker, perhaps we should be grateful that the Prime Minister will not accept the Premier's phone calls and will not meet with him. His ire is already up and the Premier would only make it worse because they believe he acts not from principle but from political opportunism.

They promised, Mr. Speaker, in the last Speech from the Throne that they would enhance our health care system. Let us examine the records. They established, in the Speech from the Throne, they said a health advisory network. Well, Mr. Speaker, it took until November for that health advisory network to even be chosen, and it took till January before they even had their first meeting, and they have yet to announce a single initiative.

They did nothing to enhance seniors' health in this province, even though the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) said that the Pharmacare card was a good system, that it could be initiated at little or no increase in cost, that there were in fact long-term savings to be made from the issuance of such a card. Has he moved in that direction? No, Mr. Speaker, he has not.

Little has been announced in the past year in the way of health promotion activities, and I hope the least that they can do is to support the Bill introduced today by the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) which will at least address the problem in health promotion with regard to smoking, as this caucus intends to do.

We waited months on end for an AIDS pamphlet, even longer before an ad was ready, but it is still not compulsory for all high school students in Manitoba to receive AIDS education, and they are not receiving it. Even those ones who are receiving it are not being given the full information. The curriculum is still unable to teach proper prevention in an open and realistic fashion. For those students who do not take Family Life Education, you are not even allowed to teach AIDS education and sex in the same breath in this province.

Housekeeping services for seniors were reduced, building upon an NDP initiative, but without examining those who fall between the cracks. No initiatives were instituted by this Government to attract physicians to rural Manitoba, despite being presented with plans which even they admitted were feasible and long overdue.

We have continued to see crisis in our acute care hospitals: Thompson, in its neonatal unit; Seven Oaks in psychiatry; St. Boniface in obstetrics; and waiting lists for major surgery, keeping people in agony for months and months and months in this province.

They promised an enhanced education system, but let us examine the record on this enhanced education system. Every Manitoban knows that 25 percent of Manitobans, adult Manitobans, are illiterate. Did we establish a single program to make a single adult Manitoban literate during 1988-89? No, Mr. Speaker, we did not, not a single program, but we spent \$300,000 rehashing exactly the same data that was available at the federal level and that has been available to educators for decades. Talk is cheap under normal circumstances, Mr. Speaker, but they even make talk expensive, and it did not result in one more literate Manitoban.

They promised consultation on education finance, but that consultation did not take place and now we are again promised more consultation—no action, but more consultation—this year.

They promised us action on home schooling and parents' rights and curriculum review, but there was no action, Mr. Speaker, on home schooling, on parents' rights and curriculum review. In fact, we received the report of the High School Review and we were expecting some wonderful announcements in this Speech from the Throne about that documentation, but what did the Minister of Education do? Well, he took the review prepared by a wide variety of interest groups and he sent it back to them and asked for their comments on their comments. That is an amazing way to effect change in our society.

Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, they fail to deal with chronic underfunding for special need students. There were no initiatives to deal with mainstreaming of the handicapped and there were no accountability provisions for the beneficiaries of private school funding. They promised help to the disadvantaged and the vulnerable in our society.

Perhaps the greatest sham of the entire Session last year was the Seniors Directorate. The Minister responsible for Seniors never did figure out exactly

what the Seniors Directorate was to do. He promised us an elder abuse study to be ready in October of 1988. The Speech from the Throne said, maybe '89, maybe '90. Regrettably, judging by the answers from the Minister now responsible for Seniors since the other one was put out of his misery, the answer from the new Minister did not appear to be any more informed, any more willing to grapple with the problems of the seniors in our province.

There was no improvement to the Single Parents Access Program which was promised, and there was certainly no initiative to meet the inadequacy of day programs for the mentally and physically disabled. This issue was not addressed, nor was the training or salary enhancement programs for the staff who provide services to these vulnerable members of our society. These, even unlike the children in day care, are unable to speak for themselves. It is true that the infant and the very young child cannot, but they have parents who can each day evaluate their behaviour to try and figure out if there is something wrong with the setting in which they have been placed. Many of these vulnerable adults who find themselves in day programs have no one to evaluate the program. There are hundreds of them, Mr. Speaker, hundreds who have no day program whatsoever.

