

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, September 22, 1989.

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the First Quarterly Report for the fiscal year 1989-90.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I have a statement to make to the House.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report today that over the summer the backlog of cases in the Provincial Court in Winnipeg has been reduced by more than 40 per cent.

This has, in turn, resulted in a sharp reduction in the time accused persons must wait between arrest or charge and their trial in court.

The hard work and devoted efforts of the staff in Provincial Court and Public Prosecutions, and the co-operation of the Manitoba Trial Lawyers Association, are the reasons for this dramatic improvement in the operations of our courts.

Back in May, Mr. Speaker, I announced a reorganization of the Public Prosecutions division of my department to better respond to the needs of an increasingly complex justice system.

This reorganization included restructuring of the Crown attorneys to make possible more effective and efficient use of staff and a commitment to eliminate the court backlog in Provincial Court.

A senior Crown attorney was added to the management team as manager of the backlog reduction project, and the decision was made to focus attention and resources towards this goal. At that time, the backlog stood at about 20,000 charges, representing 8,286 accused persons. In terms of time, this means that, on average, an accused person could expect to wait 12 to 14 months between charge and trial. We made a commitment to reduce this wait to three months for persons in custody and six months for all others.

* (1005)

The backlog project formerly started on July 5. But a lot of preparatory work had already been done before that. Senior prosecuting staff had met with staff of Provincial Court to work out the most efficient use of courtrooms and develop appropriate procedures to ensure best use of facilities and resources. A meeting was held with the Trial Lawyers' Association to enlist their support.

Our efforts were concentrated in two areas: close screening and tracking of cases before trial and scheduling of courtrooms and staff to ensure optimum use of resources.

A case management system was introduced. All cases were examined and reviewed, and defence lawyers were contacted to iron out as many trial details as possible beforehand and reduce procedural delays during trials. The case management system also contributes to much greater efficiency in the use of courtrooms. By careful management, we reduce the incidence of idle courtrooms because of last-minute postponements. We have also introduced priority scheduling of courtrooms. This ensures that top-priority cases can be handled as soon as possible and, if necessary, shifted to another courtroom instead of being postponed. The goal is to increase courtroom use to four hours a day instead of the average of two hours before the project began. We are well on the way to fulfilling our commitments, Mr. Speaker, thanks to the work and devotion of those concerned.

By the beginning of September, the period between charge and trial had been reduced to less than seven months.

The next three months will be critical for the success of the backlog elimination project. Once again, I would like to thank all the prosecutors, court staff and others. Without their cooperation and hard work, no reductions in the backlog could be achieved.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we thank the Minister of Justice for that announcement today because it means justice for the accused and it also means justice for the victims of crime within our community.

We believe that this is a positive move and one for which those who have contributed, both within the Attorney General's staff, as well as the Trial Lawyers' Association and everyone working within the field should be congratulated. We wish them success as they continue this process so that we can get the most speedy justice possible.

I would recommend to the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) that he include within these reforms, many of which are extremely profitable for the justice system, also a large component of training because we have seen time and time again that training of many of our justices in this Province is woefully inadequate and that it does not reflect the needs of women and children within our community.

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Speaker, I, too, would like to add our congratulations to the improvements that have been made in dealing with the backlog, and that the 40 percent increase is an important improvement in that area. It shows what can be done if all of the people in the judicial system decide

to work together, and your ability to bring in the trial lawyers, the defence lawyers and the people in your department to work on this cooperatively shows what can be done.

I think one of the things that we would like to see, as a follow-up, is that all of those people work cooperatively together now to see what they can do to speed up the dealing of violent criminals and violent crimes which I think is one of the commitments that this Government made.

So having demonstrated the ability in a more minor area we would like to see that carried out so that the prosecution and the dealing with criminals of violent crimes, which is of greater concern to the public, is also dealt with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

* (1010)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the gallery where we have de l'école Précieux Sang, nous avons vingt et un élèves du grade 9 sous la direction de M. André Mahé. Cette école est située dans la circonscription du député de Saint-Boniface.

(Translation)

Prior to oral questions, may I direct the attention of Honourable Members to the gallery where we have from l'école Précieux-Sang, twenty-one Grade 9 students, under the direction of Mr. André Mahé. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this morning.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Skills Unlimited Funding Reinstatement

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson). On Wednesday, outside of this House, she stated very clearly, the employees of Skills Unlimited would be returned to work immediately. How does she explain that the director of Skills Unlimited, the individual responsible for ensuring that those employees be returned to work, did not know of this message 24 hours later?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, to the Leader of the Opposition, the person was phoned yesterday morning.

Mrs. Carstairs: Well, the individual has indicated that he had no knowledge. Has the Minister herself spoken with Bert Friesen, the director of Skills Unlimited, informed him of the funding restoration and has the cheque been drawn?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Speaker, the Assistant Deputy Minister talked with that individual yesterday morning and also this morning to confirm that the funding would be provided for those positions.

Mentally Handicapped Service Reduction

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary question to the same Minister. The money to restore the funding to Skills Unlimited, and other organizations dealing with the mentally handicapped, must come from somewhere. Can the Minister tell the House, today, what other program she now intends to slash in order to find the dollars to return to Skills Unlimited?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, no program will be slashed, no programs have been slashed.

Family Services Spending Decisions

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, with a new question to the First Minister. Mr. Speaker, the principle of ministerial responsibility reached a new low in this Chamber yesterday afternoon when the Premier of this Province said, and I quote from Hansard: "that decision was not made by the Premier, and was not made by the Treasury Board, and was not made by the Minister." Can the First Minister of this province tell the House today if spending decisions, final spending decisions, are now made by the Civil Service in the Province of Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, as the Leader of the Opposition ought to know, the Government, through the Treasury Board, makes global decisions on areas of responsibility within departments. Within those global decisions, there is room for adjustment and allocation and shifting of funding. She knows that is done; at least, had she been in Government she would know that is done on a regular basis, that within overall budget numbers that are allocated to certain areas of each department, they do have some flexibility in terms of how they allocate it within that area of the budget. These are things that happen on a routine basis, on a regular basis, and these are judgments that are made within the purview of the civil servants who work in those departments. That is done on a regular basis.

Skills Unlimited Order-in-Council

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the question to the First Minister: the Order-in-Council authorizing this budget cut was passed by this Cabinet and signed by this Cabinet. How does this Minister justify passing the blame onto a civil servant when their signatures appear on the O/C?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to respond to the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) and say to her that I have the original letter that was sent to Skills Unlimited. It contains a statement announcing the funding for the year and some verbiage, the letter having been drafted by department for

signature by the Minister. It even says at the end, "I regret that it is not possible to enhance your program at this time."

* (1015)

So under those circumstances we do not always have, when we make announcements of this nature, the information attached to it that would indicate that this is more or less than a previous year. This letter certainly did not. So there are not any comparative statistics.

So that is how this sort of thing can happen, but I think the important thing for the Leader of the Opposition to know is that when the consequences of this funding announcement and decision were brought to the attention of this Minister and this Government, the right decision was made. That decision was in favour of the 12 mentally handicapped individuals who work in the sheltered workshops.

Funding

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): With a final question to the First Minister, Mr. Speaker, this Minister knew of those cuts from Skills Unlimited for four weeks and she did nothing. Is it now going to be the action of this Government that unless the issue of cuts are raised on this side of the Chamber then no restoration will be made by his Government?

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

PCB Storage Sites Safety and Security

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings). In November of '88 the Government passed a regulation dealing with the handling of PCBs and the storage of PCBs. That followed quite a bit of public concern across Canada, and rightly so with the St. Basile le Grand fire in Quebec and the vulnerability that the public was exposed to with that fire. I would ask the Minister of Environment whether he is satisfied with the appropriateness and safety of the sites that he has released to the public just last week.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, the list is as it is issued. Where the lists are quoted as being in compliance, I have been assured by the department that they in fact meet the regulatory requirements. I would indicate that there are quite a few of those sites where the PCBs that are in storage are in fact from light ballast, which is still PCBs, but of the lesser concentrated nature.

Beyond that I think we also have the federal sites which I have not had personal inspection of, but I am sure that they are up to the standards according to the federal inspectors. If the Member is referring to the number of school divisions that have storage sites, one of the principles of looking after PCBs has been that the company that owns those PCBs has the responsibility for storage. We have indicated that we

are more than willing to work with any of these locations where they might want to cease to have the responsibility for storage, and we will have that transferred into a safe storage where they will no longer have the responsibility.

Suitability

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on June 16 the Independent Advisory Council, chaired by Wally Fox-Decent, sent the Minister a letter dealing with the storage of PCBs and the regulation the Minister just cited. It states that the council, made up of business, labour and experts in health care, is concerned that the regulations appear to permit unlimited storage sites throughout the province. This letter was sent to the Minister and also outlined, in the council's opinion, that storage sites such as schools and hospitals are unsuitable under any circumstances. I wonder whether the Minister concurs with this independent council's advice in terms of the regulation that the former Minister passed that is unacceptable in the council's opinion, and whether in fact he shares the opinion and the advice of the independent council that schools and hospitals are unsuitable for the location of PCBs as storage sites in Manitoba.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Yes, Mr. Speaker, in fact that is what I was referring to a moment ago, where schools, hospitals and food processing locations—we are prepared to work with them to find long-term permanent locations. We have not issued orders or gone to them with a plan, but we are working on a plan to deal with that particular issue.

* (1020)

Schools and Hospitals

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): There are 13 either school or hospital sites in Manitoba that this Council has said clearly are unsuitable under any circumstances. The Minister received this letter over three months ago, Mr. Speaker, and I remember the comments made at the Transcona School Division by his own department that this was a fine storage site for purposes of storage of PCBs.

My question to the Minister is why did he not act on this letter upon receipt from his independent council and immediately have the PCBs moved to a more suitable site, such as the storage site at Manitoba Hydro or another suitable site, besides leaving them in schools and hospitals, contrary to the advice he received?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, they are not being left in schools and hospitals. Let us get it straight. They are being stored in sites that the department has indicated are in compliance with the regulations required, or are now proceeding with movement of those materials to a safe and secure location where they will no longer have responsibility for.

