

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 31, 1989.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Mr. Speaker: We will now be calling a recess of the House to allow the photographer to take our portrait. All papers, could we have them put inside your desks?

As agreed to, and an announcement was made yesterday, this House is now adjourned until two o'clock, at which time the buzzers will go for a minute and we will resume proceedings, to allow the photographer enough time to remove his equipment. The House is now recessed.

RECESS

* (1400)

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I am tabling today the reply to question No. 1, a written question asked by the Honourable Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans). In addition, a return to the Address for Papers No. 1 on the motion of the Honourable Member for Brandon East.

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, may I direct the Honourable Members' attention to the gallery where we have from the Earl Grey School—the Honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon).

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, can we revert, please, to the introduction of Bills.

Mr. Speaker: Can there be leave to revert back to introduction of Bills? (Agreed)

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

BILL NO. 12—THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier) introduced, by leave, Bill No. 12, The Legislative Assembly Management Commission Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Commission de régie de l'Assemblée législative.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney-General): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if we could have leave of the House to revert to ministerial statements and tabling of reports. Some of my colleagues have reports to table.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to revert back to ministerial statements and tabling of reports? (Agreed)

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS (Cont'd)

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report of the Public Utilities Board for 1988.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, it is with considerable pleasure that I table the Annual Report for the Department of Natural Resources for the years '87-88, and also to table the Annual Report for the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation for the years '87-88.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Annual Report of the Crown Investments Department 1987-88, and the Public Investment Corporation of Manitoba Annual Report 1988.

* (1405)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the gallery where we have, from the Earl Grey School, twenty-five Grades 5 and 6 students under the direction of Mel Hannah. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock).

Also with us this afternoon in the gallery, from the Faith Academy, twelve Grades 5 to 12 students under the direction of Jerry Schrock. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik).

Also with us this afternoon, from the Rock Lake School, six Grades 7 and 8 students under the direction of Mr. Galen Toews. This school is located in the constituency of the Speaker.

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Ladco Land Development Deal Proposals

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme), and it is concerning the MHRC-Ladco Development Agreement. On Friday last, the Minister indicated that he had issued a call for proposals to the Manitoba Home Builders' Association. His Deputy Minister has since denied that any such letter has been circulated. The Home Builders' Association denies that such a letter by the Minister had been circulated to its membership. My question to the Minister is, will he

admit that he gave this House incorrect information on Friday, that a letter from him was never circulated to members of the Home Builders' Association?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify the situation. First of all, I met with the Home Builders' Association, and the Home Builders' Association, through that meeting, had a call amongst their members, and that was the letter that I had mentioned last Friday.

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the Minister tell the House today what steps he specifically took to ensure that all the potential developers had knowledge, full knowledge, from his department about the Government's decision to enter into such a building project?

Mr. Ducharme: Mr. Speaker, first of all, we took approximately seven months to review any proposals coming forward. As I indicated earlier, we sat down with the Home Builders' Association. They were very concerned and they assured me at that meeting that all people involved in the development business would be aware of that particular proposal. We also went back and considered and interviewed anyone who made a proposal on the original, on the previous Government's proposal call of '86.

Nelson River Construction

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): A supplementary question to the same Minister, the Minister says that they went back and discussed matters with individuals who had made prior proposals. Can he explain why Nelson River has indicated to this side of the House that they had no contact whatsoever from his Government department, despite the fact that they were considered the primary bidder under the previous administration?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, I wish the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) would get her facts correct. We did interview and we did talk to the consortium group comprised of Nelson River, Wardrop Associates. We did meet with them, and I can assure that they got all the consideration anybody else got on this. Matter of fact, they were right in the running. However, their proposal, after consideration, was not the No. 1 proposal.

Proposals Tabling Request

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Well, the new question to the Minister, since the Minister indicates that he has correspondence with this developer and we presume with the Ladco developer, and that he indicated to them that they certainly could make any kinds of proposals and bids, would he, therefore, table all of his phone calls, all of his records, all of his letters, all of his records of phone calls, all of his letters, which he had with these developing companies, so that there is full understanding that no one received preferential treatment?

* (1410)

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition mentions—and I have to reply back to the Nelson River. They even hired a solicitor to act on their behalf who met with us, I would say, approximately five meetings altogether.

I also assure the Opposition Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) that I was prepared to get up today and mention to her that I would be glad to sit down with her critic and the critic from the NDP to go over all the papers that my MHRC board reviewed in considering these applications. We have an open Government, and I can assure her that we will go through all the working papers of all the people who we did contact during this proposal.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, but if it is such open agreement, why is the Minister unwilling to table today his correspondence with Nelson River?

Mr. Ducharme: Mr. Speaker, I just mentioned that we will go through all the working papers and also, in consideration to Nelson River and the group, and I did talk to them last Friday, one of the members last Friday.

At the time, everyone has indicated that the working papers are what you would need. The working papers explain everything. The MHRC board—at that time, the staff will be glad to sit down with her critic and the NDP critic. At that time, at the finish of that meeting, I can assure her she will like the end result of the approximately \$5 million more in the No. 1 proposal.

Finalization Date

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), with a final supplementary question.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): In the fall of 1988, a parcel of land, 33 acres, was purchased by Ladco. That piece of land connects the MHRC lands with the Ladco project. Can the Minister tell this House when Ladco learned that they were to be the recipient of a joint deal with the Government, and was it before or after they purchased the 33-acre parcel?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, they learned at the same approximate time as the Opposition. I tabled the agreement right before you, and they did not know until the last couple of weeks they were the successful tender.

Special Needs Children Advisory Committee Report

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). I have in my hand a copy of a report of the Advisory Committee on Special Needs which was provided to the Minister of Education in October of last year. That is some eight months in elapsed time since the Minister received this report, a report that was prepared by some dozen groups who are interested in the whole question of special needs education and special needs funding.

My question is, why has the Minister not made this document public some eight months after he has received it, and when can we expect the Minister to respond to the 36 recommendations, to respond to the real needs that are growing in our school divisions, in our schools across the province, to meet the needs of special needs students? When is the Minister going to act?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to respond to that question from the Member from the New Democratic Party. First of all, it is true that the report was given to me as Minister in October of 1988, and certainly that report had a considerable number of recommendations which are going to have a significant impact if implemented in their entirety on the special needs of Manitoba. That report was for the Minister's use, and certainly we have taken that report and staff have now synthesized all the recommendations. Shortly, we will be in a position whereby we can table certainly our position with regard to those recommendations and also the direction the special needs education is going to go in this province, because it has been some time, a considerable length of time, since there was any action in terms of looking at the special needs education in this province and the direction it is going.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, I think the groups that worked on this report, the committee that was established in 1987, would not be particularly enthralled with the Minister's baffle-gab. The fact is that the Minister had this report in his hands, has had it in his hands, for eight months.

* (1415)

Funding—Education

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister. Why, when he made the announcement on public school funding, did he not increase significantly funding for special needs in this province? Why did he not act when he had the opportunity to increase funding to meet some of the recommendations in this report? Why is that group that prepared his report still waiting for some action?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): The people who sat on, in doing nothing, with regard to special needs, were those who formed the former Government.

Mr. Speaker, the report was commissioned in 1987, and that is correct. It took a year for that report to come to the Minister. Within several months, the Member opposite would have liked to have a response from this Government in terms of the direction that it is going. The implications of special needs and the direction that special needs will take in the future is also a consideration under the High School Review and, therefore, when one considers that, you have to do it in conjunction.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, there was considerable funding allowed to school divisions this year over and

above their last year's funding. Certainly, school divisions across the province were happy with the kind of funding that they are going to get in terms of the increases. I am proud of the fact that we were able to advance to school divisions the kind of funding that we have and we will be addressing the issues that have been raised in that Advisory Committee report in due course.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), the fact is that he has not even consulted in any formal way with the groups that made the presentation, nor has he added to the funding for special needs, as the previous Government did by quadrupling funds over a period of seven years.

Funding—Private Schools

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Following on that question, another question to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), on February 24 of this year, the Minister's Deputy sent a letter to every private school in the province announcing that there would be retroactive funding for special needs students in the private school system without any consultation with the legitimately established committee that reported on special needs—school divisions, trustees, other people in the province who are interested in special needs. Can the Minister explain why he chose to act without regard to the recommendations in this report or the interests of the public school system?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I might remind the Member opposite that under their administration, students who were special needs students, students who had learning disabilities and were not in the public school system, did not get any support by the former administration. Mr. Speaker, they were ignored. They are citizens of this province who deserve an education. It was this Government's decision to advance funding to those children of our province whose parents pay taxes in our province so that they can get an education, so that their special needs can be addressed. I have no apologies for advancing that kind of funding to those students who are in need.

Funding—Accountability

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) may want to provide a blank cheque to some groups in society. He may want to follow the Liberal policy and increase funding to private schools.

My question is to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). What assurances can this Minister give the people of Manitoba, those 95 percent of special needs students who are in the public system, that the money that was provided for special needs is going to be spent meeting the special needs of those exceptional students? What assurances can he give, what steps has he taken to make sure that money that has been provided is accounted for?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Again, Mr. Speaker, under the former administration, there was not any accountability of any sort. Now there is accountability. For the last several months, we have been working together with the Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools to ensure that there will be accountability, not only for programming but also for the funding that is spent, not only on special needs but on all funding for education in the independent school system. So, Mr. Speaker, I will not take any criticism from that Member, under whose administration there was no accountability of any sort.

Sister Clermont Health Plan Termination

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). The Sister Clermont Health Plan will be closing as of June 30, 1989. This is a travesty. Last week, representatives of the Department of Health advised the Health Plan that this non-profit organization, which between January and March of 1988 assisted 860 health care clients, the average age of 80, using 10,000 hours of volunteer support through 1988, was not supported by the Government and that it was inconsistent with Government policy. Will this Minister advise this House just what is its policy on health care for the elderly, when he deprives them of care that enables them to stay in their home and requires them to rely on more costly institutional support?

* (1420)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the Sister Clermont Plan, as funded by the Grey Nuns, has been a very important component for delivery of service to seniors in the St. Boniface-St. Vital area. They are closing their operations as of June 30 and the St. Boniface Hospital, in the interim period of time until we can make arrangements for continuation of the service in a more formal way, will be maintaining the service to those clients.

Government Support

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, just yesterday the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) announced in Partners for Health Policy Paper that, "Manitoba Health will also increase its efforts in promoting health, working cooperatively with community groups, business, and industry across the province. There will be special efforts made to form effective partnerships with multicultural organizations, the aboriginal community, seniors' organizations and others to help identify and address the health needs of particular at-risk groups of Manitobans."

Mr. Speaker, today 860 senior citizens are without the services of the Sister Clermont Health Care Plan, a non-profit agency. The Minister of Health also committed a portion of \$10 million in lotteries funding to the health promoters—

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have a question?

Mr. Gaudry: This Minister speaks from both sides of his mouth.

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

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I very much regret my honourable friend from St. Boniface is making such unfounded and spurious accusations as he has just done.

Mr. Speaker, I have just indicated to him that in the interim period of time in which time we are confident that we can come to an arrangement with the Grey Nuns of Manitoba to equitably carry on with service to those people, those clients under the Sister Clermont plan, we are confident the negotiations will be successful. As I have indicated to my honourable friend in the first question, in the interim, the St. Boniface Hospital is assuring that service continues.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for St. Boniface, with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Gaudry: Mr. Speaker, these over 800 clients will now end up in our emergency department and will be added to the continuing care waiting list. What action is this Minister taking to ensure that these seniors will have access to emergency and home care services?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I think the last question is a demonstration of how, when you write three questions an hour ago, you have to follow them regardless of the answers. I have indicated to my honourable friends, and they apparently do not like the answer for some reason, the service to those individuals will continue. In the interim time, until we can reach an equitable arrangement with the Grey Nuns for continuation of the service and the program, the St. Boniface Hospital has agreed to provide the services. Thereby, the fearmongering of my honourable friend that people are going to end up in the emergency wards or have no care is absolutely false.

Welfare System Jim Findlay Case

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): My question is for the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson). Some months ago, after 14 years of court appearances, a Winnipegger, Mr. Jim Findlay—the Federal Court of Canada ruled that the deductions from welfare cheques went against the rules of the Canada Assistance Plan. For some reason the federal Government, prompted by their Tory twins, appealed the decision to the Supreme Court.

Mr. Findlay received a donation of \$500 to cover his travel costs to Ottawa. This Minister's department originally refused outright to allow Jim Findlay to keep this money which was needed for expenses he incurred in the travel, etc. Now the department has revised this decision and allowed Mr. Findlay to keep only \$500, but have deducted the remaining \$100 from his June welfare cheque which he just received. Could the Minister explain the rationale of these deplorable actions on this welfare recipient?

* (1425)

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services):

The Member's remarks are not quite in order of how this proceeded. In the first instance, Mr. Findlay's lawyer contacted the department and they told him that the general rule was that recipients could not keep anything more than \$400.00. That is the rule and regulation that is set down. I believe it has been set down for some time. It may need to be revised but that is the rule under which we are working at the moment. Subsequently, the department met with Mr. Findlay and did discuss his bills and assured him that he could use that \$400 for whatever purposes he wanted to. I would have to be brought up to date by the department on whether they deducted the rest of the \$100.00. I will have to check on that for the Member.

Mr. Rose: I do have a copy of the cheque and the deduction here if the Minister would be interested in seeing it. She has not addressed that question as to why such action was taken to deduct \$100 when the Federal Court of Canada ruled that such was against the Canada Assistance Plan. It is not, I do not think, reasonable for the Minister to hide behind an upcoming, months away, Supreme Court decision. So it is obvious that the Government should address the inequities immediately as pointed out by the federal court. Does this Minister intend now to change the rule to comply with this court ruling?

Mrs. Oleson: We are awaiting the ruling of the Supreme Court to indicate the status of that particular method of deducting overpayments to welfare recipients. Until that is done, we will not know exactly where we stand. I think the Member should be aware that had the proceedings gone as it was dictated by the judge in that case that it would have put in jeopardy all the social assistance plans across Canada. I think the Member better think twice before he moves quickly in his accusations about this.

Mr. Rose: Even that it was not putting into jeopardy all the funds across Canada, just those, because of the actions of the Government of Manitoba. Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, people like this continue to swell the bread lines in Winnipeg and in Manitoba because of the uncompassionate actions of the Minister.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

**Social Assistance
Clothing Provisions**

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member will kindly place his question now.

Mr. Bob Rose (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary, my last supplementary to the same Minister. Another gentlemen, Mr. Allen Nordal, a paraplegic was told by—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose), I have recognized you for a final supplementary question. Kindly put your question now.