* (1530)

They spoke about reforming the justice system but the speedy receipt of justice still remains a pipe dream with the courts mired in backlog and no enhancement of rural policing. Just ask the people of Winnipeg Beach who were promised by Gerry Mercier and promised by the Member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) that they would have enhanced police service, but they did not get it.

No urban strategy was enunciated by this Government. Indeed, the Bill that was eventually passed had input from this side and gave to the Auditor some powers long overdue, but no initiative from that side of the House. We have 105,000 square feet of office space lying vacant in south Portage that, because of a failure to address an urban strategy, will probably remain vacant.

So, last year's speech was an abject failure and we are afraid, Mr. Speaker, that the promises made for this year are no more likely to result in action. Unfortunately for some, the Throne Speech is merely a political—and I use the word in a negative sense—document designed to avoid criticism, to avoid controversy, to be all things to all people without any commitment of action. In the case of this Throne Speech, that attitude attempts to prevail.

Well, I am delighted that the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) disagrees, Mr. Speaker, because that quote is not mine. That quote comes from the Honourable Gary Filmon, the Premier of the province, and he used it in his Speech from the Throne in 1987. You know, it is hoped that life is a learning experience, that we learn through the experiences of others. What our First Ministers learned in Opposition was to be no better than those who preceded them. What a pity! How sad that Manitobans are denied yet again. This Throne

Speech, Mr. Speaker, is a hollow shell of rhetoric which provides many platitudes but few initiatives and fewer still innovations.

In their speech last Thursday, they touted the environment as their premier item. The Government states that sustainable development provides the cornerstone of their agenda, a statement that is so outrageous as to be laughable in the face of their abysmal record on the environment in their first Session.

The Tories' willingness to sacrifice southern Manitoba without an adequate environmental impact study in the Rafferty-Alameda fiasco was matched by their enthusiasm to give away one-fifth of Manitoba's natural resources, its forests, in the Manfor deal without a complete environmental impact study. Any real commitment of this Government to the environment would be signaled by their calling on the federal Minister of the Environment to conduct a full panel public review into Rafferty-Alameda to preclude another back-room deal between Saskatchewan and Ottawa which would result in Lucien Bouchard using his ministerial discretion to wish you yet another licence for this project.

The Manitoba Tories would, if they were truly committed to the environment, agree that a full environmental impact study of both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Manfor agreement be conducted. What did they promise? They promised to implement an Act which was passed two years ago. That is hardly what one can define as progressive, and then they promised to proclaim an Act which was passed a year ago, which is again not progressive, Mr. Speaker. It is simply an admittance of sloppy practice.

They also promised us a vibrant Manitoba economy. Well, they did not deliver it last year, and it does not appear that they are prepared to do it this year either because they hide behind the true facts.

Mr. Speaker, the Government claims that Manitoba's deficit is under control and at its lowest level since 1981. In fact, any deficit control is not the result of this Government's action but rather is due to revenues generated by the Kostyra tax measures of two years ago, when in Opposition they referred to it as a collective mugging of the Manitoba taxpayer.

In addition, the windfall received by this Government in mining taxes, which had absolutely nothing to do with their administration, is the explanation for why the deficit is lower than one would normally have anticipated. Currently, federal equalization grants have provided much more money than anticipated, precisely because Manitoba's economy is in such bad shape. Increased transfers, Mr. Speaker, are triggered by poor economic performance, not good economic performance.

The Tories promised that they will not increase personal income tax, but they make no firm commitment to any tax relief measures and now, Mr. Speaker, indeed is the time for such relief. The Tories claim Manitoba will experience a 4 percent growth rate in 1989, but it should be noted that this Conference Board of Canada figure which they touted was a forecast which was made while snow buried the Manitoba fields and before the

harsh measures that the federal Budget introduced had affected all Manitobans. That Budget is certain to have a serious impact on the growth of the Manitoba economy and, despite forecasts from the Finance Minister that our growth rate would be some 2 percent last year, our growth rate enunciated by the Conference Board is some .4 percent, less than one-half of 1 percent for the past year.

In another slight of hand, the Government claims Manitoba will experience the third-highest level of growth in capital investment among all provinces. On a relative scale, this may be true due primarily to a very dismal past investment record. However, when the actual investment levels are compared, Manitoba ranks sixth. Only the Atlantic provinces are ahead.