There are further ramifications to this. There are some locations where moving of the PCBs requires a decision

by the responsible body as to whether or not they wish to store them or whether or not they wish to pay for someone else to store them. There is a financial implication there, but I have stated that we are working and we are preparing a presentation to these types of institutions so that they may be able to deal with the location of those PCBs.

I can assure the Minister and assure this House that we are actively pursuing the relationship of storage of PCBs with schools, hospitals and food processing locations.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, we are told that the regulation is unenforceable by the independent commission, and then the Minister tells us that the schools and hospitals are meeting the regulation. Surely the issue is for public safety, given his own independent advisory council has stated that these sites are unsuitable under any circumstances for schools and hospitals. Why has the Minister not acted in the last three and a half months to move those PCBs to a more suitable site, as was given to him in the direct advice he received, signed by Wally Fox-Decent?

Mr. Cummings: He is interchanging the words "unsuitable" and "unsafe."

Keewatin Community College Staff Reductions

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): My question is to the Minister responsible for Training (Mr. Derkach). Mr. Speaker, for over a year now we in the Opposition have been very disturbed about the absolute lack of direction in this department. We have had a change of Ministers, and still that lack of direction continues. When the Northern Employment Training Agency was taken under the wing of the Keewatin Community College, staff in the North were told their jobs would not be in jeopardy. They have now been informed, as of December 31 of this year, that their jobs will be either terminated or they will be demoted.

Mr. Speaker, why has the Government once again betrayed the North and their Northerners?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Well, I am happy to answer this question because I was informed this morning that the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) has been nosing around Keewatin Community College to try and dig up some information on what is happening with the Northern Employment Training Agency. I have to tell you that her critic had more credibility because she had the fortitude to come and ask my department directly. The Leader does not have that courage.

* (1025)

Mr. Speaker, with regard to what is happening with the Northern Employment Training Agency, the information that the Members opposite have of course is incorrect, as always. The Northern Training employees are term employees. Some of those terms come to a termination at the end of December. We have been

working with the employees to ensure that those who wish to stay on, their contracts perhaps can be extended. There are those who do not wish to have their contracts extended. I can tell you that there are no demotions in terms of salaries paid to the employees.

Affirmative Action Northern Programs

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to see that the flow of information and confidentiality of—and the loyalties, but that is just obviously a cover-up and just demonstrates the incompetence that I have seen over the last year.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Rose: Mr. Speaker, taking into account that 90 percent—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Will the Honourable Member for St. Vital kindly put his question?

Mr. Rose: —of these staff are Native, can the Minister explain if this is yet another example of the Government's lack of commitment to the affirmative action for Natives in the North?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, that is a ridiculous assumption and statement from the Member opposite. He should know better. We are working with all Manitobans to ensure that in fact every Manitoban is able to get a job in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we have good, qualified Native instructors in northern Manitoba who have been doing excellent work, and they are not going to be removed simply because they are Native. That is a ridiculous statement and I wish he would withdraw that insinuation.

Keewatin Community College Affirmative Action

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for St. Vital, with his final supplementary question.

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, it is too bad the Minister does not do a little listening instead of speaking all the time. Their action will speak louder—

Mr. Speaker, the strength of these programs lies in the Natives working with Natives in the North. How does the Minister expect to maintain the strength of this program, or indeed other programs when he knows that fewer than 10 percent of the staff at Keewatin Community College are presently Natives?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that the president of Keewatin Community College, who is of Native ancestry himself, is doing everything he possibly can to ensure that there are Native people working in the North. For that reason, we have just announced a Bachelor of Nursing Program in northern Manitoba that is going to take into it its own Native and northern students.

Stubble Burning Government Strategy

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, every fall citizens in many Manitoba municipalities, particularly those in the Red River Valley, are subjected to adverse effects from stubble burning. Their health is impacted, there are serious breathing problems, and we know very well the disasters we have had on the roads. Government inaction is no longer acceptable. Therefore, knowing all the problems that have been encountered with this poor farming practice, will the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings) tell the House what steps he has taken which will guarantee Manitobans they will no longer be impacted from this irresponsible stubble burning?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, there has been a considerable amount of action taken since the Clean Environment Commission Report came in. The commission report did indicate that they felt education and working with the agriculture producers in the area was the recommendation that was the best for the situation.

* (1030)

The Department of Agriculture has been actively involved with the farmers in the immediate surrounding areas of the city and has put together some facts that do indicate that we are getting an improvement in the situation, and there are one or two days this fall when I quite agree that it would be very difficult to say that we have had an improvement. There were a couple of days this fall when there was absolute disaster, one which I would indicate to the farmers publicly that they should be making every effort not to have a repeat of, but there are figures to show that in the immediate areas surrounding the city, and bear in mind the city is not the only area that is impacted by stubble burning, there are other communities as well.

In the four areas that have been closely monitored there has been a reduction of 27 percent and 67 percent in two municipalities which indicates that the number of fields burned are down. We would hope that we can dramatically reduce that and have it eliminated in the not too distant future.

Regulations

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member from Wolseley (Mr. Taylor), with a supplementary question.

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, I guess I have to ask the Minister, when is he going to really start showing some concern on this matter, particularly when the education process has been done. When is he prepared to solve it with a regulatory solution which means permit burning only with weather conditions that are acceptable and only when justified?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, there are a number of issues that are related to this. The most important is agrarian practice. But

there are a number of suggestions that the Department of Agriculture is working with, not the least of which is some suggestions that have come up regarding inventory, of making this material available for other use. I think that there is no one out there more concerned about the fact that they have to burn than the people who are doing it. The problem is that they are doing it at inappropriate times and that is exactly the issue that we have to deal with and providing also some alternatives to doing that. The alternatives are to burn, if it must burn, to burn when the smoke will rise, not cause the extreme problems that we have had.

I want to put on the record that I believe we have received co-operation from the agricultural community but I want to say very clearly that I believe the patience of everyone concerned is becoming severely strained and that we would hope that their co-operation will immensely reduce the amount of problems that we have in future years.

Health Hazards

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member from Wolseley (Mr. Taylor), with his final supplementary question.

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed with that answer. I guess I have to ask the Minister how many more people have to suffer very severe breathing problems, end up in the hospital, in their doctor's office, and how many more traffic fatalities and accident victims do we have to suffer before he can be dragged into doing some action on this one?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): A couple of days ago he asked me to go outside. Today he wants to drag me out. Mr. Speaker, this is a serious point, this is a very serious issue and I would anticipate that no one should have to be put through the situation that the Member refers to. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) has assured me that he and his Department will be working one on one, if they have to, through the winter to try and make sure that the type of conditions that can be developed when improper weather conditions prevail, will not be used as an excuse to explain the difficulties that arise from the stubble burning.

Labour Management Committee Transportation Provision

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): My question is for the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond). The record of this Government in the area of labour relations in this province is quite clear. Be it the area of workers compensation or for protection for workers, they have been consistently rolling back the rights and protection of workers in this province.

* (1035)

Earlier this year the previous Minister of Labour asked the Labour Management Review to draft legislative changes to regulations that require that employers provide transportation to night workers, legislation that

was put in place in the 1950s, in particular to protect women against the kind of violence they could be subject to as night workers. I would like to table a copy of that, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to ask the current Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) whether she is willing to rescind this letter and ensure that that protection is maintained in the legislation?

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): I have just recently met with the MFL and the Members who are working on that particular regulation and the change. One of the areas that is of concern right now is the fact that police officers will be taken home and come under the same regulations, so they are looking at this very seriously. We certainly are not looking to reduce any type of protection for women or men, if needed.

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

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, why then is the memo which the Labour Management Review Committee is dealing with, why is one of the main options, the first option that is listed, repealing the Section entirely? Why will this Minister now not rescind this letter and make sure that there is no attempt on the part of this Government to roll back this important legislation?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, but the point of ever sending anything to a committee to look at it, where there are both management and labour sitting on the committee, is certainly to wait to see the kind of advice that they give you on this regulation. So we have no intention of going ahead and doing anything precipitously, and we will certainly be looking at the welfare of the workers. We will be making no changes until we hear from the committee.

An Honourable Member: It is no issue, Steve.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), with his final supplementary question.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, the Member opposite suggests it is no issue. I suggest it is a very major issue. When the previous Minister of Labour, who requested employers, not employees, is asking that this legislation ought to be rescinded, my question to the Minister is, given the fact that the MFL, the labour representatives on that committee have said they are absolutely opposed to the kind of changes that the previous Minister of Labour wanted to see on behalf of employers, why will the Minister now not rescind this letter and send a clear letter to the Labour Management Review Committee that this Government will not stand for any rescinding of this particular section?

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Speaker, I just met with Wilf Hudson and we discussed this particular issue. He did

not ask me to rescind that motion. What he did say—what I am suggesting they did say is that they are working on the regulation.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Speaker, I have said before we have no intention of doing anything with the regulation until we hear back from the committee and get a report from it.

Grain Cash Advance Program Reinstatement

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay).- (interjection)-

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

Mr. Helwer: In light of the cash flow problems that have been incurred and created for our farmers and agribusiness people in Manitoba by the federal Government cancelling the Grain Cash Advancement Program for this year, can the Minister tell us what he has done to lobby the federal Government or the federal Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Mazankowski, to reinstate the grain and cash advance program as soon as possible?

* (1040)

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Yes, I have discussed this issue with the Minister of Agriculture and followed that up with a letter requesting that, No. 1, reinstitute the program of cash advances and it be made interest free for the first six months of the crop year, which will help farmers substantially in terms of cash flow at a time when grain deliveries are tight and not equal across the Prairies.- (interjection)- It takes a while for the letter to get there, but it is effective. It takes a while.

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, I would like to be the first to thank publicly the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) for having the courage and the honesty, the first time for any Minister of this Government, to admit that the Free Trade Agreement is a factor in recent layoffs in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), on a point of order.

Mr. Findlay: I would like to know where I indicated the Free Trade Agreement had anything to do with Neepawa. Countervail has nothing to do with the Free Trade Agreement. Countervail is an act from the United States to take up against anybody at any time, before, during or after free trade. The two are not related and I guess it, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order. As the Honourable Minister is aware, a dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

Free Trade Agreement Labour Adjustment Strategy

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): The record speaks for itself. During this last week we have been trying to remind the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) that for all of this Government's talk about a labour adjustment strategy, they have only committed a mere \$60,000 to the labour adjustment branch which is 10 cents for every wage earner and worker in Manitoba.