Mr. Rose: No preamble on the answers either. Mr. Speaker, is it normal for her department, the Minister's department, is it normal procedure for them to bounce an obvious need by a welfare recipient, in this case a paraplegic for new clothes, from one bureaucracy to the other? Is it normal procedure for such people to get the replacement clothes indeed from the Department of Health?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services):

I am not quite clear on the last part of the question. Is the Member asking me if we actually provide the clothes or if we provide the money? Anyway, I have asked my department to review that particular matter, but it is part of the rules and regulations that people have to justify the need.

* (1430)

**PC Party
Promotional Funding**

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, farmers of this province and of western Canada have been hit severely by the recent federal Budget and we have had virtual silence on behalf of the provincial Government: reduction of fuel tax rebates, cancellation of interest free cash advances, continuation of double digit interest rates, costing each farm family at least \$2,000.00. The provincial Conservatives promised a new approach to Government and Manitoba farmers sure got it. They got \$2 million payments to absentee landowners in school tax rebates, attack on orderly marketing of milk, dismantling of orderly marketing on beef, and support for dismantling of the Wheat Board.

My question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), because they are using another new approach, I ask the First Minister, is it now Government policy to use public funds for the promotion of the Conservative Party, which can only be described as blatant electioneering material?

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

**Government Advertising
Inaccuracies**

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): I am pleased that the Minister answered that it is not. Then can he explain how his signature appears on a Manitoba Government ad in the Manitoba Co-operator for the Morris Stampede and part of that information is not accurate? Does he support this kind of an ad in the paper paid for out of public funds, that can only be described as pure electioneering material?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): We are certainly happy to advertise the record that we have had as a Government, a record I might say that has been lauded by every single farm group throughout this province,

applauding us for the removal of education tax on farm land, applauding us for \$18 million of drought relief directly to the farmers who needed it in this province, applauding us for changes that made a much more positive way of life for the farmers of this province, and we are very happy to advertise that record.

Drought Assistance Livestock Producers

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for the Interlake (Mr. Uruski), with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): Yes, my final supplementary question is to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) dealing with the drought payment of which the federal Government paid 50 percent of that \$18 million. I ask the provincial Minister, is he prepared to pay for the claims of Manitoba cattle producers under the Livestock Feed Security Program that have been readjusted upwards due to the appeals under the drought program, or are they going to be left hanging as a result of the inability of his Government to deal with his colleagues in Ottawa?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the Member refers to payments on the Livestock Feed Security Program, which are paid as a result of monitoring that is done in each municipality. This past year, appeals were launched to the figures that were established because, as the Member has said in his Speech from the Throne, there have been some growing pains in that program. Those appeals were used to adjust the figures, and it was my understanding that the new figures would generate the higher payments.

I have written two letters to the federal Minister and the process of negotiation to get them to understand that it should be paid under the Crop Insurance Act is ongoing. There seems to be some misunderstanding at the officials level, which we are trying to straighten out, because there is a situation where it was paid for 1987, and we are continuing to pursue that it be paid for 1988 for our livestock producers in the Province of Manitoba.

Sister Clermont Health Plan Funding Continuation

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). The Minister has management problems in his department, starting at the top. Mr. Speaker, Sister Clermont Health Plan has been attempting to negotiate with this Government over one year in regard to their continued funding. We have an Assistant Deputy Minister of this Minister's department who says, their types of programs are inconsistent with Government policy. Then, all of a sudden, the media breaks the story yesterday, and now we have a Deputy Minister today scrambling and making phone calls to Sister Clermont to determine what can be done—crisis managers, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the Minister of Health and it is a simple question. Does the Minister support the efforts

of Sister Clermont Health Plan, and will he agree to continue their funding of this worthwhile project?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I can very easily answer that question. Yes, and we continued the funding last year from the Department of Health. After receiving notice from the Sister Clermont Plan of their difficulties with continuing the commitment by the Grey Nuns to the program, the funding from the Department of Health would have continued this year—that was fully offered. So, my answer, Mr. Speaker, is yes.

As long ago as July and August of last year, when we were discussing the future of the Sister Clermont Health Plan, suggestions were made as to the Sister Clermont Health Plan becoming a sponsor under the Support Services for Seniors Program, and that offer again is still open for additional Government support to Sister Clermont.

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

Ms. Gray: With a supplementary question to the same Minister, I am wondering, if the Minister could indicate in the House today that he is saying yes, he will continue funding, why has he had his departmental staff provide such torment to this group? Why does he not simply say yes? Why did he indicate in his earlier answers that the hospital is going to take on the responsibilities of this service for the interim? Why would he indicate that?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what my honourable friend's concern is. The concern that we have had in the Department of Health, and the proponents of Sister Clermont Plan, is the clients who are receiving service. It has always been our concern in Government that those clients continue to receive service. That is being assured because as Sister Clermont, under their former funding formula which the Sisters themselves provided approximately 60 percent of the funding, is being phased out, we have an interim period of time in which we do not want the clients to be left without service. That is where St. Boniface Hospital, in the meantime, has agreed to continue that service, so that the people, the clients will continue to be served in a very capable, compassionate way.

Health Plans Service Availability

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

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): With a final supplementary to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), will the Minister of Health please indicate to us today that he will have his senior staff in his department be very clear about what health promotion services should be provided so that in fact they can communicate effectively to the people at large, because that is not being done at the present?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I guess I have trouble with my honourable

friend's question because I do not think the level or the clarity of the ability of Government to provide service in the case of the Sister Clermont Plan has ever been in question between the department or between Sister Clermont. That has never been, to my knowledge in negotiations, an area of concern.

What clearly my honourable friend does not recognize is that the Sister Clermont Order, or Service, was no longer affordable as structured by the Grey Nuns, and they gave Government notice some 18 months ago that they were going to withdraw from service. We are assuring that does not happen.

Tender Process Unfair Hiring Practices

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, last December, the NDP introduced amendments to The Legislative Assembly Conflict of Interest Act. Those amendments were introduced in response to an unprecedented number of Tory Party faithful who were being rewarded with untendered Government contracts. This Government has awarded contracts to firms that were not registered with the Corporations Branch. In fact, they were firms that were not even listed with the telephone directory assistance.

So my first question is for the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Albert Driedger). Can the Minister of Government Services tell this House why his department issued a \$27,560 untendered contract for the renovation of a strip mall space in Brandon to accommodate a Cabinet office when there was already a Cabinet office in Brandon's provincial Government building? Can the Minister explain this \$27,000 boondoggle and sheer waste of money?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

* (1440)

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Government Services): Mr. Speaker, first of all, I hope the Member for Brandon East is not indicating that the Government of the Day should not be going out and setting up Cabinet offices for accessibility to the people of Manitoba. Certainly I hope that is not the indication that he is giving.

As to the tendering process, I will take that question as notice and report back.

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

Mr. Leonard Evans: Obviously he does not realize that there was a Cabinet office in the provincial building for many a year. The Lyon Government closed it and the Filmon Government closed it down.

Perry Schulman Hiring

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Attorney General. I note there were two \$125-an-hour contracts to Perry Schulman, a former PC candidate and a major contributor to that Party. Can the Attorney General confirm that a number of the individuals contracted by his department for legal counsel also, by coincidence, appear on the list of contributors to the Conservative Party? Can the Attorney-General confirm that numerous lawyers supporting the Conservative Party are receiving untendered contracts?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to look further into the inquiries made by the Honourable Member, but I understand Perry Schulman is the same lawyer, the same solicitor who did work for the New Democratic Party when it came time for the former Member of this place, Andy Anstett, to contest the election of the Honourable Member for Springfield. So I cannot help it if lawyers in this province, some of them happen to be Conservatives.

Tender Process Unfair Hiring Practices

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Brandon East, with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary to the president of the Treasury Board (Mr. Filmon). In view of the fact that the First Minister was highly critical of untendered contracts in the past—and I notice the speech he gave on June 16, 1986, in Hansard—can the First Minister explain why in the first four months of this year, 1989, he has approved some 164 untendered contracts at a minimum value of \$4.5 million? Can he explain that?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Beauschene's 501, Speakers have consistently ruled that it is improper to peruse exhibits of any sort in the Chamber.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, you know the difference between this administration and the former administration is that now he can get all of that information. It is all public. What the public did not know under their administration was that they had more contracts than that. They had arm's lengths of contracts that went without tender, that exceeded the values of contracts that we have issued and nobody knew anything about it. This Government is open. We will go through line by line, contract by contract and get him an explanation for every single one, if he has the guts to ask.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Time is scarce.

Victim Assistance Funding Deferrals

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae). This Minister has repeatedly cited his Government's commitment to the rights of victims in this province. Yet the victims of crime are now victims of this Minister's political interference into the ongoing work of the Victims Assistance Committee. On April 18 of this year, the Treasury Board minutes will show that all funding for victims programs was indefinitely deferred until the review of the Act had taken place. Since then, four victims groups have been stalled by this Government's refusal to release funds.

My question is, why have all funds for existing and new programs for victims, groups that have developed from the grass roots as was intended by this Act, why have they all been put on hold until this review takes place? We have a victims Act in place. The money belongs to victims. Why is this Government standing in the way of giving it to the people who deserve it?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Sometimes the Honourable Member can be confusing, and perhaps he is confused himself this time. We do not know one day whether he is in favour of for example, Mr. Speaker, impaired and suspended driving countermeasures that are being brought forward by this Government. Then we read in his speech to this House on the Throne Speech that he still thinks that he would rather side with impaired drivers as opposed to those whose safety and rights need to be protected, but he reserves the right to change his mind.

Similarly with Victims Assistance and Crime Prevention Programs, the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) one day says, well, now I am in favour of you looking at this whole area of Victims Assistance and Crime Prevention, and money is available for those things. Today he seems to be saying something different. This Honourable Member is very difficult to figure out.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) has time for one very short question.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, it is precisely that kind of irresponsible shotgun answer and that kind of response which has let the people of Manitoba know well who does not have the strength of his convictions, and that is this Minister.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) kindly put his question now.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, two of the groups that have been recommended by the committee and have not been funded are out of this Minister's home town, Brandon. One has been put forth—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Mr. Edwards: —by the Brandon police. My question is this, both of these were recommended by the Victims Assistance—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The time for oral questions has expired.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: On the adjourned debate of the address of His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor (Mr. Johnson), and the proposed amendment thereto by the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), who has five minutes remaining.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupertsland): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I alluded to many of the issues that need to be addressed by this Government. One of the outstanding issues that needs to be addressed is, of course, the hydro line, the northeast hydro line that would go into the communities and the reserves that I represent. It will go into Oxford House, Gods Narrows, Gods River, Garden Hill, St. Theresa Point, Wasagamack and Red Sucker Lake. This issue has been ongoing for many years and certainly I dealt with this issue when I was Chief of the Red Sucker Lake Band, and I also dealt with this issue when I was a Member of the Government. At that time, we made a commitment to go ahead with the hydro line and we also needed a commitment from the feds to cost-share in the building of the line.— (Interjection)—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland does have the floor and I am having some great difficulty in hearing him. Honourable Members wishing to carry on private conversations may do so outside the Chamber.

Mr. Harper: I had mentioned this for a cost-sharing arrangement with the feds. Unfortunately, the feds have not agreed to the cost-sharing, at least to the percentage of the cost-sharing. I realize this issue was mentioned in the last Throne Speech and it has not become a reality. I hope the Minister for Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) and also the Minister responsible for Hydro (Mr. Neufeld) would get a commitment from the feds as soon as possible because it would certainly provide an economic opportunity for many of the reserve residents, and also improve the quality of life and the standard of life in many of the communities.

* (1450)

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Harper: The other one I wanted to mention was the Port of Churchill. It is an issue that should be fought and also should be taken seriously by all Members of the Legislature. The same type of action should be taken as was taken in respect to shutting down the

base in Portage la Prairie. The port is the heart and soul of that community, the Town of Churchill. We need to ensure that shipment of grain is shipped through that port. We need at least—it has been mentioned before—3 percent of the shipment that is being exported. If that port is not being supported, I believe other things talked about would not become a reality.

The other one I wanted to mention before my time is up, of course, is the Northern Development Agreement, NDA, that has just expired. We have, I believe, lost at least well over \$10 million of lost revenue as a result of the cancellation of the Northern Development Agreement, and there are many programs that were funded under that agreement. This agreement expired at March 31, 1989. There are some programs that are being continued to be funded until March 31, 1990. Many of the programs that people were looking forward to attend, courses such as Northern Nursing, Social Work, are not possible for many of the northern residents. I feel that the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) needs to stand up on these issues.

The other aspect that I wanted to chastise the Minister of Northern Affairs of course, is in respect to handling of the whole Meadow Portage issue, in which he divided the community into another community, Spence Lake. He said that it was Metis self-government. I believe he is misleading the Native people when he says that because he has no legal authority to establish a Metis self-government. If he has a provincial Government policy, I would like to hear it. This Minister has every right to divide communities, as Minister of Northern Affairs, and also to divide as a Northern Affairs community, not as an Indian self-government or Metis self-government because he does not have the authority. He is pulling wool over the Native peoples' eyes, misleading them. If he has a policy to make, he had better state it, because the Indian self-Government is a recognition that we want in the Constitution. He is just giving lip-service. He has already split the community of Meadow Portage and he has created an expense in that community which is basically a trust and a contact community, which is less administrative. He is taking a step backwards.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member's time has expired.

The Honourable Minister of Rural Development.

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure to stand before this Assembly and address the Throne Speech today.

I want to, first of all though before I proceed, congratulate the appointment of the new Deputy Speaker (Mr. Chornopyski). I know that by the performance that I have seen so far from him that he will do a marvellous job, and I will certainly look forward to the association that we are going to have with him.

I want to also, at this time, take the opportunity to congratulate my colleagues, the new Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), the Member for the Interlake. He certainly brings experience and seniority to our Cabinet as well as to this Assembly. His wisdom and knowledge will be appreciated and used.

I also want to congratulate the new Minister of Labour and the Status of Women (Mrs. Hammond). She is a person who everybody knows has long promoted the women's issues in this province, and her voice will be heard in Cabinet as well as in this Chamber many, many times.

I would also like to congratulate Members opposite for the appointments that they received to their respective positions. The debates that I have experienced in this House over the past year have certainly been enlightening many times and enjoyable in most cases. I want to say that as the Minister of Natural Resources I appreciated the support that I received from my staff in general, and also of the support in general that we received from this Legislature and this Assembly on new issues that we brought before this place and also of legislation that was put before this House. I have certainly enjoyed the camaraderie that I feel here periodically. I enjoy the heated debates that go on during Question Period, but that is how I suppose we get the issues before the people in a meaningful way.

I was very pleased that we were able to, in my term as Minister of Natural Resources, deal with a number of key issues that were important to Manitobans and specifically rural Manitobans. We were able to look at the whole area of reforestation in this province and the forestry issues. We were able to look at some new parks initiatives. We were able to develop a working relationship with tourism in this province that I believe will lend itself well and prepare Government in a working relationship that will encourage people from outside of this country to visit our province, visit our parks, and areas of interest, areas such as Hecla Island, which hold a very unique presence in this province. They demonstrate very clearly the ethnic and ethnic backgrounds that this province holds so dear.