The figures used in the Throne Speech of higher weekly earnings for Manitoba is refuted by the Price Waterhouse Report issued also last week, who state that they have in fact declined in Manitoba in the past year. This Government has been fortunate to enter Government in a period of revenue growth and windfalls. Consequently, they have been spared the true test of good Government, effective management with spending controls.

This Government has reallocated and redirected funds, but it has not limited its own expenditures. Our province will see tough economic times ahead which will require appropriate management. The Tories have demonstrated an inability to make the tough decisions necessary to prepare us for those tough economic times ahead. Tory times are indeed tough times.

But, Mr. Speaker, the Tories have found a new source of revenue. The Minister of Culture (Mrs. Mitchelson) is really someone who obviously believes in the pot at the end of the rainbow. Not only is it a pot, but it is a bottomless pot. It keeps filling up with gold despite the recommendations of her own department that Lottery revenues have levelled off. She seeks to find new ways to tap this regressive tax on the poor. The criticism of Governments for promoting gambling is obvious, it is regressive and the people who play are least able to pay. Worthy of equal concern is the trend towards funding Government initiatives and programs out of unpredictable gambling revenues.

In the Throne Speech, no less than four new projects will be funded from Lotteries: community conservation projects, recreational facilities in rural and remote towns, health projects, medical research, and where are these funds coming from, Mr. Speaker? Even their touted year-round casino will produce \$4 million less than they have said they will distribute. Which groups will receive less, the arts, sports, multiculturalism? It is time to come clean, Madam Minister. It is time to admit that the pot is empty and that the revenues have not increased and that if these worthwhile projects are to be funded they are going to be funded on the backs of those who have expected and received funding in the past. There is no other place to get those monies.

* (1540)

This Government has promised an active agenda but has outlined a legislative program which is tentative

and cautious. The environmental measures are timid steps taken in the right direction, but they still fall way short of real commitment.

They indicate that they are going to address an anomaly in the legislation affecting child abuse. Well, Mr. Speaker, we hope they do better than last year when they introduced a Bill which was so draconian they had to withdraw it. Elder abuse continues to get short shrift from this Government. The City of Winnipeg amendments were raised in this previous Session, as were final offer selection, and neither received the approval of this House simply because of the bumbling way in which they were introduced.

The Government has paid little heed to the need to revise or replace The Public Health Act to reflect health promotion, rather than being confined to a communicable disease-oriented focus.

They have failed to introduce an amendment to The Mental Health Act. They have failed to prepare an emergency hazardous spills Bill to provide for accidents with potential to harm the environment, and we need that Bill right now, Mr. Speaker, because we know that they are going to transfer PCBs from Quebec to Alberta through Manitoba, and yet we do not have a spills Bill which could address an unfortunate accident.

They are not prepared to introduce an amendment to The Highway Traffic Act which will deal with drunk driving, which will not send it, in its first case, reeling off to the Supreme Court of Canada as a violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. What we need is legislation which will deal quickly with drunken drivers, get them off the streets and keep them off the streets. What we need is legislation which will deal quickly with drunken drivers, get them off the streets and keep them off the streets.

We need to have a revision to The Manitoba Intercultural Act to enable its effective function at arm's length from this Government, and without all of its powers stripped by a Government that does not reflect the needs of our multicultural community. We need legislation to protect our health facilities from foreign ownership, and we need legislation which will protect our water from foreign ownership.

Mr. Speaker, this Government pretends that it is a little angry these days with the federal Government, but it still refuses to introduce necessary legislation to protect Manitoba in the case that maybe they will offend their Tory cousin in Ottawa. The promise of action by this Government gives way to more studies, more consultation, more reviews—10 all in the Throne Speech that we listened to last Thursday.

The Government has adopted strategies to limit and delay the number of decisions to be made by providing a Tory patronage pool of boards, councils and bodies. Let us look at some of the ones they announced last Thursday: the Agri-Food Advisory Council, the Public Libraries Advisory Board, the Arts Policy Committee, a working group in community living, a working group in Government operation decentralization, a Skills Training Advisory Committee, a consultation with school boards, a consultation on education finance. Where is

the action, Mr. Speaker? Where are the specific measures designed to solve problems that have existed for decades, problems they said they were going to address as soon as they were given the opportunity to cross the floor? These measures are designed to create the appearance of action and communication, but the Tory record is miserable.