My question is for the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond). Given the fact that the effect of free trade is soon to be compounded by the inflationary and recessionary effects of the GST, and the UIC changes that negatively affect Manitoba, will the Minister please tell us more than what she has been saying all week, "we are doing everything possible," and let Manitobans know exactly what she was doing to deal with our changing labour environment?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, one of the things I would like to correct—the Member indicates that there is \$60,000, the amount is actually \$180,000.00. There is an additional \$120,000 that was put into that program, so we are working actively with companies when they need the help. We have the labour adjustment unit and they work with employees. They work with employers to make sure that the workers get a chance to get into jobs, that they get into training where they need it and work actively with the committees and with all the people involved.

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

Mr. Carr: Mr. Speaker, this is a supplementary question for the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond). Since the de Grandpre Report states that "swift action, only swift action will enable the positive effects of Free Trade to pre-empt its negative potential," where is the swift action from this Minister, and what action does she anticipate she can take for \$60,000.00?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if the Member just did not hear me or is choosing to ignore what I am telling him. There is \$180,000 that is in that program. We are working with employers/employees on the labour adjustment. We also worked with the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) who is working actively to make sure that businesses come into this province. We are doing that through trying to repeal the FOS legislation, which will encourage more businesses to come into Manitoba, which will help the job situation here and with the reduction of the payroll tax.

* (1045)

Labour Adjustment Strategy Federal Consultations

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, with his final supplementary question.

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): In light of the federal Government's recent Speech from the Throne which called for extensive discussions with the provinces on labour adjustment strategies, could the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) tell us what discussions have taken place with her federal counterparts, and what specific action has resulted from those consultations?

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): Our department, as well as the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), is working actively with the federal Government to make sure that if there are any adjustments needed that we are certainly kept in touch and that we are working actively with the federal Government to try and make sure that Manitobans have their share of monies to help with any relocation that is needed.

Rural Economic Development Infrastructure Costs

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): I have a question for the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner). It is a disturbing fact that rural communities are facing an unprecedented burden because of high interest rates, record bankruptcies that have just been announced in agricultural crisis that continues to deepen, reductions in the Unemployment Insurance corporation by the federal Government, massive layoffs by CN and reductions in VIA Rail, Post Office closures, the impact of the Free Trade Agreement with its impact on Campbell Soup and the Neepawa Hog Plant, prohibitive tax increases and the absence of a rural economic development policy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister, in view of these impacts, is it the Government's policy that they will force municipalities, major centres in this province to pay one-third of the cost of major infrastructure, water and sewer infrastructure improvements in this province? Is that the policy of this Government?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development): I am surprised that the Honourable Member opposite has a one-sided view of the agricultural community and rural Manitoba. The fact of the matter is that we recognize and have recognized as a Government, the seriousness of the situation that was caused by the drought last year to the farm community. I think through the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) we put in place, and in cooperation with the federal Government, a number of programs that assisted the farm community and thereby also assisted substantially a number of the other communities located outside within the boundaries of Manitoba.

The fact of the matter is that we lowered by 35 percent the contribution to the education tax that rural Manitobans make. The fact of the matter is that the question that the Honourable Member raises is something that this Government has and is trying to address.

Rural Economic Development Infrastructure Costs

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): The Premier recently in Dauphin said that the town of Dauphin and other communities should pay one-third of the costs of these major infrastructure improvements in order to show a commitment.

I ask this Premier if in fact this Minister is going to require the municipalities to put up a prohibitive costs, in this case some \$3 million, to get a major water and sewer improvement, water treatment plant, so that they can be competitive and attract industry with other parts of this country. Is the Premier going to require that of these municipalities?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Under current circumstances, under the circumstances that were pursued and followed as policies of the NDP Government of which this Member was a part of Cabinet, these municipalities had to pay 100 percent of all those infrastructures, would have had to pay 100 percent of any water treatment plant. All of those improvements would have been all of their costs. We are proposing that we have a cost-shared program, federal-provincial-municipal in which they would only now be paying one-third. That makes a great deal of sense. The people of Dauphin are being offered a substantial benefit by the federal-provincial Governments because we recognize the circumstance we face, and we are trying to address something that was not addressed by the former Government who would have made them pay 100 percent.

Mr. Plohman: The Premier should get his facts straight instead of trying to mislead the people of this province.

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

* (1050)

Mr. Plohman: The fact is, Mr. Speaker, we are committed to ensuring that 75 percent of the costs of infrastructure are paid by senior levels of Government. Will this Premier (Mr. Filmon) get his head out of the sand and ensure that at least 75 percent of those costs are paid for by senior levels of Government so that these communities can access these improvements and be competitive to attract industry?

Mr. Filmon: Their actions speak much louder than their new commitments. I mean this new policy that he has pulled out of the air today for Question Period, Mr. Speaker, was not their policy in six and a half years of Government. In six and a half years of Government, their policy was that municipalities paid 100 percent of the water treatment plant. Today, now that he is in Opposition, their policy is changed entirely, 75 percent—that is absolutely a foolish position and he looks foolish in putting it forward.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order please. We will proceed now.

U.S. Pork Countervail Evaluation

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry has time for one short question.

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay). I would think that the Minister would admit that we run the risk of entering into a pretty vicious cycle as far as subsidization and countervail is concerned.

Now we have had countervail on hogs and pork, with the first of them starting in 1985, and the impact is as the countervail comes on, the price of hogs drops and therefore the stabilization payments go up. Does the Minister anticipate that the Americans will review the countervail looking at recent stabilization program payments, and do we run the risk of having an increase in countervail the next time they review the pork countervail in the U.S.?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, yes, the Americans have calculated countervail, and I would find it very unfortunate they would consider that 3 percent of their total pork consumption, which comes from Canada, is in any way impacting on the value of the price of hogs or pork in the United States.

It is a very unfair principle they are applying against us, and, yes, calculations have been done on a continuous basis, but the Canadian Pork Council, the Canadian Meat Council are putting a recommendation forward to the various pork boards across the province, across the country, that a mechanism be put in place to reduce the impact of the countervail presently in place so that it will not impact on the price that the farmer gets at the farm gate.

An announcement in that direction will probably be coming out shortly as they position themselves to deal with the countervail question to reduce the impact on the packing plants, in particular, that sell in the United States. How the calculation will change in the future remains to be seen, but the decision of countervail will be fought aggressively under the Free Trade Agreement dispute settling and under GATT where the principles are basically that fair trade should exist. We believe we are fair traders with the United States and the rest of the world.

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

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): May I have leave for a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have leave? (Agreed) The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

Mr. Minenko: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to advise Members of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly and,

indeed, all Manitobans that during 1989, Ukrainians around the world are commemorating the 175th anniversary of the birth of Taras Shevchenko. As participants in the democratic process, it is fitting that we recognize the important contributions of this important Ukrainian poet to the promotion of democratic rights and freedoms.

Taras Shevchenko was born a slave in 1814 while Ukraine was under the control of the Russian empire. His childhood was spent in poverty and despair. His freedom was later purchased by a group of artists who recognized his talents.

Mr. Speaker, Taras Shevchenko never forgot the slavery of his people. His poetry and drawings are full of the suffering of Ukrainians. As his works illustrate, any expression of Ukrainian nationalism was strongly punished by the Tsar. Taras wrote about the Russification of Ukraine and the inability of Ukrainians to practise their religion and speak their own language. He called for Ukraine to be free from Russian domination and for Ukrainians to be leaders of their own land.

For voicing his democratic views, Mr. Speaker, Taras Shevchenko was imprisoned and forbidden to return to Ukraine.

In 1961, a statue was erected on the grounds of the Manitoba Legislature recognizing the importance of Taras Shevchenko. On the statue is the inscription, "He revived and inspired a nation downtrodden by oppression, and his fearless appeal to right and truth speaks as eloquently in our time as it did in his." Mr. Speaker, I ask all Members of the Manitoba Legislature to join with me in recognizing the importance of the contribution of Taras Shevchenko.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you kindly call the Bills in the following order: Bill No. 27, Bill No. 31, Bill No. 9, Bill No. 19, Bill No. 33, Bill No. 35 and Bill No. 6. Thank you.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

BILL NO.27—THE FISCAL STABILIZATION FUND ACT

Mr. Speaker: Debate on Second Readings, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill No. 27, The Fiscal Stabilization Fund Act; Loi sur le Fonds de stabilisation des recettes, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock). Stand? The Honourable Member for Churchill.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: And there is leave to remain standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Osborne? (Agreed) The Honourable Member for Churchill.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, let me say from the onset that the New Democratic Party is going to support this

legislation despite some very serious concerns we have about the motivation behind it and the possible way in which it may be implemented. We are going to support it not because we are enamoured with it, not because we particularly like this piece of legislation, because quite frankly we do not like it. We think it is more subterfuge than substance. We believe that it really is a slush fund that has been designed more out of political necessity of the Government than out of good financial management or out of appropriate accounting procedures or out of an appropriate way to conduct the business of the Legislature and the Government.

However, despite those concerns about what we consider to be a manipulative and a cynical fund, we will support the legislation because we believe that the defeat of this particular legislation and, correspondingly with that, the defeat of the stabilization fund would be much more harmful to what we hope to accomplish as legislators than would be the implementation of this fund however badly flawed and faulted it may be in its conception and its implementation.

If this legislation is defeated, that \$200 million that is going to be set aside by the legislation would simply disappear into the deficit, would simply disappear back into the consolidated revenues of last year. Now that course of action might suit both Conservatives and Liberals, those whose fixation on fiscal matters place a higher priority on deficit reduction than they do on human needs and social needs, but it does not reflect our general philosophical approach, nor do we believe it would be the right thing to do.

* (1100)

Let there be no doubt about it however. It is my understanding, and I look to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) for confirmation on this, that if we defeat this Bill, what happens unless the Government comes forward with a different course of action—at this late date it would be difficult for them to do so—that \$200 million would simply go back into the consolidated revenues of the previous year.— (interjection)— Well, he says they could not provide the tax break. That money would act more to reduce the deficit than do anything else. If that happens, who will suffer? I do not think the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) would suffer, quite frankly, because he has always said, and his Government has always said, that they place a very high priority on reducing the deficit and balancing the budget. I think that it would probably not harm, as a matter of fact I know it would not harm, the Conservative Government or the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). It would not harm all those who have clamoured for so many years for a balanced budget and for a deficit reduction at any cost.