I truly enjoyed the challenges that were presented when we debated the pros and cons of selling one of our industries, one of our Government-owned industries, and I refer mainly to Manfor and the Repap sale. The discussions that we have had on the forestry resource and how to utilize it. The agreements that were struck with the Repap people, I think, will stand as an example of how to do business and how to maintain a sustainable resource in this province over many, many years.

The issues of the environment have been raised numerous times in this Legislature. Let me say this to the Members of this House, that to nobody was the concern greater than to the committee that negotiated the Manfor and the Repap sale. The environment was always of the highest priority and will be.

I want to speak briefly about the role of the new Department of Rural Development. It is, I believe, to strive to enhance the future of rural Manitobans in partnership with local Governments and, yes, the communities in general.

Rural development—I should say that I am very pleased at the confidence that the Premier has placed in me in asking me to be the first Minister of the new department that was struck. It is certainly going to be

a challenge and I will look forward to working with all Members of this Legislature and this Assembly towards alleviating the problems that rural Manitobans face, not only farmers but communities and local Governments, municipalities in all those areas that have been affected by the economic downturn that we have seen in the province in rural Manitoba for a long, long time.

(The Acting Speaker, Mrs. Gwen Charles, in the Chair.)

I want to say to you that part of the responsibility of the new department will be the municipalities and the local governing bodies, planning in rural Manitoba and to some degree even within some of the larger urban areas.

* (1500)

Conservation has, as most of you know, always been something that has been very dear to my heart, and I look forward to dealing with conservation initiatives under the Conservation Districts Authority to a much greater degree than we have over the past.

The Regional Development Corporation, I believe, can be a strong vehicle that can generate the economic activities and interests and work with rural communities.

The Manitoba Water Services Board again can be seen as a vehicle for delivering the infrastructure that is so sadly needed in some of our communities. When we talk about infrastructure and the services that Manitoba Water Services Board can provide, and the provincial Government in conjunction with the federal Government can be involved with local communities to supply the needs of those smaller rural communities.

I want to say to you that I have had some experience in working with and developing some of those regional pipelines and services that I talk about. It was only some four years ago that some of us met in my community over a cup of coffee and sort of threw around ideas as to what could be done to increase and enhance the economic opportunities in our area.

At that time, the former administration had indicated that they would build a treatment plant to treat water that would be drawn out of the Red River to supply towns such as Letellier and Altona, and, yes, even Gretna with piped, treated water, and some of us thought it might be a good idea to try and convince the Manitoba Water Services Board and PFRA to extend those services to local individual farmers. We approached the Water Services Board on it and of course you know the rest of the story.

The first year we started construction on a pipeline that would give service, piped water on tap, to 75 farm families. That regional service or that regional pipeline has since grown and now provides treated water. The same quality that those of you have long enjoyed in large urban centres are now enjoyed by 400 farm families. It is an indication as to what can happen if we put our minds to it. I think it is an indication as to how willing local rural people are to put their hands in their pockets. I should say to you that the local people had to pay a substantial amount of money out of their own pocket to bring those services onto their farms.

It cost me, for instance, \$5,000 to get a pipeline run to my farm.

Some of you who live in this city take for granted that water is not only a requirement, but a right. Many people in rural Manitoba do not have that right to just turn open the tap and let the water run. Some of us have to pay dearly for those kinds of services. We accept those kinds of things because those are part of rural living and our lifestyle out there. We are, however, pleased, very pleased, that we were able to acquire those services.

I want to speak for a few minutes about the actions that our Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) has taken over the past year to help alleviate some of the economic stress that has been put on rural Manitobans. He recognized immediately last year when we had no rain or virtually no rain in the month of May that we would be in extreme difficulty in rural Manitoba. He recognized that if we do not get spring rains the hay crops that we have in this province simply do not grow and they become non-existent. He knew that we needed to assure Manitobans that we would retain our basic livestock herds in this province and, therefore, initiated a drought program to make sure that our basic herds and our processing industry that is dependent on those basic herds would be retained. The province put in place some \$18 million towards drought assistance to livestock producers during this past year.

There is another thing that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) promoted and did, and this Government initiated, legislation that farmers in this province had for a long, long time been asking for. I know how difficult it is to organize and maintain a group of farmers that they are able to work for themselves.

The Keystone Agricultural Producers had lobbied long and hard, this province, the previous administration, to put in place legislation that would allow them some vehicle that an organization could be funded on an ongoing basis. Of course, all of you know that the previous administration refused to recognize the importance of an organized farm community. They recognized the importance of virtually every other organized group, but not agriculture.

I want to say to you that I appreciated the support that we received from the Liberal Opposition to put in place the legislation that finally came and will now allow the farm community to access proper funding to keep an organization that will work in a beneficial way for the farm community. Some of the difficulties that agriculture has for many, many years faced, I suppose, are brought on sometimes by ourselves, and we cannot blame anybody for them, but maybe ourselves—because I think we have to go back in history for a short time to recognize and realize where we are at today.

I refer you to some years ago, during the late '50s and early '60s, when there was a considerable amount of discussion in the world about huge famines, world famines, and our inability to provide food for the Third World nations and the rest of society. There was a conscious decision made to put in place efforts that would encourage farmers, not only in Canada but the

rest of the world, to increase food production and we developed a new technology.

We developed new and larger machines that would allow one person to produce much more food than what we had up to now. We developed new fertilizers and we developed new herbicides, and we developed new pesticides. We entered into an era of production the likes of which this world has never seen before. We created for ourselves, and when I talk about "we" I talk about farmers, huge surpluses which drove down prices. We supplied the world with cheap food. Yes, and we achieved what we set out to do. We stopped the predicted famines that were imminent.

But what did we do? We in fact created a famine of another kind for ourselves in our own countries, for those countries that had large surpluses, the European and American and yes, Canadians, were fighting in the world market for their share. They created a world trade war, the likes of which the agriculture community had never experienced before.

What happened? What were the end results? We drove down our commodity prices whereby our farmers would no longer be able to exist in our own economic environment. Interest rates rose to higher levels than we had ever experienced before. Farmers had to borrow money to make up their operating differences and pay up to 25 percent interest rates to do it. Farmers and the farm community fell by the wayside like flies.

* (1510)

It was not only farmers who were victims of that economic chaos that was created by the large overproduction. There were many people in the local and rural communities who faced bankruptcies and virtual extinction. I can look around my own area and whereby just looking out my front door, I used to be able to see 12 farm yards and there are none today. They disappeared off the face of the earth. I used to go and drive into my own home town and was able to visit eight dealerships, eight machinery dealerships and what have we got today? We have one left and except the fact that those eight dealerships probably employed some six people each, which supported six families and they are gone. That is 40-some odd families not able to make a living in those towns and villages anymore.

Why are we where we are today? Why is rural Manitoba—why has the population virtually disappeared in many areas? Is it because of those decisions that were made back in the late '50s and early '60s, or is it some other basic reason that Governments historically have embarked upon and society has generally supported? I talk about such basic decisions as transportation and the economic disparities that have been created by decisions that have been made to centralize our industrial production base.

We built a transportation system in this country, east-west, that was targeted in many cases towards a grow and export, grow and get it out of the country mentality. Those industries that were built to even process some of those products that we do raise, some of our most basic natural resources, were in large part transported to central Canada and manufactured over there. Our

freight rates were set in such a way that enhanced and encouraged that. I think we need to rethink some of those policies. I think we have to rethink how we are going to continue in the future and what kind of policies and direction we set for western Canada that will lead to more mechanization, more industrialization, not only in our large urban centres but in our smaller rural towns and villages, that will create jobs and thereby dispense some of the concerns that we have about the electoral disparities that we have today. I think it is time we look long and hard at the decisions we had made in the past and the kind of decisions we are going to have to make in the future. The decisions we make should be futuristic in its views.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

I believe the Free Trade Agreement that Canada and the United States have entered into will lead us to rethink the directions in transportation policy. It will lead us towards rethinking of how and where we direct our efforts into markets. I want to spend just a small portion of my time talking about some of the markets.

We have, in many instances, industries or individuals who are able to manufacture and manufacture well such things as harrows or cultivators or, yes, even in many cases small garments and other things right on their farm. The one thing many of those manufacturers or on-farm entrepreneurs lack is market expertise, the ability to identify and put in the marketplace the products they are good at producing. I just need to look at my own little community and recognize the abilities that some of these people have and are able to put in place. I say this myself that we need to, as a Government, encourage that kind of production in those little manufacturing plants and assist them in identifying markets and identifying procedures that will get them there.

There is one other thing that Manitobans and the rural towns and villages that Manitoba is so well known for needs. That is this whole area of infrastructure. Good sewer and water facilities are as important to the Town of Russell as it is to the City of Winnipeg. We need to recognize that those towns and villages, in order to be able to expand their ability to produce and provide jobs, will be largely dependent on how much emphasis is put to making sure that their needs are met and realizing full well that it cannot always be Big Brother Government that extends the resources, whether it be monetary or otherwise, but we must work in cooperation with those communities to identify those needs.

We did something in Natural Resources as a Government in the last year that I feel very proud of. We put in place a land and water strategy, and we embarked on a process of developing soil policies and water policies for this province. For the first time in history, we embarked upon a large public consultative process to develop those policies and programs. We did not only go to rural Manitobans and ask them what policies should look like or what direction we should take in management of our soil and our water resources, we went to urban Manitoba as well. We held some 37 meetings, 37 consultations with many people, better than 1,000 people came to these processes and voiced

their opinions on what a water policy and what a soil policy should look like and what should be contained in them.

They identified very clearly the direction that this province should take in conservation initiatives. They made very clear their views on how we should proceed in developing policies and initiatives. The erosion that we saw last spring has brought many people to the realization that we cannot continue to do business in this province as we have on our farms, that we must stop the soil erosion that we saw last spring and again this spring, that we must take steps as a society to make sure that those two basic resources that we depend on for our own existence, that we not only retain them but enhance the quality of those two resources. Manitobans were very explicit in telling this province what they viewed as actions that needed to be taken. We are very pleased with the cooperation and the involvement that we received from the Manitobans.

There are a number of other areas that I think are vital to the existence and maintenance of and the building of rural Manitobans. One is good health care facilities. Everybody knows that we have an aging society, not only in urban Manitoba but also in rural Manitoba. I am a young man, but for some reason, 50 years or just better than 50 years of age seems young today to me, but my boys or my grandkids would call me, maybe, an old man. I consider myself a young farmer and I identify very clearly with some of those young farmers, but when my children look at me they say, well, there goes the old man. We are very fast approaching retirement age and the health care facilities that we have and depend upon in rural Manitoba need to be expanded and enhanced. I want to congratulate our Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) for the action that he has taken to put in place budgetary requirements that will in fact see the building of facilities in rural Manitoba.

* (1520)

The education facilities and education requirements of rural Manitobans certainly will need to be addressed in a much stronger way than the previous administration had addressed them. We know we have a declining population. I believe that those trends will probably continue as long as the mechanization or the expansion of mechanization will take place in rural Manitoba, as well as the rest of rural western Canada.

However, I believe there is a possibility that if we would encourage and take proper action that we can diversify in a large area of this province our productive capacity of our farms. There is a small area in this province that has proven that against all economic adversity, areas can expand and grow in population. There are a few areas in this province where that has happened. But those areas have not taken the direction that was given to them some number of years ago which said they should specialize. They went against all good advice and said, we will not specialize, we will diversify. They have been the beneficiaries. I look at the Interlake area and the livestock production that has gone on in the Interlake area. Against all good

advice, those people diversified and are now the beneficiary of those kinds of decisions.

I look at my own area, southern Manitoba. That is another good example where we have some towns that have actually grown phenomenally during this last economic period, and why? Why have they grown economically? Was it because Governments, whether provincial, federal, or other pumped large amounts of money into those communities? No. It was not that at all. It was local initiative and a will and an ability and a belief in themselves that created the kinds of expansions that have been encountered there. I want to say to the rest of my colleagues in this Legislature that I believe we can use the expertise that some of those people have gathered and gained over the past and share with others, and thereby encourage other communities to do the same thing.

Rural communities throughout North America have experienced the upheaval in social and economic fabric over the past five decades and that is a long period of time. There have been many factors at work that have caused this upheaval as I have stated in my address. I believe it will take political fortitude and a strategy for rural development that will enhance the future of rural Manitoba through partnerships. The partnership I see that is required, we will use the expertise we have in some of those rural communities and share that expertise with others in other communities and build a partnership between the province and those communities, and thereby enhance the way of life.

More specifically, the activities of the Department of Rural Development, through ongoing consultations with those rural communities, will be able to direct and promote the kind of support that is required to put in place the sustainable development initiative we have talked about many times in this Government. Some people have sort of a diverse view about sustainable development. They think it is a nice, smooth, comfortable kind of phrase that can be used. That is not at all what it is. Sustainable development is simply to put in place initiatives that will lead us towards using our resources that they will be there for future generations, building industries that are dependent on those ongoing renewable resources.

I look at the Manfor and Repap sale and the reforestation agreement that is part of the deal that will cause them to plant a tree for every tree they cut. That is true sustainable development over the long term. I see those kinds of developments taking place and being encouraged in all parts of rural Manitoba. I look at industries, such as the oil-crushing industries that were built in Altona and Russell, Manitoba, at Harrowby. They use the renewable resource to manufacture a product that is a better quality product than anybody else in the world can produce. A better cooking oil you cannot find.

We need to work very closely with local Governments and those local communities to make sure the developments that do take place will be developed in an environmentally sound manner, that we turn around and we will not turn around instantly. We will not turn around and stop pollution of our waterways and our

lands in some instances instantly, but by putting in place initiatives we can slowly start turning the wheel around. We can slowly start cleaning up the Red River and other waterways. We will create an awareness of all provincial programs serving rural Manitobans. That is what is needed mostly, in most instances. There are numerous programs that can be accessed by local entrepreneurs but in many cases those local entrepreneurs do not know how to access or where those programs are or what they will benefit from them.

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

We will also need to develop a provincial strategy for rural development that will ensure all provincial initiatives are consistent with the strategy in its entirety, and that will ensure that all rural development initiatives are properly coordinated. I think there is a real need to work together to create an atmosphere and an environment that will encourage provincial departments to work a little more closely together to achieve the end.

In addition, rural development will provide a coordinated focus for the delivery of provincial programs to rural Manitoba in order to maximize the effectiveness of provincial as well as local investments. We will be a strong advocate on behalf of rural Manitoba, and we will do our utmost to ensure that rural Manitoba becomes a strong and viable economic entity.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Hey, Harold, I will get Connery.

* (1530)

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Would you, please? The Honourable Highways Minister mentions that he will get Ed Connery in, and I would really appreciate that because I will be addressing some comments to him. But if he is not here, he will just have to read Hansard. I am sure it will give him some interesting bedtime reading.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would first of all like to congratulate yourself and the Speaker for taking on the sometimes arduous task of leading us and deliberating for us in this Chamber, and look forward to working with you.