This Government has repeatedly demonstrated its lack of openness by deciding issues before consulting with the interested groups, such as that which occurred with the foster parents, MIC, the allocation of casino monies to health care and research before the Lotteries needs assessment was complete. There is no evidence of job creation in this particular document at a time when the unemployment rates are higher than the national average for the first time since 1966, also of course a Conservative Government.

The Government recognizes in its Throne Speech the changing global economic environment and the impact of work force, but offers only to establish a Skills Training Advisory Committee as a sop to the workers. Vague promises to expand provincial measures to help Manitoba workers adapt is little comfort to the workers at Ogilvie's, at Wescott, at Marr's, at Toro, at Canada Packers, at Molsons, and Marks and Spencer, who were laid off, nor is it any comfort to those who will be laid off.

A comprehensive strategy to help both workers and business deal with the coming changes is needed, rather than minor piecemeal announcements. The initiatives of Manitoba's adjustment to the Free Trade Agreement are tokenism. At a time when mergers and advancement are causing a massive restructuring of the marketplace, job loss and worker displacement is the result. What do the Tories promise? They promised workers, workshops, plan assistance, development, promotion—buzzwords, Mr. Speaker, that is all they promised, buzzwords but no action, no specific training programs, lofty phrases, these token efforts to support business.

Promotion alone will not have investors lined up to move into Manitoba. What is required is a more thoughtful and comprehensive program of investment opportunities. Why do they not look at the Manitoba stock option plan? Quebec has been able to attract new initiatives, new employment.

This Session, again they promised priority to health concerns. They say, for example, that a women's health directorate is to be established. If it is no more successful than the Seniors Directorate, then no, we are not in favour of it.

* (1550)

Mr. Speaker, programs for women are scattered, haphazard, ad hoc. What is needed are people in the field providing a comprehensive set of health standards for women throughout Manitoba, not more bureaucrats sitting around as the Seniors Directorate sat around and could not even come up with a White Paper. We have regrettably no confidence in this Government's ability to establish effective directorates.

The breast-screening program which was introduced in the Speech from the Throne is most welcome on

behalf of this Government and is similar to an initiative which we filed with the Clerk some weeks ago. Therefore, we will support this initiative because we know that cancer can strike at any moment to those of us in this room and to our loved ones.

Additional resources for AIDS outreach is again promised. They promised more prevention information, they promised more services, but it is not believable when the same Government promised exactly the same initiatives last year and did nothing.

They say that they want to make the Health Sciences Centre a world-class surgical education and service centre, and if this is the beginning of a centre of excellence we welcome it, but we challenge the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and his Cabinet and colleagues to make sure that this surgical centre is a community-based out-patient service delivery program because that is where the real need is in surgical delivery in the Province of Manitoba. Increasing our capacity for high-tech, sophisticated surgical interventions will not meet the needs of the majority of Manitobans who need ready access to basic health care and treatment, including surgery.

Mr. Speaker, they announced a partnership with all sectors of the health care community, but if the Minister of Health's treatment of Klinik at their outdoor rally and of MONA at their meeting on the Legislative steps are any example of his willingness to form a partnership, let me remind him that adversaries rarely make good partners.

This Government appears willing to maintain the status quo in so many health care areas. We have heard nothing about the continued long waiting lists for speech pathology treatment, for physiotherapy, for rehabilitation services, for cardiac surgery.

There is little promise of new expenditure and no evidence of finding any efficiencies within a system, because all of their actions last year indicated that they were going back to a hospital-based model and they were not moving to a community-based model of health care delivery where indeed savings and efficiencies can be found.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of Family Services, they have promised enhanced flexibility of the child care system but no indication of new spending, and indeed the report which was tabled today indicates a suggestion of some 25 percent increase to parents for the cost of day care in our province. The vast majority of parents with children in day care cannot afford 5 percent increases, let alone 25 percent increases. Any increase must be balanced with an addition in the subsidy rate for those whose day care is subsidized.

They have indicated that they need to strengthen child and spouse abuse measures, but they have not said what they are going to do.