There are many in this Chamber who place that as their highest priority. I can tell you that is not why I sought office, nor sit in this Chamber. It is not to place such a high priority on deficit reduction and balanced budgets that it blurs the needs, perceptions of needs, and the ability to fulfill the needs of human beings, and fulfill the needs of groups out there. But that is what will happen if we defeat this particular legislation.

There are those who do bring that philosophical approach to this Chamber, and I have to say that we

have many differing approaches, philosophies and perceptions of how society should be shaped in this Chamber, and they are all legitimate. We all believe in them very strongly and we all believe that we are right. The fact is that we cannot all be right, and we cannot all be wrong, so we must stand by our beliefs. I acknowledge the fact that there will be those who will stand from their seats today and very strongly suggest that the balanced budget is more important in the short term and the long term than is meeting some of those needs that are out there now. But that is not the approach that I take, that is not the approach that my colleagues take.

So we will not be hurting those individuals. Who will we be hurting? I go back to the original question. We will be hurting those communities, those individuals, those groups out there who could possibly use part of that \$200 million to meet some of the very pressing needs that confront them. We will be hurting the day care workers because what money in this fund that could have been used to assist them will now go back into balancing last year's budget. That is the choice that is before us. We will be hurting ordinary Manitobans and, quite frankly, I believe that the tax cuts that are contained in this budget will help ordinary Manitobans. I think when the Liberals voted against those tax cuts, they in effect were hurting ordinary Manitobans. They would have hurt them a lot more had their negative approach succeeded but, fortunately, it did not. If they vote against this fund, and this fund disappears, they will have accomplished—if they can win the vote—what they could not accomplish in the budget vote, and that is to deny ordinary Manitobans that significant tax cut.

So I think that they have to give some real consideration to their approach on this particular Bill, but that is who they will be hurting. They will be hurting the mentally handicapped who need the funds to continue on with their projects. They will be hurting the health care system that needs an infusion of funds to ensure that it can maintain the quality that it has built up over so many years. I, quite frankly, am very concerned about the deterioration of the quality in the health care system since the Conservatives took office. I do not want to do anything as a legislator that would aid and abet them in their efforts to ratchet down the spending in the health care system at the cost of Manitobans and those who seek to serve them in the medical professions.

They will be, if they vote against this Bill, the Liberals. They will be hurting those who require home care because we know that there is more money required for the home care system than presently is available. If we deny the Government the ability to spend some of this money on the home care system by defeating this Bill and having this money disappear with last year's end to last year's deficit, we will be hurting those individuals. We will be hurting Manitobans who rely upon job creation programs in their communities to find some productive work. If we vote against this Bill, if the Liberals vote against this Bill, what they will be saying they are prepared to do is to hurt the miners in Lynn Lake, because I am going to make a very special plea in my speech today that some of this money go

to assist the miners in Lynn Lake so that they can help work together to ensure the continuation and the survival of that community.

That is exactly what the Liberals will be doing if they vote against this legislation. I do not think they are doing it out of malice. I do not believe that the Liberals are doing it out of a fixation on the deficit that is so overwhelming, that they cannot see clearly. I do not think it is a philosophical motivation that drives them to vote against all those individuals and groups, and many more who I have not named. I do not think they are doing it to be spiteful. I do not think they are doing it just to oppose the Government because quite often I think motivation on their part is based more on opposition to the Government than it is on a reasoned practical approach and an analysis of what their actions will accomplish.

I think there are perhaps only two reasons why the Liberals would find themselves in the position of having to vote against the stabilization fund. I think the first reason is that they have a lust for power that does, in fact, cloud their vision. I think the first reason might be—and they have said it so many times—that they want to defeat this Government to get into power so they can begin to shape the province in the image of themselves, or more accurately said, in the image of their own Leader.

That worries me very much because I heard them the other day add to their long list of areas of social programming where they would want to impose a means test, the day care system. I am really fearful that if they were to get in the driver's seat of this province for a while that we would veer even more sharply to the right than we have veered under the present Conservative Government. I do not think that is entirely possible, but I fear that it might be. I think we have veered much too far to the right with the present Government.

So I would not want to replace someone who is going to—as one of their stated policy—impose means tests in day care with the group that we have over here. No matter how badly they are handling the child care situation and no matter how badly the Minister is creating a crisis in that area, I would not want to replace the present Government with a group that have said they want to charge people for meals in the hospital, or for toothpaste when they are in the hospital, or for slippers when they are in the hospital. I would not want to replace them with a group that said they are in favour of means tests for home care because -(interjection)-

Well, the Health Critic for the Liberals (Mr. Cheema) says that is nonsense and I would point him to his own words, and those words of the Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko), and the words of the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) here just the other day, and the words of the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) when they talk about means tests in this very area.

Maybe he does not know that what they are talking about is means tests. Maybe he does not understand that what they are talking about is a two-tiered system, that eventually that is what it leads to. But that in fact is what they say when they stand in this House and

when they would make statements outside of this House on home care. That is what they said when they made those statements just the other day on child care. That is what they said when they made statements about having—and the Leader herself said this, and I have the quote, “imposing user fees to the extent that hospital patients would have to pay for their meals and toothpaste.”

I do not want to see that happen. That is why I am concerned that if there is any opportunity whatsoever, however slight it might be, better to stay with the group that we know at least is moderating their viewpoint somewhat because of a minority Government situation. We like to think that we play some role in helping them come to those more moderate approaches, or replacing them with a group that has already said it is going to go even a step further with those means tests.

So if that is a real fear, then I think one of the reasons that they may be opposing this is out of that lust for power. Lord help us all if they do happen to gain that power. I think it would be devastating to so many Manitobans.

The other reason they might be opposing this is that they just do not understand what they are doing. That is understandable. They are new in this House and they have never sat on Government's side. So maybe they do not realize that if they vote against the stabilization fund they are voting to reduce last year's deficit by \$200 million. They are voting against the tax cuts which the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has said are tied to this particular stabilization fund. They are voting against those groups that could use this money to build a better province.

* (1110)

I think perhaps it is a mixture; a little bit of lust for power, a little bit of greediness to get on the other side, a little bit of impatience on their part. I think, quite frankly, they should learn patience a bit more than they have already because they are going to need it; they are going to need that patience.

So I think they should start practising a bit of self-discipline in learning how to not be quite so motivated by the moment and their innermost dreams, but a bit more motivated by doing a good job in here on behalf of the people who sent them here, and the people did not send them here to vote against tax cuts. The people did not send them here to vote against tax cuts, and the people did not send them here to vote against money going into home care, and the people did not send them here to vote against more money going into the health care system, and the people did not send them to vote against an opportunity for funds to be used to help save the Town of Lynn Lake.

If they stand up and vote against this stabilization fund, that is what they are going to vote against, and I am telling them that now, not because I particularly want to see them change their mind, but I would like for once to see them do something with full knowledge of the consequences of their actions. So at least they cannot stand later and say, my goodness, we did not understand, when we really did, we voted against home

care recipients, we voted against hospital users, we voted against the health care system, we voted against Lynn Lake, we voted against the job creation. We did not know we were voting against that, and for that reason we should be absolved of all guilt.

Well, the fact is you now know what you are voting against when you vote against this stabilization fund and do not come forward with phony excuses that you did not know what you were doing when you stand up and take that course of action in this Chamber.

The Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) tells me not to waste House time and I have to take from that he thinks I am wasting House time now. You know something, I almost agree, with trying to tell the Liberals anything about their actions in this House. Trying to explain to them what they are doing is a waste of time because obviously they do not hear or they do not understand.

But despite the fact that we have tried often and perhaps we have wasted time in the past, I do not yet see them as a lost cause. I am willing to spend a bit more time to try to explain to them what it is that they are doing when they stand up and vote against tax cuts and vote against the stabilization fund.

I tell you, not only am I trying to do that in this House, but I am trying to do that with every one of my constituents and every Manitoban I meet in a coffee house, on the street corner, in the plants, in the shops, and in political meetings. I am telling them what I am telling you right now, that when the Liberals stand in this House they are voting against Manitobans when they vote against tax cuts, they are voting against Manitobans when they vote against the stabilization fund and that is not a waste of time, that is a very productive use of one's time because the people really do not have a good sense of what this groups stands for just yet.

That is right, the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) says, how can they, because on the one hand and the other hand, is the model of the Liberal Party. This is their symbol, on the one hand, on the other hand. It could be their political sign. They could have a sign like this and saying on the one hand, and on the other hand, we are the Liberals.

It is difficult for people to understand what Liberals stand for. The Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) talked about ideologues, and you know what is funny is that every time we talk about a strong philosophical root, they talk about ideologues, which tells me they do not understand what philosophical roots are all about. They do not understand what a strong stand on principle is all about, that they only understand the moment, the moment, what is before them at any present time.

That is what they are going to be voting against, not out of principle, as I do not believe that it is out of principle. I think it is out of a pragmatic approach and a little bit of ignorance. That is what they are going to be voting against when they vote against this stabilization fund. Now I have been somewhat critical of the Liberals. I think that perhaps I have been overly critical, given the fact that I think I have wasted some

time, but I do think it is important to at least allow them the opportunity to think about what they are going to be doing when they are forced to vote on this, in time to come in this Chamber. I am going to be somewhat critical of the fund itself. This is, as was my last criticism, constructive criticism, because I do think it is a badly flawed and faulted fund. I do believe it is somewhat cynically motivated, and I do believe that it can be used in manipulative ways. When we vote for it, we do not want to be voting without having expressed those concerns to try to help the Conservatives understand our concerns and maybe perhaps change their approach a bit, as much as we have tried to help the Liberals understand what their approach will do.