I would also like to take this opportunity in my address to congratulate our new Minister of the Environment, or the Deputy Premier (Mr. Cummings), and our new Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns). Although this will be a short Session in the late spring, I am sure there is going to be ample time to deal on a number of issues that are of concern to myself and of course to Manitobans in general. I will be interested in hearing their views and having the opportunity to speak with them on matters in these areas.

It is interesting to note that one of the themes in the Throne Speech is that of the environment and sustainable development. You could not find a Manitoban who relishes that more. I am very, very pleased to see that. It is, however, with I guess a little

bit of shock that I see that, given that we have the witness of the last Session where the Conservatives had jumped on the bandwagon and we had their more-than-noted display of lack of information, lack of concern, lack of decision, the performance of the lip-service environmentalists, the Johnny-come-lately's of the environmental movement.

An Honourable Member: Tory-come-lately's.

Mr. Taylor: Tory-come-lately's? Possibly that, too.

The comment on the opening page of the Throne Speech referred to the fact that Manitoba was hosting an International Conference on Sustainable Development. I might juxtapose that, in that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) no longer talked about the International Centre for Sustainable Development. I was a delegate to that conference, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I have to say that one of the unfortunate aspects of it, although it did cover the ground as far as people or delegates from Government across Canada, and I was very pleased with this, the fact that it was good representation from industry. There was terrible representation though from non-Government organizations, the environmentalists, the lobby groups, and that does trouble me.

Few members of the NGOs were there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and therefore they were not able to bring their voices to that conference and to the small sessions that were held there. I think also it is necessary to say that the Sustainable Development Conference hosted by Manitoba this month was one that was not structured to provide a solution and end result.

We had some three days of speakers, presentations and social sessions and booths with presentations and information which you could discuss with people and take away, but it was not set up in a fashion so that there would be discussion sessions, so that there would be a plenary session, so that there would be solutions on the table which would come forward after debate among Government representatives, industry representatives and environmentalists, to be brought forward to this Government and to other Governments in Canada as recommendations down the road towards sustainable development. Unfortunately sustainable development from that conference and for this Government remains to be a, if you will, modern, current buzzword, but one that I do not think is truly believed in. I am afraid, and I hope I am proven wrong, that sustainable development is going to be a catch phrase that will mask the usual insensitive exploit of development tendencies of Tories across Canada.

The Government has said that under the heading "Protecting The Environment" in the Throne Speech, that sustainable development, protection of the environment is absolutely basic, fundamental to the Filmon administration, and that they will not allow the quality of the environment to be sacrificed. I am sorry to say that is not what we have seen over the last 13 months.

Yes, the environment has been a focus, no question about that, but effective action, sufficient resources,

proper research, direction that would lead us down the road somewhere in this province have all been lacking. In fact, there has been no increase at all in the staff of the Environment Department, no increase in the budget whatsoever, hence no increase in the capability of that department, be it in the regulatory, monitoring, advisory or emergency response functions. Actions speak louder than words—again, lip-service environmentalists.

Another big item, the Environment Department has been strengthened and is now a stand-alone department. Well, it was against all advice available that department was put together with Labour in the first place. I do not know that there should be great compliments with the fact that it is now back on its own, where it should have been in the first place.

We also have the situation where this Government is talking about the implementation of the environment Act. Well, I thought the environment Act in the—referring to an aside here from the Environment Minister, and I hope he will be here to listen to the rest of my discourse on this. Why is this Act only being implemented fully now? This is not new legislation. This is not new legislation at all. It was passed a year and a-half ago. It was implemented 14 months ago. What is with this staged implementation? I thought we had an environment Act to be adhered to. It would appear that we do not.

Then we talk about proclamation of The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Act. It was passed by the Legislature two years back. We know there are some problem areas between the provincial Governments and the federal Government on the whole issue of dangerous goods and handling and transportation, but I will say there has been progress in this direction and there is a convention or a protocol that has been worked out that is a definite step in the right direction. However, I do not see any initiative by this Government to try and test that protocol to see where the weak spots are and to cover them off properly so that we do not have any further incidents with the handling of dangerous goods, because we have gaps in the protocol and gaps in legislation, whether it be at the federal or provincial level.

We are talking here about fully implementing, finally, our environment Act, but nothing is in there about the monitoring of other departments and agencies in the following of that Act. In fact, when brought up very recently at a committee meeting with a senior member of the department, I received a quizzical look, a scratching of the head, is that not interesting that you brought that up. Yes, it is interesting it was brought up because environment concerns must be that of all Government agencies and departments and, until we have an Environment Department that is monitoring those delegated authorities and we see the performance of those agencies and departments, we will not know what is going on.

To what extent is Natural Resources being monitored by Environment for adherence to the Manitoba Environment Act? I will tell you how it is being monitored—not one iota. That is not satisfactory; that is not satisfactory at all. I see our new Minister of Natural

Resources (Mr. Enns) is opposite and he is listening to this. I hope he will take action on that as an initiative, as the new Minister of Natural Resources, because it is not forthcoming out of Environment.

This new Minister has a lot of experience under his belt, and I am hoping for a heck of a lot better performance than we had under the last Minister of Natural Resources.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Taylor: The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) is, as usual, from the front bench coming out with disparaging and personal remarks, but we are getting used to that from the Minister of Agriculture, and at times the Justice Minister (Mr. McCrae), and at times from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), and quite often from low-road Filmon, himself as the Premier leads that front bench in that sort of diatribe against other Members who bring up good points.

I do not mind taking a shot in debate at any time, but I would suggest to that Member that he consider his type of comment brings nothing to this House and in fact takes from the sort of subject matter that needs to be seriously discussed.

One of the interesting things that I saw last year was an initiative on the land and water strategy. It is the type of thing that is required in a province like ours, particularly with its orientation to agriculture, and particularly with problems with water supply.

* (1540)

We are in near-drought conditions again this year. We got reasonable snowfall last year. We have not had much in the way of spring rains. The water tables are down all over southern Manitoba and not much better in the North. That is the sort of thing that exactly needs to be done. But when I see the water strategy component being presented and it does not even cover the watersheds of the northern parts of this province, it leaves me aghast. It absolutely leaves me aghast.

Yes, the former Minister says, we did. They did after being caught on that very embarrassing point by a resident from the North who was here in Winnipeg at the presentation here in the Legislative Building.

I am hoping we are going to see more of the water strategy in real form, in solid form, and that it will not be a guise for just more activities on the part of the Natural Resources Department without full environmental studies.

The former Minister of Natural Resources says, Mr. Deputy Speaker, tell the truth. Well, I pride myself on that. I will give an example of—and the Members can decide for themselves—the truth. We heard that Member in a press conference talk about how he had requested of his federal counterpart, the new Environment Minister in Ottawa, Monsieur Lucien Bouchard, that Manitoba wanted to have an environmental impact assessment study on Rafferty-Alameda, and I say, yea for them. But, then he goes on to say in addition that was Manitoba's long-standing position.

Well, I have seen this Minister here in the House, and this Minister out in the hall in scrum, and that Minister on TV and in press conferences say, we do not need it, ignore the facts, and say it was not done. How can you speak of the truth when you say that very thing? You make a joke of it and you make a joke of your portfolio.

We go on further in the Throne Speech and say, "Trans-boundary water protection continues to be a concern of my Government." I am glad it has become a concern of this Government because Rafferty-Alameda and the fiasco that was does not bode well for concerns about trans-border waters or any other waters, quite frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Penner: On a point of order, the Honourable Member opposite stands there and accuses me of not telling the truth and not protecting the environmental interests of this province. I have said continually in this Legislature and outside of these doors that we will not be party to an agreement with the federal Government or with North Dakota or the Saskatchewan people on an agreement until we were satisfied that our environmental concerns were concerned, and I stand by that.

An Honourable Member: Take it under advisement and come out with—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: A dispute of the facts is not a point of order.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for that swift decision.

The agreement to provide more and better monitoring of water quality within Manitoba is being negotiated by the federal Government. Good. But let us see what results it bears. We will be watching, I can tell you that.

We have had an interesting comment that Lotteries money is going to be used for environmental projects and conservation projects. Well, it is really interesting to see that what we have now is Manitoba Lotteries money—and it is decreasing as time goes on when you allow for inflation. It is now being used for health purposes; it is being used for seniors purposes; it is being used for the traditional areas of sports and for the arts and now it is being used for conservation. I have no problem of it being used that way, but I would wonder how much you are going to stretch this Lotteries money for this sort of thing. I do take exception to the fact that Lotteries money is being used for regular funding, as opposed to project funding, in some of these cases. I do not think that is the way Lotteries money, which is undependable money, should be used.

Manitoba is interested in participation in acid rain monitoring. Good. Do you know what I said? Good. I cannot say that the last Government was as sharp on this as it might have been, as aware as it was of the problems of acid rain. I would hope, however, that we are going to hear something from this Government about the potential acid rain problem coming from the Shand Generating Station. Alongside what? The Rafferty impoundment, that is the cooling pond for

Shand. Shand is going to use new technology to control acid rain. They are putting scrubbers on the tops of the stacks. That is too expensive. We are going for a cheaper solution. No problem there, except the cheaper solution was underestimated. It was underestimated by half, so they doubled it.

New statistics out say, with doubling it, they are still halfway short. So guess what? We are going to have acid rain in southwest Manitoba unless something is done on that. I hope there will be some ample acid rain monitoring going on in the southwest part of our province to make sure we are not being dumped upon by the effluent, the airborne pollution from the new Shand Generating Station. However, if Rafferty-Alameda does not finally go ahead, we may have a different solution in any case.

There is proposed legislation to increase penalties for polluters, just as it should be. I will make a prediction though, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am going to predict that either the fines will not be sufficient, they will not be tough enough, or there may be, as we have seen in the environmental Act and heavily used by the former Minister of the Environment, ministerial discretion on enforcement, as there has been ministerial discretion on EIAs, environmental impact assessment studies.

Action is going to be taken to protect the ozone layer. I think it better be. It may not affect you and I as much as it is going to affect our children and our children's children, because the problem with the ozone layer is insidious. The deterioration is there; the deterioration will continue. Even if we stopped all productions of CFCs this moment, there is enough CFC product in the air and in other items and products that we use daily, or buried in our garbage sites, it will continue for 30 more years to bring that deleterious material up which will destroy gradually the ozone layer which protects us from the ultraviolet rays of the sun.

Now, when WHMIS was brought up to the Environment Minister (Mr. Cummings), in particular to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) because we looked at a taxing solution as maybe one way to deal with some CFC products, chlorofluorocarbon products available off the shelf in stores today in Manitoba, we were told that "any action at this time, by that Government, would be imprudent." I would tell this House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the only imprudence was the lack of action on the part of that Government. The Government of Ontario led the nation in revising standards on CFCs. The federal Government followed, other Governments are starting to follow, so is this Government starting to follow. It had a chance to lead. I am disappointed in that.

The International—and nobody uses International very much now—Centre on Sustainable Development is supposed to come to Winnipeg, so says the federal Government, or it has reiterated it. I am very pleased to hear that. I am not very pleased, however, when I see the resources dedicated. The resources, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are as follows, a very small group of seconded civil servants from the provincial Government only, working in isolation without any working relationship with their federal counterparts. I do not understand that. This is supposed to be a federal-provincial initiative

on a world scale, put Canada and Manitoba on the map regarding sustainable development and how it can impact not just our country but the world.

Where is the link? It is set up in theory; it is not there in practice. Do you know what we have for dollars, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We have a whole \$150,000 out of the Western Diversification Fund—wow! You know, that is the sort of scale of monies we need. There is talk about \$5 million committed out of CIDA monies, Canadian International Development Agency, and guess what? It is not in the federal Budget. Where is it committed? There is not a dollar of it committed yet and there is no written agreement to prove it. If there was, I would like to see it tabled in this House. I would suggest to you we have the great danger of having this project stillborn. I hope that prophecy is totally wrong because this globe needs it and needs it badly.

Let us see some dedication of resources, both people and dollars, to make sure this happens and that it happens well.

* (1550)

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): We will make it happen.

Mr. Taylor: I hear that assurance from our new Minister of Natural Resources, and I will be buttonholing him on a continuous basis to give me updates to let us see what happens with that project.

There is mention of some needed new legislation and I commend the Government on that. The Endangered Species Act, we really do need new legislation on this. The legislation on the table today is very, very dated, the little that is there. I think that is exactly the sort of thing that is required. We do have a series of endangered species, both flora and fauna in this province, that are almost being ignored as they disappear. I will be looking forward to a close review of that Act, also the new Wildlife Act and The Ecological Reserves Act. The Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) will be working with me on that, and we will have some interesting times in committee and in the legislative review.

We are talking in the Throne Speech as well about natural resources, an engine for growth in rural and northern Manitoba. I should hope it will be, but I should hope it will not be an exploitive rape of the people and the resources in northern and rural Manitoba. Why I say that, and I say that with some caution because those are strong words, is that when we looked at the situation where I think all Parties here agreed that Manfor should be sold, we now have the deal with Repap.

I will address that in more detail later, but the fact is there was no advance consultation with those communities and in particular the Native communities. Those are the ones who are going to be impacted the most. There was no advance consultation. Now there should have been, as regards the change of their lifestyle potentially by the scale of operation which is four times the harvest of what is going on with Manfor. Repap,

when it is up and Phase 2 is in place, will harvest four times the volume of trees that were harvested earlier. That is a quantum leap in activity. In itself, that requires an environmental impact assessment.

The fact that there was also a change in the nature of the operation, a rather significant nature, within a few years there will be no lumber activities, no sawmill operation. You have a brown paper, a kraft paper operation that is being converted to pulp for fine papers. That is a change in the nature of the operation which in itself requires an environmental impact assessment.

Now when you combine that with the fact that the technology to be employed to do that is untested technology, there is not a single licence in Canada for that chlorine dioxide substitution for chlorine, not one. The test licence that is in place in New Brunswick is not even being used by the company and there is not a company in the world that is using more than 20 percent substitution on an in situ working plant. There are others that are testing at 40 percent, and I say this is significant because this plant is going to be operating at 80 percent substitution on an unknown, unproven technology.

All three of those things require environmental impact assessments. Not one environmental impact assessment was done before the deed was done and the ink was put to that document. I would suggest that flies in the face of sustainable development and it flies in the face of the environmental Act of this province. You should be looking at the environmental considerations and coming to your conclusions upon thorough study and public involvement before you make the economic and political decisions, but that is not the way this Government operates. That is not the way the Devine Government operates in Saskatchewan and it is not the way the Tory Government in Ottawa operates also. Surprise, surprise, lip-service environmentalists again.