They indicated that a new arts policy should be initiated. Mr. Speaker, that strikes terror in the arts community simply because this Government's record on establishing committees is to then strip the organization of all its powers like they did with the Manitoba Intercultural Council. If MIC is stripped of all

of its funding policies, will this new arts committee come up with a recommendation that it too be stripped, that the Manitoba Arts Council no longer be the funding agency of this Government? Well, we are fearful, not because of the initiative but because of this Government's record.

They have indicated that education had to be expanded and so what did they do? They took a Minister with one of the heaviest burdens in Government and they added to that ministry by giving that individual training. This was the opportunity to establish a new ministry, a ministry of post-secondary education and training. If the Premier wants to control cost, he can get rid of the Minister representing Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery). He does not have a budget worth speaking about anyway. He can replace that Minister with a Minister responsible for education, post-secondary education and training, because—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. Carstairs: —any number of Deputy Ministers of Education and Ministers of Education will announce and tell you that post-secondary education has always gotten short shrift in the Education Department. It has gotten short shrift because of the problems affecting education from K to 12 and the demand on the Minister to meet the needs of K to 12. So what do we do? We take training, the most vital issue affecting the workers in Manitoba, and we lump it into a ministry which is already overburdened.

They speak about the need for more accessibility and flexibility in education. Well, who is to receive more accessible education? Is it to be the deaf? Is it to be the handicapped? Is it to be the poor? Is it to be the gifted? If you really want to address the issues of accessibility and flexibility? Then I would suggest you support the resolution introduced by the critic for Education, the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), who has said that it is time to address the school boundaries to see if there is a way of administrating greater flexibility and greater accessibility.

They promised in their Speech from the Throne that they would strengthen the links between community colleges and the communities that they serve. But where is the Northern Nursing Program for The Pas? Where is it? The federal Government has agreed to fund it but the province has yet to agree to fund it.

Where are the new initiatives that they admit are required for Keewatin Community College? Where is adequate funding for Red River Community College and Portage la Prairie? That is a community that certainly will require additional training and upgrading in the years that lie ahead.

They mention the move to use long distance technology for education, but it is in direct conflict with the decision not to fund one of the few Canadian computer curriculum programs presently in existence at the University of Manitoba. It is going to fail because this Government will not provide funding to make it successful.

They talk about the need for a consultation paper on education finance, but we have had paper after paper after paper on education finance. It is time to make some decisions about education finance.

They promised a Skills Training Advisory Committee, but last year they took away funding to the Unemployed Help Centre which was providing just that kind of advice. They took money away from labour education's funding centre which had its funding decreased substantially. Surely, they were fulfilling some of the needs in a proactive way rather than more consultation.

* (1600)

In the Speech from the Throne, they said they would try to decentralize service delivery, not that they would do it, but that they would try to do it. The federal Government and other provincial Governments have done it. The models are there. The Department of Veteran's Affairs for the federal Government is in Prince Edward Island. Regional offices for taxation have been spread throughout the country, including one here in Winnipeg. Next door, Ontario has recently announced the relocation of the Student Aid Branch to Thunder Bay. The savings in office space alone will be huge and the impact in Thunder Bay enormous. Why cannot this Government act? Why after a year in power do they still not know where they can decentralize?

Mr. Speaker, opening ministerial offices in Thompson and in Brandon are not examples of decentralization, and employees in the Boissevain Land Titles from the Department of Finance is not decentralization. Moving full and partial Government departments are examples of decentralization and we have had none of that from this Government.

They have enunciated a department entitled Rural Development, and that is good if it does anything. But establishing the department, in and of itself, is not a solution. We must watch and we will watch with eagerness for any initiatives which will be promoted by this department. According to the staff, the conflicts between the Department of Rural Development, Agriculture and Natural Resources have not even yet been ironed out. So it seems unlikely that there will be any new initiatives coming forth very quickly in this particular Session.

Payoff seems to be running supreme and that is of no use to either the farmers or the rural residents who centralization and decentralization would be used to affect.

We have heard little or nothing about Northern and Native Affairs, about the need for additional housing, about how we can enhance tourism in Manitoba, other than of course they go south of the border to do their ads and use people who are not members of ACTRA. We heard nothing of the Kopstein Report. This Throne Speech does not address some of the most important issues facing Manitobans.

This is not a progressive Government, Mr. Speaker. There are no progressive measures in health care, no progressive measures in rural development, no progressive measures in the economy, and none in the

environment, nor are they willing to take the good advice offered to them, be it in these or any other areas, whether it is because of their own lack of self image makes it impossible to accept that ideas that do not come from within or simply because they do not care.