Now the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) says the simple question is, why are we voting with them, which shows that perhaps I have wasted a little bit of time because I have tried to explain to him to vote against them will be to vote against home care users; to vote against them will be to vote against health care recipients; to vote against them will be to vote against Lynn Lake; to vote against them will be to vote against the mentally handicapped workshops that need the money; to vote against them will be to just follow along with the Liberal approach that says reduce the deficit, balance the budget and do not care about those people out there who are going to be impacted by it—and I do care. I do care about those people out there who can use some of this money, and let me talk about that in just a moment. But firstly, let me—(interjection)—well, now, out of the mouths of the Liberals themselves!

Will the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), and the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) tell us what really motivates them, because they said, “until the polls get better”? So if the polls say, vote for it, vote for it; when the polls say, do not vote for it, do not vote for it; and the polls say, drop the Government, drop the Government. It does not matter what the issue is because we have seen that it does not matter with this bunch over here what the issue is, they just lust for power. That is all they want, power. They just want to be in a position to do as their Leader says, “what is good for them.”—(interjection)— Well, yes, as the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) says, “their approach is, what is good for Sharon Carstairs, is good for everybody.” I am sorry I used her name, but I was repeating what the Minister of Agriculture said.—(interjection)—

So, Mr. Speaker, we do not find this fund to be thoughtless. No, we think that it should be better structured. We also believe that it should be used now. That is the approach that we have taken all along. We do not want to see this money disappear in the last year's deficit. We want to see it be used for some of the things that the Government says it would like to do—and we have to take them at their word—but they do not have the money to do.

There is no clearer example of how this fund should be used than the Lynn Lake situation, and I quote from the Hansard of yesterday—or at least the unedited version of the Question Period—when Mr. Neufeld the Minister of Energy and Mines was asked to make a commitment to the community of Lynn Lake to help it

survive this very difficult period of time and that commitment will require, as my colleague, the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) said, “creativity, innovation, imagination, and a commitment to fund some projects.” How did the Minister of Energy and Mines answer that request? I am going to read it verbatim because I think it is very illustrative.

The question from the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) was, “Mr. Speaker, the Minister's answer is indicative of the problem. The Minister has indicated that they have received a report. My question is to the Minister. Has the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) taken the time, shown enough interest to prepare a proposal from the provincial Government that indicates what needs to be done to save this community? Must the Minister rely on others? Does he not have enough energy, enough creativity, enough imagination, to prepare a proposal so that the community of Lynn Lake can survive and the workers and their families will be protected? Has the Minister put forward any concrete, specific proposal to save that community?”

The response of the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) was, and I quote again, “Mr. Speaker, I do believe I have the creativity; I have the imagination; I have the energy; I do not have enough money—that is my problem.” Well, I am not going to argue that the Minister does or does not have the energy. I am not going to argue as to whether or not the Minister does or does not have the creativity. I am not going to argue as to whether or not the Minister has the imagination or does not have the imagination. But I am going to argue that the Government has the money, and that the money is contained right here in this Bill that is before us, the stabilization fund.

* (1120)

They cannot say that they have \$200 million extra left over from last year, and that a fair portion of that money, as they did say in the Budget, comes from increased mining taxes that comes out of northern communities like Lynn Lake, and then stand up in this House and say that they do not have the money. There is a contradiction. What they are in reality saying is they do not place enough priority on the Lynn Lake situation to find the money within the stabilization fund. That is what they are saying because on the one hand they have enough money to set aside this fund, and on the other hand they are not using it for purposes such as the Lynn Lake situation.

So in standing to speak to this Bill today, I am going to suggest to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) that our support on this Bill is based upon our assumption that this money is going to be used for some very urgent needs. Maybe not all of it, he does not have to use all of it, but he does have to very seriously consider the needs of Manitobans as much as he considers his own political needs in wanting to stretch this money over a particular period of time to make the budget look good year after year. He does have to consider the Lynn Lake situation, and he has to consider particularly in this context because a lot of the money that comes into the stabilization fund

came from windfall revenues from increased mining taxes in northern Manitoba. So it came out of the North, let us take some of that money and put it back into the North.

I hope he will sit down and talk to the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld) and tell him that you do have the money, yes, we do have the money, all it is going to take is some creativity and some energy and some imagination to come forward with a proposal that allows us to protect the interests of Manitobans, but at the same time protect the interests of those in the North who are facing a much more difficult situation and a crisis than are most other Manitobans.

That is why we believe it is important to get this fund into place and to get it utilized. We are not going to the extent that I think the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) would want us to go, with unconditional support and say fine, set aside the fund and you use it for the things that you think are important. No, we are saying this money should be used to protect Manitobans, to protect Manitobans in Lynn Lake. What is the Minister talking about in today's paper? He is talking about the need for several millions of dollars to be put to use to ensure the continuation of the LynnGold operation for a period of five years, and over that period of five years hopefully more ore will be found.

That is a very different approach today than we had from that Minister of Mines when he first heard about this situation. His first approach was to ignore the situation by suggesting that it really was not a crisis and a problem, because experienced miners in Lynn Lake could find jobs elsewhere. That was the first response of this Government, let us not worry about this too much, because experienced miners can find jobs elsewhere. Well, that very cavalier approach betrayed a complete lack of understanding of what the circumstances are in Lynn Lake. Maybe the experienced miners can find jobs elsewhere, that is a question that yet remains answered. What about the millworkers, what about the people who worked in the stores in the community, what about the people who worked in the public service in the community, what about the fact that their houses will be worthless if that town shuts down? What about the fact that the increased cost to the province will be significant through increased unemployment, increased welfare, through trying to subsidize that community's taxes over a longer period of time, through having to pay more for public services in the area? What about the individuals in different communities that use Lynn Lake as a centre for their public services? What about the citizens of Brochet, of Lac Brochet, of Tadoule Lake, those who come in from Leaf Rapids, Granville Lake, Pukatawagan? What about those individuals?

What we found when this was first announced was that there was a Government that did not understand what was happening in northern Manitoba. That is why we spent a fair amount of time and effort trying to, and I do not use the term in a presumptuous way, and I do not use it in an arrogant way, but I think it describes what we are trying to do, trying to educate the Government as to what was going to happen in Lynn

Lake if LynnGold operations closed down, and what was going to happen to the surrounding communities if the LynnGold operation closed down.

I am pleased to see that had some effect. I do not think it really happened until the Leader of my Party, Mr. Gary Doer, and myself met with a public group in a public meeting in Lynn Lake to discuss this situation and called upon the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to get directly involved. I do not think we were able to accomplish that task until the Premier got directly involved, but when the Premier went up to the community the last time around, although he did not have any answers for the community, and the community was critical of him for that, he at least did not continue on with that very cavalier and cruel approach that suggested there was not a problem because experienced miners could find jobs elsewhere. So at least they had come that far.

Now over the last couple of days, and I have to tell you that there has been continued pressure on the Government by not only the New Democratic Party but I think, more importantly, by the Citizens Committee in Lynn Lake, by individuals from Lynn Lake, by the union in Lynn Lake and by other interested individuals. I think they have come to the conclusion that they have to do something to help save that community. That is why we see a mellowing of their position and in coming to the point where they are going to, I hope, put some financial commitment into the Lynn Lake area and ensure that the mine continues its operation. Now, where are they going to get the money for that financial commitment? I do not want them to come back later on as they did yesterday -(interjections)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am having some difficulty in hearing the Honourable Member for Churchill.

Mr. Cowan: —and say we know what to do but we just do not have the money. That is one of the reasons and perhaps one of the most motivating reasons for myself personally that I and the New Democratic Party will be supporting the stabilization fund and the legislation enabling it, but we are supporting it on the basis that it be used now. If indeed it is a rainy day fund, then let us see where it is raining out there in the province at the present time. Let us see where the problems are now, and if it takes the entire \$200 million fund, then it takes the entire \$200 million fund. If it does not, then fine, save some of it for years to continue on. But the fact is that there are some very pressing needs out there right now.

I would like to see more money go into the Seniors Directorate than went in last year, and a very insignificant amount actually went into the Seniors Directorate although the Government announced that it was going to spend a lot more on the Seniors Directorate. I can only assume that the reason they did not spend a lot more on the Seniors Directorate was they felt they did not have the money to do so. Well, there is money here that they can spend on the needs of seniors, and I hope that they will do that when they have this fund in place.

We have seen some cutbacks in the home care system. I can only assume that the cutbacks in the

home care system and some of the shifting of the burden of paying for that system onto the recipients of the service is because the Government believes that it does not have enough money, and when they have this stabilization fund in place they will be able to take some of that money and apply it to that system. Much better that the money go into the home care system, into Lynn Lake and into many different communities across the province, communities in my own constituency, such as South Indian Lake or Brochet or Shamattawa or Churchill, where they need job creation funds, where they need some more infrastructure. Much better that the money go there than into last year's deficit, and that is what will happen if the Liberals have their way. That is why I have spent some time trying to explain to them today that is the result of their action, that is what will happen.

Well, the Member for, and I forget the name of his constituency—

An Honourable Member: Assiniboia.

Mr. Cowan: —Assiniboia, laughs from his seat.

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): The people of Manitoba taught you a lesson last time, did they not?

Mr. Cowan: Well, he says the people of Manitoba taught me a lesson last time. Well, if they want to teach me a lesson by sending me here to speak out on their behalf in the fight for the needs that they experience, then I am prepared to accept that lesson election after election. So I am not certain that he fully understood what he was saying, but I am not certain that he ever fully understands that which he is saying in this Chamber. But not to dwell on that, because I think it takes us away from the issue at hand.

* (1130)

I want to go back to the Liberals, because perhaps the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) was not listening to his own Finance Critic, a very powerful person within that caucus, probably increasing in power and near as powerful as the Leader right now. I can see some dynamics going on in that particular caucus, and I think that the Liberal House Leader (Mr. Alcock) is assuming more and more responsibility and taking more and more power unto himself, justifiably so, and you know what? I do not think that bothers the rest of the caucus because I think they are tired of being treated like school children. I think they are tired of being told what to do. I think now that they have been in this House for awhile they want to assume a bit more responsibility for their own actions. I think the House Leader gives them that where the previous Leader obviously did not, or at least we are told she did not, by her comments. I am sorry, I went too far. I did say the previous Leader and I was probably jumping the gun by a few years. The fact is, the present Leader did not give him that flexibility.