We have a whole dearth of activities in the environmental sphere, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this last year. We have the round table. We have mentioned Rafferty-Alameda where we went into some detail a moment ago. We have got the Lake Manitoba small-mesh fishery. There are also the PCBs and we used to call those predictable Connery bloopers outside the halls. There was Beaconia Beach and the abuse of that formerly pristine beach. The response to radon gas led to issues, environmental assessments in general, Dutch elm disease, Winnipeg sewers. You could go on, far too many of them, I am sorry to say. In the case of all of them though, what we have is a non-performance by the Filmon administration. At whatever level by whatever Minister, the environment is not being served.

We had the round table where this was one of the big things the Premier himself crowed about in the last Throne Speech, but guess what? He chose not to put either the Environment Minister or the Natural Resource Minister of the time into those positions on that round table, and I wonder why. They are not even Ministers now. Maybe that was a foreboding of what was to come. We also have only a single Member out of the 14 or 15 Members of that round table. We have one Member of a non-Government organization. That is not very

impressive. Normally, you would expect roughly one-third involvement by Government, by industry and by the non-Government groups, but not in Manitoba. The result has been no direction has come out of that round table, although it has been set up and working for a year.

The Lake Manitoba Small Mesh Fishery against the advice of the officials of the department and with the fishermen themselves in dispute over the benefits with the north basin in opposition to the views of the south basin, this Government followed a poor move by the former NDP administration and introduced a small mesh fishery, which is not a sustainable development. It will fish it out, it will fish it out. It will change the mix of fish in the lake.

So what we will have is probably, unless something is done to change it, we will have a perch fishery only and the more valuable pickerel will be almost non-existent. We had the same problem in Lake Winnipegosis. What happened in Lake Winnipegosis? Voluntarily, the fishermen pulled back and have not been active for three years. They may be going back in fairly shortly. Here is a case, we have documented evidence of problems in Lake Manitoba previously, problems in Lake Winnipegosis recently and what do we do? We make a non-sustainable, political-only decision, not in the interest of the natural resources, environmentally unsound.

The PCBs or the polychlorinated biphenyls of which everybody is deathly afraid and they should have respect for, we have a case here where Manitoba does not have its own standards. The federal standards are rightfully under review and yet we had an Environment Minister who said the standards are fine, and then he said we do not need any new regulations for Manitoba. After a month and a-half of questioning here, he finally admitted, no, Manitoba does need new regulations, and I will have them for you here in a few weeks. We have not got them yet. We have not got those regulations in Manitoba yet. Where are they? I do not know. I am hoping the new Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings), our Deputy Premier, will be a little more on top of it than the last Minister of the Environment.

I have mentioned the Rafferty-Alameda fiasco. I will not belabour it but the fact is that Minister of Natural Resources refused to look at facts, refused to conduct studies and refused to protect Manitoba's interest, and then does a glorious flip-flop and said that is what I was saying all along.

I brought up again, with the former Minister of Natural Resources, Beaconsia Beach. I am hoping this Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) is listening because he has got parallels to that he is probably well aware of, a beach that was allowed to be abused, a beach that is in actual danger of being eroded away to nothing because of the damage by four-wheel drive, all-terrain vehicles that Minister allowed to go on.

* (1600)

As of the information I had last night, that situation continues and I checked it as recently as last night.

There is an improved roadway out to the sand ring around the lake. But guess what? There are no barriers around that parking lot, and I would suggest to you is that the land husbandry, the property management responsibilities of your department need one heck of a shake-up. Take a look at it. You will find you have a director in there who is washing his hands, as Pontius Pilate, on issues of this nature. When I brought it up in December in Estimates and showed photographs in that forum and that committee, there was a lot of shaking of heads about, it is pretty bad, we agree. Then the Member for Rhineland (Mr. Penner) said, goldarned, if I spend as much time on this issue as I have on all the others, I would not get anything done. I am looking for much more response from the new Natural Resources Minister (Mr. Enns).

We had the case of radon gas. All we asked on radon gas was research. Radon gas, a colourless, odourless gas emanating from our soils naturally can cause problems in basements of homes and other buildings as well. All we asked for was research. We did not have an expectation that the Environment Minister could wave a wand. He did not wave a wand but he did say—he charged in this House and said, if you have any problems, the people of Manitoba with radon gas, here is the phone number, it is staffed. Fast Eddie with the slow answers was wrong. It was not staffed and that phone rung off the wall and there was nobody there to answer it. Of course, it happened to be in the Energy and Mines Department. It was not in the Environment Department, and he did not bother telling the other Minister what was going on—like I say, fast Eddie with the slow answers.

Lead, we said there are lead problems in the air. The Weston School area has not been tested in five years. Guess what today, still no testing, and also lead solder in our water pipes. We indicated the standards that could be brought in and how they could be brought in. The research was complete, the standards were already drafted and about to be passed in Ontario. They are just coming in, in June. Why? Why did we wait almost a year? No reason as far as I am concerned.

When research is available, when somebody else has done some lead work, borrow it. The information is free. How about some improvement in inter-Governmental relations? We are a small province. We cannot afford to do everything ourselves. There is nothing wrong with borrowing from others. Why wait a year? Why wait two years for other solutions?

An interesting item that came up at the end of the last Session and between Sessions was that of Dutch elm disease. I am very concerned about this. When I hear that not only are practices being changed, particularly in the buffer zone around Winnipeg, but those practices not only are environmentally unsound but we had this winter the spectacle of a Minister of Natural Resources recommending that an effective, efficient, popular, well-received program be offered up for cut.

That Minister was away, out of the country when it came up before Cabinet, and his actor, the Minister of Government Services, and Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) spoke on behalf of that cut. That is appalling

and that shows the lack of environmental concern by the Filmon administration. How the heck do you justify cutting a program that works, that has an excellent track record and is employed both in the City of Winnipeg and is available to all the smaller communities as well? Those communities that have availed themselves of it have been highly successful in controlling Dutch elm disease. The couple of communities that did not move on it, Emerson and Selkirk, have suffered the losses. The others show the benefits. What are we doing? Let us look at it and review it and make sure it is up to date and working well, but goldarned, let us not start advocating cuts.

We also had the interesting thing of hence, the infamous name, a manhole. I keep telling the Members on the other side to get with the modern times. Those are PHCs—personhole covers. Now could you remember that, personhole covers? Let us have non-sexist terms when we deal with sewers. In all seriousness, the emergency response in that context when we had exploding sewers was not adequate. It was not adequate at all. The Environment Department took well over 24 hours before it dared to take a sample of whatever it was that was flowing along with the regular sewage and was on its way out to further pollute the Red River.

My view is there are sampling techniques available that are totally safe for the staff doing it, if they have the equipment and the training. That was not done. We brought that up with the Minister, and he said, we are going to put our people in danger, that is not reasonable. I would suggest he get up on it technologically, and I hope the new Environment Minister will be a better performer.

There is still no enforcement of The Manitoba Environment Act on the City of Winnipeg as it applies to this, unfortunately for a few other things too. But as it applies to the sewers, it is not in force and the provincial advice that is available has been minimally offered. Why, I do not know. The slight improvement made to the practices and uses of the Winnipeg sewer system is not adequate and I do not see that in the Throne Speech. We will be questioning that and we will be monitoring that, because I do not think any of us want to ever see that spectacle that happened in '88, that happened in '81, and has happened in previous years too, where personhole covers go blasting through the sky and people get hurt and they start wondering what the heck is going on in their sewer system.

The comment was—and I think maybe this should go on the record, you were sitting there, you are right, and on the committees—and I will mention it to the Member, the committees that I was sitting on started looking at new things. I can claim that I was not on the Works Committee, unfortunately, but I became a specialist on the committees that I was on, the two of them, and as a result some things happened that should have happened. I have been working on environmental issues for the last decade. In fact, my city literature was green and white with a tree emblem on it, so you know where I am coming from. I did not just get on the bandwagon. I have been at this for the last decade.

When I see that this Government is not going to force there be environmental impact assessments, like the

one on the Charleswood Bridge, we have taken the view that there is a process problem with that bridge. I think there are some merits possibly for a crossing. There might be. In fact, there probably should be a heck of a lot more crossings in the City of Winnipeg across its major rivers because then it would put less stress on those existing streets that are carrying a heck of a volume of traffic. If you had more crossings, there would be one heck of a lot less pressure on the ones that are there then. Now what I am suggesting is that the environmental impact assessment is required.

I would not be surprised if there may be a legal case come out of this one, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because the suggestion has been made by the Member for Portage (Mr. Connery) that ostensibly the city carried out an environmental impact assessment or the equivalent thereto. Hooley, absolute hooley. Anybody who analyzes that will say, nonsense. I hope that this Government will review that situation and we will not have an exemption by the Minister like we did with Rafferty-Alameda, and we will not have an exemption in the case of Manfor-Repap in the sense that we are not doing a comprehensive front-end EIS, we are going to do a staged environmental impact assessment. What does that give you? It gives you piecemeal answers after the decisions have been made and nothing is being looked at as a totality.

So the record on the environment, on sustainable development, is not terribly good. In fact, we had the spectacle relating to this Manfor-Repap issue of Ministers of the Crown picking up their portfolios, very graphic, and walking out of a duly constituted committee of this House. I hope I will never see that again. I hope Canada never sees it again because it has never seen it before. It is under advisement and we await with interest the views of the Speaker on that matter, but it was nothing short of despicable.

We have some very interesting things coming out just in the last little while in the fact that the Conservatives consider themselves the greatest money managers in the province. We are talking here of the Party of CFI. We are talking here of the Party of MTX. We are speaking here of the Party of the Flyer Bus debacle. Now what we have instead, we do not have a Tory Government giving away public dollars, we have a Government here, a Tory Government, that is giving away public assets, lands and buildings, whether it is down in south St. Boniface or whether it is the issue in the backyard of the Premier of this province, the Fort Osborne Barracks, where they gave it away. I say "gave it away" because they are going to have to house 350 civil servants now at enormous cost and that \$3.86 million is not going to do much at all—\$2 million is going just for the move. Then you have got to house them. That is not going to be that easy to do.

So I would like to hear the wisdom of that. We have the lethargy on the Port of Churchill. We have got the flip-flop on the Meech Lake Accord.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member's time has expired.

* (1610)

Mr. Taylor: Thank you. If you will give me 30 seconds, I just have one paragraph to finish off. Thank you very much to the Members.

On the Meech Lake, I feel very strongly on this. I take exception to the fact that the Premier (Mr. Filmon), not realizing what was involved in Meech Lake, introduced this to us in late December and only three days later changed his position. I feel any Government in this country should have known what Meech Lake really meant. I do not think that it was justifiable to change the position just on the issue of minority language rights. I take exception, as a former English-speaking Quebecer, to have that Premier defend minority language rights in that province where my family still resides, when he has before him the debacle of what he did in 1983 in this Legislature. It is going to stand as an ignominious chapter in the annals of this Legislature. Thank you very much.

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): First of all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to address the House this afternoon in support of the Speech from the Throne. I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to the Member for Kirkfield Park (Mrs. Hammond) and the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) on their appointments to their respective ministries, and welcome them as Cabinet colleagues.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, Hear!

Mr. Ducharme: The Member for Lakeside, as mentioned by the previous speaker, brings to the Cabinet a wealth of knowledge and understanding, not only about his own constituency but also for the rest of Manitoba.

I would also, at this time, like to extend my congratulations to you, the Member for Burrows (Mr. Chornopyski), on your appointment as Deputy Speaker. You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, our experience goes back a little ways at City Hall. I could probably expound on some stories, little stories between you and I, of notes that were passed, but maybe that is for another day. I would also say though that I always found you at City Hall probably one of the most fair of all the councillors, one who you could talk to and confide in, and one who you could go about with the City Hall business. I especially enjoyed your term as Deputy Mayor when you carried out that duty. I am sure you will carry out the duties the same way here in this Chamber.

I also would like to mention the Speaker and congratulate him in his first year as Speaker of the House. I enjoyed my friend very much. He and I, probably in the last year, were not as close as we used to be because of his position. I am sure he has shown that he is a real good referee, and in this Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you have to be a good referee.

Since I am congratulating people today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not offer my congratulations to some residents and organizations in the St. Vital area. Congratulations are certainly in order for the Glenlawn girls' basketball team who won the 1988-89 provincial championships. As a former alma

mater of Glenlawn, it was an honour for me to be able to take along with me the Premier, Gary Filmon, to pay tribute to these young athletes last May 1 at Glenlawn Collegiate. I believe it was the first time a Premier had visited the collegiate in 65 years. I know they all came out in droves to meet our Premier. We were very well received and it was a good event for myself, the Premier and the students involved.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are also two Grade 7 students from Darwin School in Riel constituency, who deserve much acclaim for winning the Dr. Sunil Sen Award at the 1989 Provincial Science Symposium held at the University of Winnipeg on April 26. Their project was on acid rain and, as this world becomes more and more conscious of environmental concerns, it is gratifying to see the upcoming generation so interested in our environment and the effects of pollution such as acid rain on the quality of life in the world. I am sure these young students from Darwin will go far in their chosen careers, whatever they might be, and I congratulate them at this time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, usually during the Throne Speech Debate you do mention some organizations that have been long-standing in your constituency. I have one that has been involved and this year will be celebrating their 40th Anniversary, and that is the Lions Club of Riverside. They have been very, very involved and dedicated to those in need through undertakings such as the eye bank, the Salvation Army Shield Campaign, the Lions Telethon and the Diabetes Association.

The Lions' presence in my ward and in my community is an asset. The Lions also have a very large project. The Lions seniors' home is a very sound example of their type of work and is now acting as a blueprint for other organizations. I know the residents, and I have visited them many times, of the manor enjoy an active lifestyle created by the environment in which they live. It has been an honour to help this club and these residents in any way I could.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, some councils originally of the Knights of Columbus have banded together in the constituency of Riel and put forward a proposal for a seniors' residence on Lavallee Road in my constituency. My congratulations to the Knights for putting forward this proposal.

There are two people, however, in my constituency who I would like to pay tribute to today for their long and untiring service to the people in my community. A lot of St. Vital residents know these two people. One is Ernie Gaudreau and the other is Eileen Wilson because they were taught or coached by one of these teachers or by both, and they were all assumed and recognized as super teachers. Long-time residents and teachers in the St. Vital area, Eileen and Ernie will long be remembered for their concern and for their commitment to the students they have taught. I say at this time, good luck to both of you in your retirement.

In my first Throne Speech, it was generally agreed that the most pressing problem that we emphasized from the previous administration was the financial management of the province. While the Meech Lake and Free Trade Agreement were important to the people

of Manitoba, our first priority had to be to bring the province's financial house in order and this has been done, our greatest achievement in the first year. We have now managed to bring the Government back into control by prioritizing spending and reorganizing Government to provide Manitobans with a more reasonable and responsible Government. We realize that, although much has been accomplished in the last year, we must continue to give priority to continued effective management and the reduction of taxes for Manitobans. Mr. Deputy Speaker, reforms must continue.