But the one year that this Government has been in office has been a display of a total lack of respect for the people of our province, yes, lack of respect. Let us examine some of those issues in which they have displayed over and over and over again their lack of respect for Manitoba citizens. They were prepared to sign a CSIS agreement without any controls on documentation, and they did so. They were prepared and are prepared, apparently, to sell Manitoba Data Services and the first item on the agenda is not confidentiality and security. The first item on the agenda is not to protect the privacy rights of Manitobans.

Their treatment of the foster parents was an example of an abuse of those people. But, Mr. Speaker, the treatment of the patients at the Municipal Hospital had to take the cake for lack of respect for individuals. These people have been promised a new hospital for decades. These people, some of them, have been living in that hospital for 36 years, Mr. Speaker, and for decades they have been promised better living conditions. But again, this Premier (Mr. Filmon) would rather laugh at the needs of those post-polio victims than provide them with decent living accommodation.

Some Honourable Members: Shame, shame on you!

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I would never laugh at the needs of the post-polio victims and I would ask the Leader of the Opposition, if she has any sense of dignity, to withdraw that comment.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable First Minister does not have a point of order.

Mrs. Carstairs: And what of the clients at Klinik? Will the clients of Klinik still be asked to deal in crowded headquarters without any privacy for their physical or their mental complaint, despite previous promises from previous Governments that they would get an enhanced facility? What about vulnerable adults in group homes? Where is the respect for those individuals? When will they be guaranteed decent programs?

What of Jim Findlay, a Manitoban who, because he believed he was right, took his case to court, proved the Government wrong? Did the Government admit it was wrong? No, the Government decided to appeal the court decision and then when he was given a donation from a philanthropic organization, a cheque which he was going to use to help him pay some of these court bills, did Jim Findlay get to use that money? Not according to the Minister. According to the Minister, the funds were due and owing to the Government of the Province of Manitoba.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the Member

would like to correct me but I do not believe, from the information I have, Mr. Findlay ever went to his worker in social assistance to ask to be allowed to keep that, and that is the general practice, not to go to the media first.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. A dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

Mrs. Carstairs: What of the environmentalists from coast to coast, as well as our own environmentalists? They were not listened to from this Government when they were asked to look and examine the Rafferty-Alameda Dam and its impact on this province. They were told that their opinion was of no value, that their opinions were of no consequence.

What about the Natives who wanted to speak with the Minister prior to the divestiture of Manfor? Were they given the opportunity to express their concerns? Were they given the opportunity to show why changes had to be made to the agreement? Not until they had to go public and make their problems an issue of public opinion.

What about the people of The Pas Indian Band who wanted to set before this Government a program, an analysis for how they could deal with the Manfor sale? Were they given the opportunity to make their case? No, group after group after group has to come to the Opposition Parties and demand they be heard because without that kind of pressure—and thank God that pressure exists—the people on the other side of this Chamber have their ears firmly closed to new ideas, new initiatives and new innovations.

Mr. Speaker, because we do not believe this Government has served this province well, because I do not believe they have met their own campaign promises, therefore, I move, seconded by the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr), THAT the motion be amended by adding to it the following words: that this House regrets:

That this Government has ignored the need for employment opportunities at a time when our unemployment rate is above the national average;

This Government has sold Manfor without adequate concern for the environment, Treaty rights or employment opportunities for our aboriginal peoples and Northerners;

This Government has for too long been apologetic for the federal Government and is, therefore, incapable of achieving fairness and equity for Manitoba and Manitobans;

This Government has failed to stimulate the economy of our province with the result that housing starts, retail expenditures are down, while unemployment, interest rates and inflation are up;

That this Government has failed to provide new directives for our health care system;

That this Government has ignored the needs of rural Manitobans, including the need for rural diversification;

That this Government has thereby lost the trust and confidence of the people of Manitoba.

MOTION presented.

* (1610)

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):
I would move the motion be adjourned, seconded by
the Member for Thompson (Mr. Storie). Thank you.

MOTION presented and carried.

Mr. Doer: I can never support a user fee in health care.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):
Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable
Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that the House do
now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried and the House
adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m.
tomorrow (Wednesday).