Let us see what the Liberal Finance Critic said when he responded to the announcement of the fund, and I quote from the Free Press: "But Liberal Finance Critic

Reg Alcock said: 'Manness should have used last year's windfall revenue arising from the mining tax and federal transfer payment to bring in a balanced budget, or surplus.'"

So maybe that is what they are voting for when they vote against the stabilization fund, and that is sending this money back into last year's deficit and removing it from the Government so that they do not have the ability to use it to meet some of the very pressing needs. They would rather see a balanced budget or a surplus than they would see the ability to meet needs that will come as a result of voting for the stabilization fund.

In essence, I have said it before, there are some needs out there that must be met. We will be pressing the Government to meet those particular needs, just as yesterday my colleague, the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) pressed the Government to meet the needs in Lynn Lake, just as the last week the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) and the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), the Leader of the New Democratic Party, has pressed the Government to meet needs in the child care system, and we will continue to do that.

So again, I do not want the Liberals to feel hesitant during the Estimates when they stand up and ask for the Government to spend more money, about the fact that they voted against giving the Government the opportunity to do so by voting against the stabilization fund. So I would not want to see them in any way renege on their traditional approach of on the one hand and on the other hand. They have created a tradition within their caucus where they can vote against providing the money and then ask for the money to be provided for by the Government, in the past, without any shame or without any recognition, or at least acknowledgment of their inconsistency. I want to see them continue to help us press the Government to provide that type of funding; but at the same time, I do think that by voting against this Bill they are going to limit the ability of the Government to do so.

There are a number of other areas, Mr. Speaker, where this funding could be applied, and I want to touch briefly on them. We need, in northern communities, much more economic development through job creation programs. I make that point specifically. I highlight that particular area because this Government, the Conservative Government in the past, both in Government and in Opposition, have consistently argued against job creation programs in northern communities. That has been their philosophical approach and I disagree with that philosophical approach very strongly.

I believe they do not understand what impact those job creation programs have in those communities, and they see them only as short-term quick fixes to economic problems when, in fact, they are much more than that. They are an integral part of creating an economy in the North that reflects the needs of the communities, reflects the needs of Northerners and addresses those needs in a positive fashion, while building stronger communities that are more capable of undertaking economic activity in the future as a result of those job creation programs.

So I want to see some of this stabilization fund money used for those job creation programs, and I know that both the Liberals and the Conservatives were very critical of the Jobs Fund approach. If this is how the Liberals have to get out from under the history of that criticism of the Jobs Fund approach, to apply money to job creation programs in northern Manitoba, then I do not give them much credit for political courage, but I do recognize the fact that perhaps, in spite of what they said in the past, they will be spending some of this money in that fashion in northern Manitoba, and we will allow them the excuse that they need to generate through the stabilization fund to do so if, in fact, that money is going to be used in that purpose. We will even support those job creation programs where they do truly reflect the needs, aspirations and hopes of Northerners, and they do truly help build stronger northern communities.

There are also—and I mentioned earlier a number of other areas where funding is required. I would like some indication from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), as I am going through this list, if in fact the stabilization fund could be used in this area. I will not ask him for a commitment that it will be used at this particular time, and I will acknowledge, as I speak, whether or not it could be used but, for example, could this stabilization fund be used to improve the home care system in Manitoba? Perhaps, by leave, Mr. Speaker, I could sit for a moment and ask the Minister, because I could not hear him, if he could put that on the record.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, it is highly unusual, but I will stand anyway to respond to the question.

This is the subtle difference, Mr. Speaker. If we use the fund in the manner wished by the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), and that is when we see needs arise, as obviously they do during the year, during the fiscal year, and reach into it, for whatever good reason, and of course they are all good reasons, then in my view we are charged with possibly using the fund as a slush fund. But if we enforce upon ourselves the very hard restriction that we access the fund once a year, in preparing the budget, then, in my view, there is no way any Party can make the claim it is a slush fund, as a slush fund by its very nature as was indicated by my colleague, the Minister for Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld). Reaching into that account before we have the support of the Legislature prevents it from having the scrutiny and the accountability that is required. So in my view, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you for the opportunity, if we access the fund during the year, it is a slush fund. If we do not, other than during the preparation of the budget, then it is a true stabilization fund.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Churchill has 30 seconds remaining to wind up.

Mr. Cowan: Perhaps I might ask for leave, Mr. Speaker. I just want to make just a couple comments based on that answer, and then if I have leave to do so I will keep my remarks brief.

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have leave? (Agreed)

Mr. Cowan: Then I want to suggest to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) that perhaps the approach is more faulted, and more faulted than it need be.

I will just suggest to him that there will be, and I am speaking from experience, there will be occasions during the tenure of the Government after the budget has been presented that require some immediate funding that is for the best of possible reasons that all the Legislature would support, as I believe all the Legislature would support the application of this funding to the Lynn Lake situation.

In those instances I believe this fund should be used and however the Minister wants to account for it, that is fine, but this money will provide him with the flexibility, and I would not want to see him cut himself off from that opportunity at this time, so I would ask him to rethink that.

Having given those constructive criticisms and that conditional support, which in no way is being held back, Mr. Speaker, I indicate again that we will be voting for this Bill because we believe voting for this Bill is voting for the people of Manitoba and voting to meet the needs of Manitobans.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Today marks the equinox and I mention that because it should be the end of the season of slush. Summer is over and you do not have to go to your 7-ELEVEN, or your Mac's Milk, to get slush any more, but here we are, we are dealing with slush here—

An Honourable Member: That is a Slurpee.

Mr. Taylor: —Each to your own taste, to the NDP.

An Honourable Member: You are beginning to believe your own rhetoric, and that is when you get into trouble.

* (1140)

Mr. Taylor: Because that is the issue, Mr. Speaker, as what is the viability and the legitimacy of the fund that we are talking about today?

It carries its formal title, Fiscal Stabilization Fund, but the FSFA is, I do not think, worth the paper that it is written on. It is very interesting to note in the past that the Tories, when in Opposition, made quite an issue of a fund that had similarities to this one, albeit it had a different name, but it was used for similar sorts of things at different times. I am talking about the Jobs Fund. The Jobs Fund was one that had some very noble beginnings that had a mandate that I do not think many Members of this House then or now would question. The reality was something else.

We had a fund with the Jobs Fund that created few permanent jobs, that created few full-time jobs, and created jobs only one of which in six was a job for a

female. I find that sort of a performance really inadequate. I find it really incredible that we have the statements from the Tories then comparing to the statements from the Tories today, including those of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and other front bench Members in this House. We can quote from Mr. Cummings, pardon me, the Environment Minister, when in Opposition, quote, dismantling the Jobs Fund office will make Government more accountable. Well that is really interesting. He further was quoted as, that move, the dismantling, will end the political manipulation of taxpayers' money the NDP has carried on since the program was implemented five years ago. That happens to be a quote from some year and a half ago.

We also have the former Member of this House, the now head of Hydro, talking about, quote, the initiative was a bogus public relations play, end quote. Don Orchard was quoted, the Honourable Don Orchard was quoted as saying that it was—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Taylor: The Honourable Member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard), pardon me, Mr. Speaker, was quoted as saying it was a fraud fund. Our new Minister of Natural Resources, 1984, quote, we wanted a more straightforward approach instead of attempts to hoodwink the public, in a column in the Free Press in 1984.

Now when you look at those sorts of quotes to what is being presented here in this House, I ask the question and I think the public asks the question: what is the big difference? I am not sure there is that big a difference. I am not sure, Mr. Speaker, that there is that big a difference at all.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) a few moments ago said, if we as a Government dipped into it, that would make it a slush fund. Well I am going to make a prediction, Mr. Speaker, I am going to make a prediction. I am going to make the prediction that there will be a dipping into that fund particularly in the pre-writ period. I would suggest that could be the use of that fund for very nice purpose, which will be the bribing of Manitoba Electric with its own money. It can be taken in different ways.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Point of order. Administratively, it is impossible to defeat the fund and spend money on child care and health care. So I think we should be talking on the factual legislative reality. You cannot spend the money on health care, you cannot spend the money on child care, and defeat the money. It goes into last year's deficit.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. I thank the Honourable Member for Concordia for the clarification. He does not have a point of order.

Mr. Taylor: The typical NDP tactic to get their little shots in by using points of order in that fashion is, I would suggest, a misuse of the privilege of the House. We already know the inaccuracies that we can expect from the dismal dozen in their desperation.

An Honourable Member: Last April the people showed how much faith they have in the NDP economics.

Mr. Taylor: Yes, the NDP economics, their record is all before us. It is all too clear in our memories, Mr. Speaker, but I wonder if I might call for a little order in the House. It is difficult to continue with this hubbub a few feet away.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is not surprising that the ideologues of the left, and the ideologues of the right cannot understand each other on this issue because they are not so far apart on some of these things. They are certainly not as principled as they make themselves out to be.

The situation is that there is desperation on the part of the third Party in the House and one has to look at their track record when you compare with the NDP of British Columbia and the statements that they have made vis-a-vis a similar fund that has been created by the Vander Zalm administration. I would say those are rather more principled statements that were brought out by that group.

One of the NDP MLAs, Mr. Dale Lovick says, "You wonder in this speech in the House, Mr. Minister, why some of us are asking whether this fund has any real budgetary or economic validity, or whether it is all show, all about winning elections. I think we have some grounds for being a little skeptical and perhaps a little cynical."

I can equate with that quote from the NDP MLA, Mr. Lovick, I can very much equate and so can other Members on the Liberal side. That is where we see that there is a difference between the NDP and us; and between the PCs and us. I see great similarity between the PCs and the NDP on this matter and I certainly want that on the record. The marriage of convenience that we have seen here, evidenced in the House over the last months, is really something. The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) talks about telling groups in the workplace, the union leadership, out at public meetings, on the street, whatever, the Liberals voted against tax cuts.

I would say hogwash—to use a good agricultural term—because the fact is we voted against the budget as a whole and its total impact on Manitoba. We were very clear on our -(interjection)- That is right, that is right. We cannot cherry pick. We voted for the principle of a poor budget and we voted against it. The NDP went along with it. They did not like a lot of what they saw, but they held their nose and they held their nose tightly as they stood up for Manitobans one more time and voted for that Tory minority Government. That will be remembered by the public when it comes time in the next election. We are going to bring that out only

too clearly in the NDP areas, the desperation of the dismal dozen is pathetic.