In this Throne Speech delivered on May 18, our Government has stated that it will pursue its objective of economical renewal through sustainable development in order to lay a foundation for reforms in human services and policies and to provide for greater opportunities, security and equality for all Manitobans.

As stated before, much of our time and energy during the last year has been taken up reviewing budgets and departmental functions. In my own Department of Housing, the Peat Marwick report has proven to be a starting point for making the department more responsible, accountable and responsive to the people of our province. We are now acting on and implementing the recommendations of this report and will continue to do so until such time that we are satisfied that all we can possibly do has been done.

One of their recommendations was the disbursement of land owned by Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. Since 1986, the department has been disposing of land and, to date, 2,400 acres or 22 properties have been declared surplus and have been sold or are in the process of being sold. In the Peat Marwick report, it identified a section of land called the south St. Boniface land as an exception and recognized a joint venture could work well there. To this end, last week I announced the joint venture between Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation and Ladco to develop a major subdivision in south St. Boniface over a period of 15 years.

The same piece of land also in proposals, or the same piece of land in reports done by the Urban Affairs, University of Winnipeg, had suggested also that this particular piece of property be done on the virtue of a joint venture. Since last May or June, we started talking to different groups in the area, to the Manitoba Home Builders' Association, to various land developers throughout the city, covering that.

* (1620)

We felt that this joint venture under the direction of a management committee should net the province approximately \$10 million. The two parties to this agreement will share the expenses and profits of this venture according to the proportion of land each contributed, with Manitoba Housing receiving 75 percent of surplus revenues during the first five years of this venture. The revenue the province receives from this venture will allow the province to enhance housing programs for all Manitobans and particularly those Manitobans most in need of assistance.

Just to note, today the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), in getting up and mentioning that there was no information forward, and I would like to read onto the record right now a letter that came from the Manitoba Home Builders' Association, dated June 30, 1988, a memo to all members, a memo from Jim Gallagher, the provincial liaison chairman, re MHRC Landbank and it reads as follows: "In recent discussions with the Honourable Gerry Ducharme, Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, MHBA has been informed that the Minister is prepared to sell MHRC land. Of immediate interest to MHBA members will be three parcels within the City of Winnipeg." These are—and we go on to mention the three largest parcels—"Meadows West, John Bruce and South Island Lakes," and the following paragraph: "We understand that some proposals have already been made to MHRC for the above land. The Minister informs us that he will be reviewing all proposals during the summer and making a decision by the end of August. The Minister advises that he will accept revised, as well as new, proposals. Further, you should be aware that the process will be a joint venture with MHRC, and final agreement will be a negotiated one."

At the time, we had suggested the end of August. However, in reviewing and showing the interest and going through and making sure that everyone had an opportunity to make a proposal, we carried on until the spring of this year.

Finally, in the last paragraph: "The Minister advises that he will receive proposals on any other MHRC land. The final agreement on these are to be negotiated directly with the Minister's office."

It was a surprise to me to learn today from the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) when she said there was one group that was not contacted. The group not only was contacted but was interviewed by not only myself but the MHRC committee, and they hired a lawyer to act on their behalf. So let us clarify that for the record right now. Whoever gave her this information, I am sorry to say, gave her the wrong information and led her down the garden path. All I am saying is to clarify that I met four or five times and they did meet, not only with ourselves but through their legal counsellor.

I would like to also mention that on May 23, 1989, the day of the press conference, the Manitoba Home Builders' Association wrote myself, the Honourable G. Ducharme, Minister of Housing, a letter, and I would like to read that letter right now.

It is re MHRC Ladco-Bishop Grandin Boulevard Joint Venture. This was for the joint press release and it reads. It was on the day of the press release, May 23, and it was delivered there. "Dear Mr. Minister: I regret I am unable to attend the media event that you have scheduled for Thursday, May 25, regarding the above joint venture announcement. Previous commitments require me to be out of town on that date.

"However, on behalf of the Manitoba Home Builders' Association, I am thrilled to congratulate you on your respective roles in concluding this significant agreement. It is, of course, the MHBA belief that Government land-

banking and/or direct involvement in the residential land development business is unnecessary to say the least.

"Therefore, we applaud the Government of Manitoba for taking this significant step in returning these lands to the marketplace for free enterprise development. This initiative and a well-conceived method of doing so indicates to our association just how sincere our present provincial Government is in its stated belief in our industry's ability to provide affordable quality housing for Manitobans without direct Government involvement. For a job well done, congratulations." Signed by B.M. Fenske, the President of the Manitoba Home Builders' Association.

I just wanted to make sure I clarified, for the records, that the Home Builders' Association, who were involved, were very, very concerned that whoever developed this land would make sure the majority of the lots were available to the small builders and especially in this quadrant of the city. The agreement was that a majority of the lots will be available and we are not looking at any optimistic type of period of time because we are basing it on probably 130 to 140 lots becoming available once the zoning is in place, which could be in a couple of years down the road, if you know how City Hall works.

Not only that, but we are hoping that over a period of time this particular development will enhance another further piece that we have south of there that has no commitment to this particular joint venture. We hope that land, through a period of years, will then become more valuable and become more valuable to MHRC.

It was with great pride I was involved in obtaining, also in my first year, a residence in Winnipeg for the Osborne House, a Winnipeg Crisis Centre for Abused Women and Children, as well as the province's first shelter for abused Native women, which is operated by a *Ikwe-Widdjiitiwin*, a board of aboriginal women. Manitoba Housing was very, very involved in establishing the first Native abuse centre for women. It was with great pride that not only were we able to provide this housing for these two groups in our first year of office, it was unable to be provided in any proper setting before by any provincial Government.

Manitoba Housing has continued its mandate under our Government to enhance the affordability of and the accessibility to adequate housing for Manitobans particularly those of low and moderate income or those with specialized needs, such as people with physical or mental handicaps or people who are victims of abuse. I believe, and I know all the colleagues in our Cabinet and our Government believe that it is a right to have someone have a proper roof over their head. We feel that and we will carry on not only with the lands that we will dispose of to provide those types of housing. We will continue to support the people who have those needs that are necessary for that affordable housing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I suffered probably with great disappointment in the last Session of the Legislature as Minister of Urban Affairs when my Liberal and New Democratic Party colleagues defeated my attempt to decrease the size of City Council. I feel we have

accomplished much however in the Urban Affairs Department during the last year. For the first time, the City of Winnipeg boundaries and the community committees have now been set in time for the next civic election in October of 1989.

Sincere thanks go to the members who sat on the Boundaries Commission, namely, Ben Hewak, Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench; Ross McCormack, Acting President of the University of Winnipeg; and Robert B. Hayes, Returning Officer for the City of Winnipeg. These men gave countless hours of their valuable time and energy without compensation to draw these ward and community committee boundaries through public hearings and consultation. As you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is not easy to sit at committee hearings and listen to people come forward who probably have to be explained what the system is all about. They got involved in not only boundaries, they got involved in probably lots of discussions in the community committees. They went throughout the area in this very difficult task. I am aware of how difficult a task it must have been for these members of the Boundaries Commission.

A major accomplishment of the Urban Affairs Department has been the agreement in principle of the Shoal Lake water supply. When I get up in the morning, I turn that tap on. I look at it and I say every time throughout my life I realize that I had some part in having the water supply guaranteed to the citizens of Winnipeg. Congratulations must be extended to the negotiators from the three parties involved in this particular agreement.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ducharme: A team was put together, who had a good rapport, and the result is an agreement for a 60-year period with a settlement on all major issues. This agreement may only be terminated on a five-year notice after the first 10 years of the agreement have expired. I hope in the near future and probably I hope this month, before the end of the month, that the federal Government will honour their commitment in agreeing to this particular agreement. We felt that the province and city had to take the lead role. We addressed this agreement with the Indian band.

These three major areas are addressed in the agreement. The first area of agreement is water quality protection which includes Indian Band No. 40, prohibiting and regulating certain activities on reserve land which would affect the water quality, developing a waste management system, and an environmental management plan in their particular area. The second area of agreement is the compensation provisions and economic-social benefits, which include a \$6 million trust fund, promotion of sustainable economic development, employment training and contracts, contribution from the federal Government, and inventory-economic development opportunities.

The last area of agreement is the agreement administration and implementation, which includes a three-member Senior Policy Committee and a six-member working group. These two committees will also

deal with dispute resolutions. I guess one of the major considerations of this agreement is we will always now have somebody sitting on and have a chance to observe the site and what goes on in that particular site. We had a case here where we had people who gelled together. The chemistry was there and they were able to come up with this agreement. I know you, as a member of council, were always concerned about the water supply, like the rest of us. I am very proud to be part of that particular agreement. I can leave the Chamber at any time knowing that this agreement was accomplished while this particular Government was in power.

* (1630)

I would like to update the Members of the House on the status of the Forks site. As the Members know, the Forks Renewal Corporation mandate is to develop the Forks site according to the conceptual plan approved by the three levels of Government, no matter how long the process takes.

The reason for that is because there is no sense in developing land, that 70 acre park site—I know you were also a councillor when it was negotiated on—there was no use just developing for the sake of developing. It is a very important site and should be developed well, regardless of how long it takes to develop it.

The essential elements of the plan are to have the idea of a meeting place to be the central theme, have all-seasonal use, have distinctive and high quality design and have imaginative use of light, water, and power. In late summer, 1989, the official openings of the public market and the Forks National Park should take place and the internal roadways should be completed. Negotiations are now taking place with potential tenants for the marketplace at the Forks. The Forks is also currently reviewing responses to a proposal call for the Johnson Terminal and the B and B building.

I would like to also share—there have been some concerns in regard to the south side of Portage Avenue.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, maybe you can inform me how much time I have left?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: You have . . . minutes left.

Mr. Ducharme: I would also like to share with some of the other Members some facts in regard to the south side of Portage Avenue. The ad hoc committee has been meeting with all parties concerned to break the deadlock that has been occurring and encourage the the owners and the merchants to take a leadership role in planning and implementing needed improvements on the south side. Dialogue has begun between North Portage Development Corporation and the south siders. The corporation is hopeful that a consensus will be reached for a meeting with all the south side parties so the corporation can develop a firm program proposal to submit to the south side.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the time of appointment, when some of the renewals are coming up, it would also be a good opportunity maybe to place someone from the

south side on the North of Portage Board. There will be an opening shortly, and maybe it would be a good time for me as Minister to appoint someone at that time.

To date, two positive activities have taken place. Eaton's has announced and started implementing the improvements to the major external facade of its building on the south side. The cost of this project is around the \$2 million mark. As well, Gendis has decided to acquire two properties adjacent to its current holdings. Both of these developments show commitment to the south side of Portage Avenue.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that the impact of Portage Avenue redevelopment on the south side has had an effect and was identified fairly early on as the major issue of the project. The south side was already experiencing a decline prior to the opening of Portage Avenue. We all hoped that at some time Graham Avenue could be a bus route and a bus connector to contact towards the north side of Portage Avenue. I believe and I hope the ad hoc committee can resolve that situation. I know the dialogue has been better in the last short while and I hope they can resolve that particular problem.

One joint project undertaken by the Department of Urban Affairs and Government Services, I believe, will prove to be a winner for the Province of Manitoba, especially for the people adjoining the Legislative Building and that is the joint project I refer to as the redevelopment of Louis Riel Park. The project will enhance those legislative grounds and provide continuity along the river. I have also talked to the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) who has had discussions and been involved in this. I am sure this particular setting will generate more tourist traffic and more interest for those groups holding ceremonies throughout these beautiful legislative grounds that we have around us.

To update you on the proposed redevelopment of this park, I will explain the process the two departments have gone through. In 1988, Gaboury Associate Architects along with UMA Associates were appointed as project consultants. Traffic studies were conducted in August/September '88 to study the Assiniboine Avenue closure options. A Public Advisory Committee was set up in November '88 to advise the consultants, and this committee included the Manitoba Metis Federation, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Manitoba Tourism Industry, the Naturalist Society, the Broadway-Assiniboine residents, the St. Boniface Historical Society, and some landscape architects.

There was also a Technical Advisory Committee set up consisting of representatives from the two departments of the City of Winnipeg. A public meeting was held in February of this year to give the area residents a chance to look at and comment on the optional plans that were devised. At the present time, the committee is reviewing the information and will devise a final concept plan which will be recommended to the Government very, very shortly.

Finally, in this Session, in closing, I will be introducing in the House two important pieces of legislation. A Bill

amending The City of Winnipeg Act will be presented in two separate Bills, the first one dealing with the political and administrative structure of the City of Winnipeg elections. The second Bill, to be introduced in the fall, will deal mainly with the planning and environmental sections of the Act.

As I have said previously, the basic concept which will be incorporated in the political structure of the city will be issues like increasing the powers of the mayor and the Executive Policy Committee. The reason behind this concept is that the mayor and EPC should have probably greater powers. They will have to become more and more accountable to the people who elect them as civic representatives. In other words, the buck will stop there and the mayor and members of EPC cannot sit under (sic) the fence. They will have to make decisions and either sink or swim on their decisions.

As far as the election of civic representations is concerned, there will be provision for election spending limits, we hope will be set, and on and on and on. I will be reviewing my legislation as the Bill comes forward and I know there are a lot of years that have gone into different parts of the Act which should be brought before the Legislature. I will be doing that as the Minister.

Also, I have to mention, for the Honourable Member for Inkster's (Mr. Lamoureux) information, I will be introducing—as he is one my critics for Housing from Labour—to amend The Landlord and Tenant Act later in this Session. The Honourable Member, as reported in the Winnipeg Free Press of May 26, states the report was on the back burner. The report has never been on the back burner since I have taken office. A lot of recommendations to the report are ready to be implemented.

The Liberal Party would have us introduce legislation in piecemeal fashion and without consideration of every aspect of these amendments. My philosophy is, if you are going to do something worthwhile, do it as well as you are capable of doing. In other words, take time to study the possible implications of the amendments and all possible legal ramifications as best as you can before you legislate them. It was mentioned earlier in the last Session that I would be bringing forward this legislation in this Session.

The Bill my Government will be introducing will include a lot of housekeeping items, but will also deal with the condition reports and a major change in the way disputes are handled by the Rentalsman's Office. The process which a tenant or a landlord must go through, if they have a dispute, will be shortened and should ultimately save the proponents of this dispute much aggravation and the taxpayers of Manitoba money.

Although the name is a misnomer, a "housing court" will be proposed to listen to appeals once the party or parties have gone through the regular process, which by the way has been streamlined and shortened over the last year. This body or housing court will make decisions, will be final and binding to the parties involved. In this way we feel a lot of disputes will be kept out of the courts which should help to cut down the backlog.