To say the least, we feel that the monies could have been used in a different way. We feel that these monies could have been expended on programs serving people. We think there could have been monies spent now on programs serving people, and not down the road some time into the future, as the NDP has suggested. We know very well there are needs in this province that are not being met. They come up again and again and again in this Legislature in Question Period. They are not being answered by that Government. They are not being answered at all. They could have reduced the budget deficit somewhat and taken some of that money and put it into needed service areas, that was not the choice. There was a diminishment of dollars spent in service areas. There was instead the taking of this \$200-some million and a setting aside of it. Well, that is not the way to manage from our viewpoint, that is not the way at all to manage.

* (1150)

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

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we feel that it could have been handled in a much better fashion. This has been pointed out in the Budget Debate. It has been pointed out quite clearly and we can hear the ripple of calls out of the Government benches. Well, maybe it is time they did some listening and a little less chirping.

We see also the interesting phenomenon where there was underspending in budgets since this Government took office. We can see \$42 million underspending in Health. I have a lot of problem with that, a lot of problems.

We have the facility that is handling chronic care, one of the largest ones in the city, in the riding of Osborne, the Municipal Hospitals, the three Municipal Hospitals. Although that facility is supposed to be fully funded by the Province of Manitoba, it is not. Not only does the city play the role of the operating arm, but the city also, contrary to the agreement under this Government and under the NDP, actually subsidizes those hospitals to some extent out of city coffers. The facilities are woefully inadequate. They were built around the time of the first war, for the most part. I am speaking of the older part of the facilities. Why have we not monies going for rebuilding? We do not need the small \$400,000, what we need is the larger money that was promised and lifted.

I would also speak of the Misericordia Hospital, which happens to be in my riding. Yes, the project is going ahead, but, yes, it is going ahead in a delayed fashion. I am pleased it is going ahead. I would hope there will be not another delay as there has been. Clinic—

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): The previous guys did not know what they were doing and these guys do not know what they are doing.

Mr. Taylor: Well, that was an interesting comment from one of my colleagues, is the former Government did

not know what it was doing and neither does this one, and I would unfortunately have to agree.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have another facility, again in my riding and in fact the existing facilities only a block from this very building, and I refer to Clinic, Clinic on Broadway, one of the best full-service clinics you can see in the whole of Manitoba. In fact I would suggest an innovator, a leader-type of facility that is showing ways to serve people better and has served them better at reduced cost to the taxpayer.

Now there had been a planning exercise undertaken some years back in the early mid-'80s. That planning exercise indicated how the rabbit warrens of that old house and the trailers hooked up temporarily along the west side must be replaced and must be replaced shortly.

New land was bought on Sherbrook. Buildings were torn down on Sherbrook. The land is lying fallow. The city approvals are in place for that project, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and what goes on? Nothing goes on. Not only do we have here a Minister who likes to chop as do some of the other Ministers do, but we also have Cabinet colleagues from the city who obviously in Cabinet did not speak up for this city facility who have let this project slip.

I have to say in all fairness to the Tories it was not the first slip, because the first slip came from the NDP. They are the ones that axed it out of the budget. They were going to put it back, I agree, in '88, but why was it not there in '86, and why was it not there in '87? They were prepared to play politics because they felt they had Clinic behind them and they could push them a little bit, and they could squeeze them a little bit. Well, enough darn squeezing has been done, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and this Government has to open up the purse strings. There have been public monies committed in the planning process for that facility. There have been monies put forward in achieving the approvals necessary. The architects' fees have been paid. The plans are ready to implement. I would suggest it should be in for this next construction year, because any further squeezing of people and services is totally unacceptable.

I find that in dealing with a matter of this nature, there is not really a willingness to debate and to sell the project, the project being the fund. I speak of the Fiscal Stabilization Fund itself, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There is not a willingness to listen and debate and amend. It is a case of, on the part of the Government benches, you will accept it as it is, you will accept it untouched, and if you do not, it is a matter of confidence in this Government. Well, we do not have confidence in this Government when it operates in this fashion.

There have been some very successful minority Governments in Canada, in Ontario, on the federal scene, but why did they survive? Because they were prepared to talk to the opposition Parties and because they were prepared to amend legislation, to improve legislation and to work on compromises. What we have from the other side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a prevalent attitude of arrogance and non-compromise. They govern as though they were in a majority position. Thank goodness they are not. Thank

goodness they are not in a majority situation, because we behold Manitobans. If this is what we will get in a minority context, what would we get if it were in a majority situation?

The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) from his seat, Mr. Deputy Speaker, says it will not sell. Well, what I am suggesting to him is try and sell their ideas, sell their programs and stop being so darned arrogant and assuming that they have all the answers, because they certainly do not.

I think we could make this House work better than it does, and yesterday was a prize example where the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) did not have the agreement of the opposition Parties to do the most unusual thing of substituting a Minister into an Estimates process for a whole day's session. That is unheard of, that is nonsense, and for the Premier (Mr. Filmon) later, as he left this Chamber after the vote yelling out "silly children," he should speak to his silly House Leader and we would not be in these situations. And if the Minister—oh, where did he go?—the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) like to sit beside me so he can hear this a little bit better. He was the one who was attempting to substitute in for the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger). Well, I say to you we will not have but the Minister for his or her portfolio, because we feel that is appropriate, we feel that is the only way it should be and there is not precedence for major deviation from that. So to suggest that we would not hear from that Minister I think is ridiculous.

The issue was of the making of the Government and it was their mismanagement, as has been the case on a number of confrontations between the opposition side and the Government side. I would suggest very strongly that it is time for that Cabinet and that caucus to start asking some hard questions of their House Leader. These issues have unnecessarily come up, they have unnecessarily caused friction between the Parties, and the Member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae) is not serving this House well in so doing. Maybe he is carrying too many responsibilities and too many portfolios, but we have seen this time and time again.

I can remember only too well the issue this spring, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of the fiasco of a walkout by Government Members from the Economic Development Committee. That was unbelievable. That set a precedent in parliamentary tradition worldwide; there has not been a case of that before. It was this same Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) that led that walkout, irresponsibly led that walkout, and he will not be let to forget that.

* (1200)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, from his seat the Health Minister (Mr. Orchard) says it was the Deputy Clerk's fault. It was not the Deputy Clerk's fault and I take exception to the fact that that night there was a brand new Deputy Clerk on, in her first night of Committee, and he says that. There was no confusion at the clerical level. The confusion and the duplicity in the lack of responsibility was entirely on the part of the politicians, the Government politicians, and they should take it for what

they did. To blame it on somebody else who is defenceless, I am really, really taken aback by that. The Member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) should be ashamed of himself for that sort of thing.

You know, that is the sort of thing we have come to expect from this Government, because what did we have yesterday? The Premier (Mr. Filmon) saying the civil servants and community servants did not tell the Minister so she did not know when she made the cut. Well, that is nonsense. Where is the Cabinet responsibility here? It is—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Order. The Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), on a point of order.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wonder if the Honourable Member might permit a question. I would simply like to know if the pizza arrived cold that evening?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) has the floor.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that ridiculous interruption was from a Member of the front bench, a Minister of the Crown. He wastes time of this Chamber asking a question like this. I mean I thought there were some ridiculous interruptions by the third Party in this House, but this Minister, the Member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard), just takes the cake. He may, because of the hour, have his tummy grumbling and maybe it needs some filling but probably so do other parts, because they are certainly bereft of ideas and they are certainly bereft of the serious nature that they should be bringing to this House, to this sort of a debate.

The economy of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not think is in the best of shape. I do not think it is going to get any better. I think we are going to see a deterioration of the economy. That is why it is important one talk about the use of this fund. The reason I talk about that is because, like the preceding Conservative administration which we had in the period of '77-81, the Tories at that time, precipitated an early recession in this province.

We knew there was going to be a nationwide recession. Why did it come here first? It came here first because of the economic theories that were put in place by that administration. Why did the construction industry in Manitoba suffer the pangs of recession early? Why did the professional engineers and architects and other consultants in Manitoba suffer recession first? Why were we in full recession here when it started to hit nationally? Because of the inaction and the ideological approaches of that administration, the Lyon administration of '77-81, I would hope we do not see the same thing happen here in Manitoba again with this administration, but between them and the federal Conservatives with the Free Trade Agreement and with the budgets they have been bringing in, and the goods and services tax that is unfortunately on the horizon, guess what?—we are going to probably see a recession by '90 and guess where it may hit first? Here, because

we do not have the sort of leadership that we need, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from that side.

Those Government benches need to rethink some of their ideological right-wing economic thinking. That is why the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) from his seat holds up one economist's paper saying how good things are in Manitoba.

All one has to do is compare the performance of a number of other provinces. Let us compare the performance of a number of other provinces. Next door, we know Ontario is a little overheated, but let us not take the Ontario example. Let us take Quebec now, Quebec's performance is at 4.5 percent of real growth. That is not growth including inflation; I am talking net growth, our performance is nowhere near that. Let us take Nova Scotia, you know, in the poor Maritimes, over the last number of years, doing very well, thank you very much.

* (1210)

I would hope that we could strive for those sorts of performances. I do not think we should rest on our laurels as a province, and I do not think that Government should rest on its laurels. It has had some luck. It has had some luck, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and to say that luck was strictly because of moves that they have made is nonsense, absolute, complete and total nonsense. It has not been. It has been good luck, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I think we should leave it at that. Let us take that good fortune and make something of it. We do not see it with this Fiscal Stabilization Fund, and I repeat in closing, I and the Liberal benches consider it nothing less than a slush fund and have no intention in its present form of supporting it. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Bill will continue to stand in the name of the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock).

BILL NO. 31—THE LABOUR RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Deputy Speaker: We will now have Debate on Second Readings. On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond), Bill No. 31, The Labour Relations Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les relations du travail, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards).

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to have this Bill remain standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards)? (Agreed)

SECOND READINGS

BILL NO. 9—THE FOREST AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources) presented Bill No. 9, The Forest Amendment Act; Loi

modifiant la Loi sur les forêts, for second reading, and be referred to a committee of this House.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Enns: I am privileged to introduce this Bill for second reading at this time, Bill No. 9, an Act to amend The Forest Act.

Mr. Speaker, it is a relatively short Bill but it contains, I think, an extremely important principle within the Bill and it is very easy to understand. It is the central clause of this short Bill which calls for the establishment of a forest renewal charge upon all those who harvest our timber resources.

By way of background for our Honourable Members, and particularly my critics in this House, it should be understood that in Manitoba we have, of course, our two major forestry operations, formerly the Government operated Manfor operations in The Pas and, of course, for some long-standing the Abitibi-Price people in the eastern portion of our province that have, for many years, operated a forestry operations utilizing the forestry resources of this province.

In addition, what is not always appreciated, and I want to just take a moment to acknowledge the role of a number of independent operators, smaller operators that we have involved in our forestry industry. When I use the adjective "smaller," it should be borne in mind that together, and it was my privilege of meeting with them just earlier on this week, they employ directly in excess of 1,000 people in the forestry operations throughout the province from the southeastern corner, communities of Sprague, up through to The Pas and throughout the interlake and in the Westman region as well in the North.

Mr. Speaker, what I particularly want to draw your attention and that of my honourable Members to, is the fact that the legislation that I am presenting to this Chamber, the Legislature that my Government is allowing me to move forward all ties together in a very important theme of concern for our resources, the sustainability of those resources, the management of those resources, and I would ask Honourable Members to view them, quite frankly, as a package. Yes, the other day, it was a concern for endangered species. Today, it is a concern for our very important forestry resources in this province. Hopefully, next week or the middle of next week or next when we have an opportunity of discussing Bills, Government Bills, I will be introducing a measure with respect to concern about our ground water supplies.

I have a further Bill that further fine tunes and amends our Wildlife Act. I am confident, and I feel very comfortable with the legislation that I am proposing to this Chamber, that it will be viewed by my critics and by the general public as being appropriate legislation, appropriate to this time, appropriate to the heightened public awareness that all of us have to more seriously address ourselves to how we manage those resources that province has given us here in this great Province of Manitoba.

I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that when viewed in that light, although no doubt recommendations or

suggestions will be made of some differing in detail perhaps. But I am confident that Honourable Members opposite of both Parties will be able to support these measures because they are measures designed to further our responsibility as Government to properly manage these resources.

Coming back to Bill 9, the one I am introducing or debating in second reading at this time, The Forest Amendment Act, are two major operators. Now Repap, formerly Manfor and Abitibi Price, have in their forestry management agreements with the Government or with my particular Department of Natural Resources always included in their charges, in addition to the normal stumpage charges that the Department charges for the harvesting of these timber resources, additional fees built into them for reforestation, and indeed also for fire suppression costs incurred by the province, particularly having experienced the kind of summer that we have experienced this past summer. But what was not in place was the legislative authority to include all those persons and all those operators harvesting timber in this province to make some contribution for the vitally important task of ensuring that future generations of Manitobans will continue to enjoy the benefits of our forestries by making sure they are there. That is the central part of this Bill—the reforestation clause.

Mr. Speaker, the department has and we have talked about the scale of the charge. We have indicated to independent forestry operators that have understandably expressed concern about any additional charge that they would have to absorb. I am confident and satisfied, in principle, having met with him just last week, that they embrace and endorse the concept of a forestry renewal charge as to being part of our overall forestry management in the Province of Manitoba.

No doubt they will not necessarily agree with Government from time to time as to at what level that charge ought to be. The figure of \$1.80 per cubic metre has been indicated by the department but this Bill does not deal with those kind of specifics of course. Those would be established under the regulations following passage of this Bill.

I am particularly pleased to indicate once again, and take this opportunity to indicate that in the recently concluded agreement signed with the principals of Repap who are taking over, and in fact have taken over and are managing the former operation known as Manfor, that in fact in that agreement—and I really want Manitobans and at least Members of this Chamber to be aware of it—that there is a clause, a specific condition of this sale, that is very likely unique to the forestry industry in Canada in that it spells right out in that agreement and embraces in that agreement that sales agreement, that takeover agreement, the very principle that I am talking about and introducing in this Chamber, forestry renewal. We go beyond that, it is not just left to be negotiated at some future time. It is spelled out that there shall be a growing tree for every tree that is harvested.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you have been in this Chamber, I have been in this Chamber for some years and we have had a Minister of Natural Resources, or a Minister more specifically charged with the responsibility of

answering to this Chamber for our Government-owned forestry operation for these last 15-17 years. Not only did we have to accept the fact that additional monies, public monies, had to be poured into that operation to keep it running, but the unforgivable fact that they were cutting 10 trees down and we were barely planting six. That is the record of Government involvement in forestry, and surely that is not acceptable.

I look at my NDP friends who like to hold themselves up sometimes as having a greater concern about our environment, a greater concern about the sustainability of our environment. Mr. Speaker, we are by virtue of whether it is my colleague, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), in making a sales agreement is, by deed and not by rhetoric, carrying out those kinds of desirable goals. It is my privilege now to introduce into legislation that that principle apply to all operators, large and small, who operate in the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I am more than prepared and I will sit down and negotiate a fair level of charge, but I have indicated very clearly to spokespersons as late as a few days ago when they called on me in my office that I will not negotiate the principle of a forestry renewal charge to be part of the return that we demand as due to the Government and to the department to enable us to carry out our responsibility in ensuring that we have a reforestation program in place funded by these funds that will carry out the full intent of such phrases that have become and can become just buzzwords. We talk about sustainable development, that we regard any economic activity, particularly in our resource field, that they have to be of a sustaining nature.

* (1220)

Well, Mr. Speaker, we are putting the kind of legislative framework together to ensure that will happen. I am aware that currently, particularly for the smaller operators, the lumber industry is in a somewhat depressed state pricewise. So they called upon me to make me aware of it in the first instance and to take that into consideration as to at what level the forestry renewal charge will be instituted. I made it very clear, and I make it very clear to all Members in this Chamber, and I really would be very surprised if anybody took exception to the principle that is paramount in this legislation, and really the only principle involved in Bill 9.

You can see by perusing the Bill it is a very short Bill. It contains really that only principle of allowing us to introduce, by legislation, a forestry renewal charge that in my judgement will enable myself, as long as it is my privilege, Mr. Speaker, to be the Minister responsible for Natural Resources, and forestry in particular in this province, and any succeeding Ministers or Government who follow me, to have the necessary mechanics in place to ensure that future forests will grow, while those that we harvest now will help us provide the kind of wealth, the kind of revenue that we need and we desire for all those other things that Governments are responsible for.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to make this presentation on Bill No. 9. I commend the Bill to

the Honourable Members' consideration and for its passage through the House. I would expect again, and do indeed invite Honourable Members to take the opportunity when this Bill is before committee. I have been served notice that a number of the independent operators will be appearing before that committee to make Members more aware of the general state of the industry, some of their concerns, and certainly I value that kind of information coming from those people who will be directly affected by the legislation that we are proposing. Having said all that, Mr. Speaker, I am confident that all the Members will support this Bill and see this, in due order, be approved through all its stages.

Mrs. Charles (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that debate on this Bill be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 19—THE GROUND WATER AND WATER WELL AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources) presented Bill No. 19, The Ground Water and Water Well Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les eaux souterraines et les puits for second reading to be referred to a committee of this House.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Enns: Well, Mr. Speaker, it does not always work that way in the schedule of this House, that I can so immediately demonstrate what I said just a moment ago about Bill Number 9, The Forestry Amendment Act.

I indicated in my few remarks on that Bill that it was my privilege to present to this Chamber a package of Bills that have a common thread, and the thread is a concern for how we manage all our resources. It began the other day when we talked about the resources that were in danger. A moment ago I talked about the resources important to us, the forestry resources, and how we want to ensure their sustainability and create the mechanics for a forestry renewal charge.

Now, surely equally important is our ongoing care and concern about how we would treat our ground water resources.

Mr. Speaker, Bill No.—what is the number of that Bill?—the Bill before you dealing with the amendments to The Water Resources Act provides for a more precise relationship between the department and the water well contractors and the water well owners. It requires a more sophisticated degree of reporting on the part of the water well contractors, and it will further place a greater onus on the owners of wells that they do and report properly and promptly any source of contamination that could endanger our ground water supplies.

Other sections of the Bill, Mr. Speaker, require that owners will be required to make necessary repairs to

their water wells, and that any unsatisfactory conditions should result in the closing down of the wells if need be upon inspection if the provisions of the Act are not followed.

Mr. Speaker, I am enthused about this legislative package that I am presenting to Honourable Members for several reasons. The most important one of course being that it has form, and when put together it will be viewed truly as a piece of art that is in tune with that heightened and growing awareness of all things having to do with our natural environment.

Mr. Speaker, I go home at night after a busy day in the Legislature here to the environment that I am very pleased to go home to—land, water, ducks and geese, and some of my own cattle—and I feel myself in harmony with what I am doing in a kind of legislative program that I am bringing forward during these days.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I have that feeling that despite the divisiveness that sometimes is exercised in this House, that my colleagues are going to support this legislation.

I have that genuine feeling when I gaze across the Honourable Member from Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), who is my critic of the Majesty's Loyal Opposition. I gaze across a former Minister of this very department, a Member of the New Democratic Party, that they will join hands with me in seeing the safe passage of this legislation through this Chamber and, Mr. Speaker, I propose to you that you will witness a unique coming together as we move forward to do the right thing with respect to our environment.

Indeed it will be an enlightened day for all of us and, Mr. Speaker, I ask you, Sir, as you witness this phenomena, as you witness this sharing of responsibility of our natural resources, this doing away of petty political arguing, this act of unanimity in this House and this legislation, let that be a model, let that be a model for other deliberations in this Chamber, as surely we are then carrying out, truly in a fashion honourable to our names, to our callings, as we sit in this Chamber.

* (1230)

Mr. Speaker, I move to these remarks on a fine, fun Friday morning, first morning of fall officially. We are leaving this Chamber to enjoy those natural resources that providence has left us in this province. I ask Honourable Members to deliberate over the weekend over what I have told them and to come back next week and pass these measures.

Thank you.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I very graciously join hands with the Honourable Member, Minister of Natural Resources and move, seconded by the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that debate on this Bill be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 12:30 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. Monday.