I would like to say I am very proud of what our Government has accomplished in the last year, and I

am very proud of the Throne Speech that was delivered to the residents of Manitoba by the Lieutenant-Governor (Mr. Johnson) on May 18.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

Mr. Speaker, my hope for the people of Manitoba is that all the elected representatives in the House will work in harmony and with the spirit of cooperation to make Manitoba a province that will be the envy of all other provinces in Canada. As we have discussed many times, we are all proud to be part of this legislation. There are only 57 of us representing the million people in this province and it is a pleasure to serve them. We might have our disputes inside this room, but anyone realizes that when you get out of this room and you go to other tables that is where it should leave, in this room. I believe that most politicians have that one thought in mind.

* (1640)

A lot of times people will criticize politicians, not realizing the efforts of both sides in disputes and both sides dealing with legislation. The people in Manitoba have a pride and a belief in our province or they would not have spent the recent \$100 million buying Manitoba HydroBonds, so they are proud of our province. It is up to us, as elected representatives, to make sure Manitoba will be economically sound, opportunity rich and environmentally safe for the future generations.

It is a pleasure to have this opportunity to speak on this Throne Speech. It will be a pleasure to see it passed when we get to vote on it in the next couple of days. I look forward to carrying on my duties as a Minister and working with the present Government. Thank you again.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I would like to start I think today by welcoming you back. It is my first opportunity to speak in the House. I had a wonderful time with you last Session and this one promises to be equally pleasurable. I would like to take a minute to congratulate the new Deputy Speaker (Mr. Chornopyski). I think the former Deputy Speaker did an admirable job and I know this one will too. I would also like to note the presence of the new Pages. Already I am getting to know them and I think that they will be a pleasure to work with.

I would like to note we have a new House Leader (Mr. Ashton) for the third Party. The former House Leader for the third Party was extremely helpful to me. He taught me a lot. He is a very experienced parliamentarian and I find the new one equally good to work with.

Mr. Speaker, I would even like to congratulate the new Ministers opposite. I think the new Minister for Labour and the Status of Women (Mrs. Hammond), while I suspect that she and I are very different politically, I nonetheless am a respecter of hard work and she fits that bill in every way. I also want to welcome to the Cabinet the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Harry Enns). There is no substitute for experience and I think he will be a badly needed addition to that Cabinet.

Mr. Speaker, I listened with some interest to the Minister of Urban Affairs' (Mr. Ducharme) remarks and

I would like to tell him and other Members of the House that I am not going to vote against this Throne Speech. When I read this Throne Speech, I do not find anything in here offensive. I do not find anything in here that I think is worthy of being tossed out of this House. This speech speaks of laying a foundation, creating opportunity, of protecting the environment, of enhancing rural development, servicing the North. It talks about urban affairs, cultural affairs, health care, education.

It talks about all sorts of principles that I believe in and that I support and Members on this side would support, but I am going to vote for an amendment that expresses our lack of confidence in this Government. I want Members on that side of the House to know that I am going to vote against you because I believe this is an extremely bad Government. This is a Government that has no vision, no sense of where it is going, no concept of what this province can or could become.

This is a Government, Mr. Speaker, that lurches from crisis to crisis, that appears to be run by one individual sitting opposite, that has no sense of how to control an organization as complex as the Province of Manitoba. I have to ask myself as I sit here and I watch the Members opposite operate, why are they here? What purpose are they attempting to fulfill? What goal have they set for themselves that will somehow make life in this province better? I am afraid I do not see that.

Let me spend a little time on the Throne Speech. The first section I particularly like, the one that they entitled "Laying the foundation" because it begins with a statement that Manitoba's Government is back under control. "Over the past year my Government has reprioritized spending and reorganized Government to provide more effective and responsive service to Manitobans." They go on to talk about putting the financial house in order.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is reminiscent of the rainmen and shamans of old, who would walk around every time there was a cloud claiming that it was raining because of his acts, or that when there was an eclipse of the sun, that he caused it. There is nothing in the actions that this Government has taken that has streamlined Government, that has done anything to control some of the abuses in the past, nothing at all. This has been a laissez-faire, do-nothing Government.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just reference one quote. I am not going to speak on matters financial because we have a Budget coming, and I will wait until then to address it. I have too much to say on this, but I do want to call your attention to one thing in this Speech. They say here, and they quote: "The Conference Board of Canada predicts that, with one of the lowest unemployment rates in Canada, real growth in Manitoba will reach 4 percent in 1989." They say that in this Throne Speech.

If that were true, that would make me feel very good because I have been terribly afraid of what is coming in this province. I have spoken about this many times in the past year. We are about to face an economic

downturn like we have not seen for the last six or eight years, and it will impact very negatively on a great many Manitobans. So when I read something like that I say, well, that is good news, that runs counter to some of the news that I have. Except, when I go back and I search the source, what I find is that Conference Board Report is four to six months out of date.

Mr. Speaker, let me quote the Director of Forecasting for the Conference Board who said in response to the release of this report or the announcement of this report that not only was it out of date, but that the risk of recession is much higher than six months ago when that forecast was made because of the increase in interest rates, tax increases and the lack of spending restraints in the latest federal Budget. The next few months are critical, he told reporters, if the rates do not fall over the summer, a recession is likely.

In order to avert a recession, they are saying they need a double-digit increase in the money supply and a drop in the interest rate to below 10 percent. Those are the forecasts that Mr. Wilson has made. Every one of them has proved to be false. Yet this Government relies on that information for their announcement on what they are going to do with our economy.

It is interesting, as I walked in the room, I was handed a copy of a letter. I wrote to my constituents and asked them, after the federal Budget, I said, what has been the impact on your income tax? I wrote to everybody who lives in my area and asked them to go through their '87 and '88 income tax returns and write back to me and tell me. Are their taxes flat the way our Minister of Finance promised? Have the benefits of "tax reform" from the federal side flowed through to Manitobans? As I was walking in, I got this letter from one of my constituents who notes that—he is a school teacher who has just come back from deferred salary leave—his income from '86 to '88 has gone up: 9 percent from '86 to '87, 5.1 percent from '87 to '88. His federal taxes have gone up 12 percent both those times and his provincial taxes went up 24 percent under the NDP Government, 24 percent; under the Conservative Government, which allowed the tax decreases to flow through, they only went up 23 percent. That is management, Mr. Speaker, that is this pro-active Government attempting to correct some of the abuses of the former Government.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk a bit about the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). The Minister of Health, in his section of the Throne Speech—

An Honourable Member: Should have kept quiet.

Mr. Alcock: Yes, he should have. No, it would not have mattered, I would have done it anyway.

The Minister of Health makes a statement on the health section of this Throne Speech that, "The Manitoba Health Advisory Network is providing a mechanism that permits the health services community and Government to work as partners in the overall effort to reform and improve health services while ensuring that health costs are managed."

* (1650)

It is a wonderful statement, Mr. Speaker. I could stand behind that myself. I think that the concept of the Health Advisory Network is a good one. It is similar to a proposal that we made during the election. When this announcement was first made, once we got into this House and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) asked for some time to get used to his new portfolio and to adjust to the changes, I felt that was a reasonable request.

I felt it is a large and complex portfolio and he should have the time to learn what was going on, to assess the conditions within the community and to come to some kind of reasoned decision about where the priorities should lie. When he announced this advisory network, I thought, well that is a reasonable way to do it, bring everybody together. There are some incredible professionals in the field. Talk to them, discuss it, plan it and then make your decisions about where you are going to place your money.

On that basis, he told us they were not going to fund the reconstruction of the Municipal Hospital. I could accept that decision if he would put all the projects on hold, but his need to consult the community did not extend to the construction of hospitals in his constituency or in the constituencies of Tory Ministers. The need to consult did not extend to his priorities.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Connery) talked about how under the former Government, it was a real problem because they could never get highways into rural constituencies, that they would only go into NDP constituencies and he used to say how bad that was. Now that they are doing it with health care facilities and I think that is disgusting. I think what is going on in the Department of Health right now is completely unacceptable. There are 200-plus patients at the Municipal Hospital who are living in substandard conditions, and this Government has sat for an entire year and allowed that situation to get worse.

We have an admittedly bright, energetic Minister, who prefers to spend his time combatting this side of the House rather than discussing matters of policy, rather than working in his department to improve the services. I think it is time that changed. I do not think that we can afford more of this kind of management in health care.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting when you go through this Speech from the Throne. They talk in the section on justice, they talk here about Manitobans place tremendous value on the pace and quality of life in our province. Manitoba is a place where respect for others and protection of the vulnerable are fundamental values. How does that statement stack up against the Minister of Health's decision about Klinik? What health care facility in this province serves a more vulnerable clientele? Yet there is another project that has simply been cut in the name of planning, planning that does not seem to apply to the building of a few new hospitals in his area.

The third one is Home Care. As a Member, I get calls from all sorts of constituents about all sorts of problems, and I will say that Home Care is not No. 1 on the list.

That particular place of honour is reserved for Workers Compensation. Home Care is No. 2. The number of seniors who call me because their Home Care has been reduced, cut off, because they cannot get it, because they cannot access some very basic services that will make their life a little better and allow them to live independently a little longer, and keep the financial pressure off the hospitals, the number who call me is absolutely astounding.

This Minister stands in the House repeatedly and talks about the tremendous increases he has provided in Home Care. Mr. Speaker, those increases, when you look at them, are miniscule compared to what they spent last year. The increases, print-to-print, appear large but the reality is in fact very small. The reality is they are cutting back in Home Care. The reality is that people are staying longer in hospitals because they cannot access Home Care. That is the reality we face every day.

What about justice? The Minister for Justice (Mr. McCrae), the one who I presume was consulted when they talked about this thing about respecting others, and Manitobans placing value on the pace and quality of life. Is this the same Minister of Justice who refuses to take action to protect our privacy, who is willing to hand over to the federal Government our confidential records without any kind of control, despite the fact of evidence that the monitoring systems within CSIS are not adequate? When we asked him that, and we asked him the question, we say we have a concern about this, we have a report that says that this is not a good thing to do, does he say, I will look at that? Does he act like the Minister for the Environment (Mr. Cummings) or the Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) or the Minister for Government Services (Mr. Albert Driedger) who will sit back and say, well, that may be an important point, I will look at it, I will try to figure it out?

No, he begins to personally attack the person who asks the question. He begins to call the question silly. He derogates the individual who is attempting to raise the question to the House. Is that what he is talking about when he talks about respect for others? Derogate, is that the word? -(Interjection)- Denigrate. Thank you, my dear.- (Interjection)- Not too bad, "derogate" works. Where is the respect in that kind of attitude in this House? When does that Minister ever engage in debate in this House? He engages in insults continuously.

The inconsistencies, Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult to get a handle on how this Government works. On the one hand, he says he is not going to appoint judges, he is not going to respond to the concerns that are raised legitimately by our critic and by the legal community around the appointment of judges. He is not going to respond to that because he is awaiting a report, and yet he can appoint a couple before he gets the report. He is not going to respond to the question of Q.C.s until he gets a report. Well, he can appoint 15 of them but that is irrelevant.

Mr. Speaker, on the environment, it is fascinating to see the emphasis placed on the environment in this speech. One has a sense that the Government stepped outside recently and discovered that there was one,

because this is a very different tone from what we heard six months ago. I like what they write in here. I think it is good stuff. I just do not believe it. I do not believe that they mean it.

How do I explain this rhetoric when I look at what they did on Rafferty-Alameda, when they told us continuously that we were wrong and they were right, that we were fearmongering, that we did not know what was going on, and now all of a sudden they are magically reborn as environmentalists? We have this centre for sustainable rhetoric that has been promised over and over and over again by the federal and provincial Governments, with yet no product—oh, I know we will see one. I know that they can put money into the supplemental Estimates federally to finally provide us with what has been promised to us for a year now. The problem I have with this is the very clear implication in our negotiations with the federal Government, on this and other projects, that if we do not please our federal masters, we somehow are going to be penalized financially. I think this attempt on the part of the federal Government to blackmail us into supporting their constitutional image of Canada is simply unacceptable.

They have all of sudden discovered the problem with the water quality for the City of Winnipeg, the mine on the island in the lake. I do not hear one word in this about the water quality of Selkirk, Manitoba. Is that like health care facilities that, well, we are going to fix up the water quality for the Conservatives, but that was an NDP-Liberal riding, so we will ignore that one? Is that more of the same? Where is the commitment? Where is it? I do not see it in here.

I do have a question for them, Mr. Speaker. I want to describe a little situation that exists in my constituency, and we will see whether there is anything that underlies the words in this document.

On Brandon Avenue, if you go south from here you come to Brandon Avenue, you turn left on Brandon Avenue, you go up a short street and you find something that looks like a bombed-out area. That is a snow-dumping site that is used by the City of Winnipeg to—(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, at the end of Brandon Avenue, there is a site on the banks of the Red River that the city uses to dump snow. Now, it is a huge site and all winter long they collect snow off the streets of the city. They drag it out there and they pack it down on the shores of the river. In the wintertime, the people who live on Brandon Avenue are subjected to heavy trucks going up and down their street all night long when they are attempting to sleep, as are the rest of us.

* (1700)

In the springtime, that site melts and we are left with a collection of bottles, tin cans, garbage, plastic bags and paper that blow all over the neighbourhood. As if that is not bad enough, we now have a sense of the damage that is being done by the concentration of salts and chemicals, and more recently a report released this winter about the concentration of lead in those sites.

Now, I raised this with sensitive, caring, environmentally aware Government last year. I said, I

know you cannot do something about it overnight but you control the licensing under which these sites are established, and you can provide some conditions in that licence and put some pressure on the city to make a decision to move off that site in a responsible period of time. You can hold that out as a condition of licensing. This responsible environmentally aware Government refused to do it. They refused to act against the interests of the city as they refused to act on behalf of the people of Brandon when it affected the interests of business. I think the words that are in this document are, while lofty, essentially meaningless in the hands of this Government.

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak just briefly about the Manitoba Intercultural Council and what is happening in culture, heritage and rec. There is a process taking place both federally and now provincially whereby the Governments at both levels are acting to take out of the hands of legitimate community organizations, or legitimate consulting organizations, responsibility for funding. They are taking it back into the hands of the politicians. I think the actions of the Minister of Cultural Affairs (Mrs. Mitchelson) regarding MIC is completely unforgivable. Here we have a community that has organized itself, that has come together, that has built a structure that allows it to act as a coordinator and link with its community, and respecting that and using that vehicle, the Minister has chosen to weaken it and to step back from it.

But let us just step back for a minute and talk just briefly about management. I want to focus on Family Services just for a moment. I will leave that for the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) to get into in more detail, but I do want to know two things. I was out of town when the name was changed. Once again, I had this sense at that time of are they changing the name in an attempt to suggest that they are doing anything about the problems in the department, or is it simply attempting to put a new face before the world so the old problems can go on, because I see nothing happening internally to that department that does anything to improve services to people.

What the organization did though was raise the question about who is managing the department, because the Minister did not even know that her Deputy was fired. So, you have to ask yourself, who made the decision? Who is making the major decisions on behalf of the department?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Who told you that, Reg?

Mr. Alcock: You and the Deputy. The Minister asked who told me that. She was quoted as saying that very thing and the Deputy also has confirmed that.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, the question is, where is the vision, what is the direction they are trying to bring that department in, what are the improvements they want to build, what is it that they witnessed all the time they sat in Opposition that they now want to correct? Or are they going to go on in that department they way they are in Health and just lurch from one crisis to another?

Mr. Speaker, let me just jump quickly on to Urban Affairs because, once again, we have an example of this kind of random behaviour on the part of this Government. Why have they gone into a joint venture with Ladco? What purpose are they attempting to serve by doing that? Is there a housing shortage? Is there a need for more space? Is the vacancy rate so low that people cannot find housing?

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Highest in years.

Mr. Alcock: The Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) says it is the highest in years and that is true. We do not need the housing, Mr. Speaker. The existence of the housing puts more pressure on our core area which is already in desperate need of people. We need policies that push people to use the existing city, not make the city bigger and drag people out of the core areas.

What is this Government doing? What is this visionary new manager in Manitoba doing? They are selling off assets all over the place randomly to their friends in opposition to any principle, planning, thought. There is nothing that underlies these decisions that anyone can point at and say that Manitoba will be better off five years from now as a result of these decisions. There are all sorts of indications that Manitoba will be worse off as a result of these decisions.

Mr. Speaker, the attitude of this Government I find most hard to accept is the attitude expressed by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) during the meeting of the Committee on Economic Development. If there is anything that sort of crystallizes the way this Government behaves when things are not going its way, it is the actions that Minister took along with his colleagues to get up and just walk out. It does not matter what the committee decides, does not matter what decision is made, we do not like it, we are taking the ball and going home.

Everybody expects better than that from their governors and they do not get it from this arrogant, disrespectful Government. The hypocrisy on that side of the House is absolutely astounding. They speak in the Speech from the Throne about respect. They do not know the meaning of the word.

What do they say, Mr. Speaker, what does this Government say when they get questioned by our critics or by the Members of the third Party when they are questioned, as they were today by the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), about patronage and about untendered contracts? Do they say, yes, we have a concern about that, we are taking steps to correct it? No, they say the NDP did it, it is okay, the NDP did it or they say Trudeau used to do it or Turner did it. If it is wrong, it is wrong. It does not matter who did it before. If it is wrong and it is still happening, do something about it, stop it.

I am cognizant that the time is passing and I do want to just mention a couple of little things for the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). I want to talk a bit about the CNR, and I want to talk to the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) just briefly.

An Honourable Member: You already cleaned up on me.

Mr. Alcock: I will come back to you in just a second there, Sparky.

The first is that down in my constituency we have a number of schools. Now we have an elementary school called Lord Roberts, which is a particularly high quality school. It has a very good program for handicapped children. It is part of the Government's attempt, long-standing—in fact, it was a policy introduced by the former Government to mainstream handicapped children and to allow them to build relationships within a normal school setting. The program at Lord Roberts has been extremely successful.

* (1710)

The problem we face right now, Mr. Speaker, is that the children at Lord Roberts are now reaching an age where they are graduating, and they cannot go with their peers to Churchill High School because Churchill High School is not wheelchair accessible. The renovations to the high school are relatively inexpensive. The money is available through the Education Finance Board. All it takes now is some assistance from the Government to see that project is prioritized. I have spoken to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) about it and I would urge the Government to move on behalf of that project immediately.

The second thing I want to talk about is, I got a letter from the CNR just the other day and I am getting real tired of the CNR. The CNR Fort Rouge Yards sit right in the middle of my constituency. Last year, when I spoke in the House, I spoke about how they stored dangerous goods in that yard. They stored gases and chemicals and explosives, not for a long period of time, just for 48 hours but they store them there. We had an incident last year where a tanker car was leaking and we have a record of a whole series of incidents in that yard.

We appealed to the Government last year and we appealed to the CNR to work to put a berm in place that would provide some measure of protection between the rail yard and the people who live within a few hundred yards of those tracks. We have such a berm in the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) riding. We have such separations in the Minister of Urban Affairs' (Mr. Ducharme) riding. I think it is right that when such a dangerous situation exists we get one immediately.

An Honourable Member: That is where those housing projects are.

Mr. Alcock: That is exactly where those housing projects are.

There is another thing that goes on in the community. There are literally hundreds of people in my riding who work on Neighbourhood Watch Programs, and they do it because they believe in something called crime prevention.

Mr. McCrae: It is a fine program.

Mr. Alcock: The Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) says it is a fine program and I suspect he uses the language

of crime prevention. It is odd to me that it is absent from the speech. It is odd to me that all the emphasis on crime prevention that this Government theorizes about does not get reflected in action at any level.

-(Interjection)- Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice—I cannot let this go. The Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) talks with some pride about the night he was out at the university ward speaking on crime prevention. He was there because I set it up. I am the one who saw that he was invited to that. You took no action on it; I am the one who did it. I think you should be proud. I think you should be out a lot more often at those events. I think it is time you did something about it. Curb your dog. It is okay, the people who organized it, Jim, knows.

I do want to raise another concern—I referenced it earlier—and that is a very serious problem that exists at the Workers Compensation Board. That is not a new problem. It is a problem that this Government, when they were in Opposition, dealt with. There was a concern that was raised over and over and over again but I can tell you that after an entire year of waiting the situation at the Workers Compensation Board is little improved. If there is any constituent call that I get, chances are it is that one. They outnumber any other calls that I get. If there is any problem that stands out in my mind that I deal with on a daily basis, it is Workers Compensation cases. People cannot access money, they get cut off arbitrarily. They cannot get any kind of recourse or any sort of appeal in a timely fashion. People are going broke, they are losing their houses, they are being seriously financially burdened because of the incompetence of the way that organization is organized.

Now I know the new Minister has taken that as a priority and I have spoken to him about it. If there is any area this Government could focus on that would provide immediate improvement to some very vulnerable people, if it believes in what it says here about respecting vulnerable people, this is an area that it could move on quickly and produce some very definite good in a very timely fashion.

Mr. Speaker, I simply want to close by saying once again that I am going to vote for the motion. I am going to vote against this Government because I do not believe that this Government has anything to offer this province. After one year, one-quarter of a normal mandate, they have not done anything to improve the quality of life to people in this province, not one thing.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): I appreciate this opportunity to participate in the debate on the Speech from the Throne and I must say, Mr. Speaker, that I participate out of a great deal of concern and a great sense of unease. The Throne Speech, as we all know, ought to be a significant document. The ensuing debate ought to be meaningful exchange, and the current minority Government situation ought to have created an opportunity for cooperation from all Members of this House, on all sides of this House, to produce some meaningful exchange and some meaningful results. Instead what has, by and large, developed among the Conservatives on my left and the Liberals on my right is an orgy of infatuation with power. A lust—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for St. Johns has the floor.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has made reference to this place being a day care. It is a term that has been used by the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs). The Leader of the Liberal Opposition has suggested this place is a day care. Well, Mr.—

An Honourable Member: No, no, that is her caucus.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Her caucus. Let us get this straight for the record, Mr. Speaker. It has been suggested by many in this House that this place has become an adult day care. It has been suggested by the Leader of the Liberal Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) that her caucus is often falling to the behaviour of a day care. Well, I think that is not a fair comment about the state of any day care in this province, because I think the behaviour in this House is far below any activity that we have seen anywhere in any day care in this province.

* (1720)

I was saying, Mr. Speaker, that what we have seen in this House from the two political Parties on my left and on my right is an orgy of infatuation with political power, a lust for power, a power grab between the Conservatives and the Liberals of unprecedented proportions, a political game that has overshadowed all attempts to deal with substantive matters, with real concerns, with visions for the future. I cannot think of any other recent example, so early in a minority Government situation, where the legislative debate, where the political commentary, where the media coverage has been so preoccupied with the political games and power plays of this Legislature and so uninterested in the benefits of cooperating to do what is best for Manitobans.

It comes as no surprise to see that kind of orgy of infatuation with political power coming from the Conservative benches. We expected it. We expected it, we have seen this Government operate for a year on the basis of timidity, on the basis of caution, on the basis of doing nothing, founded out of this fear of being defeated and losing that political power. But, Mr. Speaker, we did not expect to see it so early among the Liberal benches. The speed by which the Liberals have shown their true motives have appeared so transparent, so blatantly opportunistic, so power hungry, has all caught us a bit by surprise. One would have thought that their recent arrival on the political scene would have brought some fresh new approaches to politics. One would have thought that they would not have become so involved in the games, in the backbiting, in the guttersniping, in the personal attacks that we have seen in the last number of days since this new Session opened.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen it on a daily basis. We saw it the other day from the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) who had the gall to stand up and suggest

that he personally would have no respect for voters in this province if they would choose to vote NDP in the next election. Well, I can appreciate a personal attack on me. I can understand it and I will accept it, but for the Member for St. James or any Member of that Liberal side to decide that they have no respect for voters in this province because they make a choice in terms of what is best for them is absolutely repugnant.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, one would not have thought that they, the Liberals to my right, would have had the gall to come to us and suggest that this Conservative Government, albeit bad and albeit a terrible Throne Speech, should be defeated on the basis of a do-nothing approach and present us with a do-nothing platform themselves. To have not presented anything more than a few general statements in a press release that has nothing of substance, that has shown no vision, it was interesting to follow the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) and to hear him criticize the Conservatives for lack of vision when he has not, and his Leader has not, come forward with a platform, come forward with a program. We have seen their position on pay equity, they are the same; we have seen their positions on day care, they are the same; we have seen their positions on the environment, they are the same.

The real question is, Mr. Speaker, in these few minutes before a motion on the part of the Liberal Opposition—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am sure all Honourable Members would want to give the opportunity to the Member for St. Johns, to get her remarks on the record. The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: The real question, Mr. Speaker, in these few minutes before this vote on this irresponsible motion on the part of the Liberal Opposition, the real question is, why should the New Democratic Party support the politically bankrupt Liberals to defeat a do-nothing Conservative Government and risk electing a Liberal Government that is as right-wing as the Conservatives on many issues, that is as self-centred and self-serving as the Conservatives, that has shown no commitment to a true progressive and democratic process in Manitoba?

Let me ask a question of the Members in this House, through you, Mr. Speaker, if Members in this House can tell me the difference between these two statements on day care. Let me read, such and such a party has stated that we will allow the parent subsidy to go with the child to the day care that parents deem most appropriate to meet their needs. Let us compare that with, if public day care spaces are not available and if that child qualifies for public subsidy, then the subsidy flows with the child to a private day care space until such time as a public space is available. Now, Mr. Speaker, can you tell the difference? Can you tell the difference? No. The first one is the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of this province, and the second one is Liberal policy coming out of a letter from the Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko). There is no difference, Mr. Speaker.

We have example after example. Let us look at the Home Care issue. We have heard questions today in the House from Members of the Liberal side about

Home Care, yet we know that their position is clearly not much different from the Conservatives in this House. They talk about a means test, a user fee. They talk about having the senior citizens in the North End of Winnipeg reveal all their financial situation so that they can assess whether or not that individual, that community is entitled to home care, no different from the Conservative Government who has decided to end a number of support services to seniors and disabled people in the North End.

There really is no difference in these two political Parties. When it comes to the economy, when it comes to the critical issues facing us now pertaining to employment, pertaining to growing poverty, pertaining to training programs, there is no difference. Mr. Speaker, let me give you an example in the last couple of moments before my time runs out. Compare the Conservatives of 1988 with the Liberals of 1978 and see the difference when it comes to employment strategy and economic policy.

Back in 1978, the Liberal Employment Minister, Bud Cullen said, I suppose one could make statistics prove anything, but the unemployment rate for men, 25 years of age and over, and I suggest with respect, that these are breadwinners dropped. Now compare that— (Interjection)— I am talking too fast. Compare that with the statement by the Member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson), the Conservative Member in 1988 when she said that there are people who choose to put their children in day care space and have them looked after, but they might be out there working, not necessarily because they have to, it is for the little extra things that they want.

Mr. Speaker, is there a difference? No, there is no difference. Seeing as time is running out at this part in the debate on the Speech from the Throne, let me say that what is critical here is for all of us to remember why we got elected, why the people put faith in us.

Mr. Speaker, some of us enter politics not for a power grab, not for political opportunism, but because we have to do something for the people of Manitoba, and I suggest to you, to all Members of the House through you, Mr. Speaker, that what this House requires on all sides of the Legislature is not political opportunism but political courage. To quote from an individual who has spoken on this, by the name of Madeleine Kunin from Vermont government, she said, "Political courage stems from a number of sources—anger, pain, love, hate. We should all feel it, anger at a world which rushes towards sabre-rattling displays of power; pain at a world which ignores the suffering of its homeless, its elderly, its children; hatred towards the injustice which occurs daily, as the strong overpower the weak, and love for the dream of peace on earth." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

* (1730)

Mr. Speaker: In accordance with Rule 35(3), I am interrupting the proceedings to put the question on the amendment to the House.

The question before the House is the amendment moved by the Honourable Leader of the Official

Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), to the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz), for an address to His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor.

Do you wish the amendment read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: But this House regrets that:

1. this Government has ignored the need for employment opportunities at a time when our unemployment rate is above the national average;
2. this Government has sold Manfor without adequate concern for the environment, Treaty rights or employment opportunities for our aboriginal peoples and Northerners;
3. this Government has for too long been apologetic for the federal Government and is therefore incapable of achieving fairness and equity for Manitoba and Manitobans;
4. this Government has failed to stimulate the economy of our province with the results that housing starts, retail expenditures are down while unemployment, interest rates and inflation are up;
5. this Government has failed to provide new directives for our health care system;
6. this Government has ignored the needs of rural Manitobans, including the need for rural diversification; and
7. this Government has thereby lost the trust and confidence of the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the amendment? Those in favour of the amendment will please say yea. Those opposed will please say nay. In my opinion, the nays have it.

Order, please. The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader): Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Call in the Members.

The question before the House is the amendment moved by the Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition to the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for La Verendrye for an address to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

* (1750)

A STANDING VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

YEAS

Alcock, Angus, Carr, Carstairs, Charles, Cheema, Chornopyski, Driedger (Niakwa), Edwards, Evans (Fort Garry), Gaudry, Gray, Kozak, Lamoureux, Mandrake, Minenko, Patterson, Roch, Rose, Taylor, Yeo.

NAYS

Burrell, Connery, Cummings, Derkach, Downey, Driedger (Emerson), Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Hammond, Helwer, Manness, McCrae, Mitchelson, Neufeld, Oleson, Orchard, Pankratz, Penner, Praznik, Ashton, Cowan, Doer, Evans (Brandon East), Harapiak, Harper, Hemphill, Maloway, Plohman, Storie, Uruski, Wasylcyia-Leis.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas, 21; Nays, 35.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the amendment lost.

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

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