



Second Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

LIB - Liberal; ND - New Democrat; PC - Progressive Conservative

| NAME | CONSTITUENCY | PARTY |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| ALCOCK, Reg | Osborne | LIB |
| ASHTON, Steve | Thompson | ND |
| BARRETT, Becky | Wellington | ND |
| CARR, James | Crescentwood | LIB |
| CARSTAIRS, Sharon | River Heights | LIB |
| CERILLI, Marianne | Radisson | ND |
| CHEEMA, Gulzar | The Maples | LIB |
| CHOMIAK, Dave | Kildonan | ND |
| CONNERY, Edward | Portage la Prairie | PC |
| CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon. | Ste. Rose | PC |
| DACQUAY, Louise | Seine River | PC |
| DERKACH, Leonard, Hon. | Roblin-Russell | PC |
| DEWAR, Gregory | Selkirk | ND |
| DOER, Gary | Concordia | ND |
| DOWNEY, James, Hon. | Arthur-Virden | PC |
| DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon. | Steinbach | PC |
| DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon. | Riel | PC |
| EDWARDS, Paul | St. James | LIB |
| ENNS, Harry, Hon. | Lakeside | PC |
| ERNST, Jim, Hon. | Charleswood | PC |
| EVANS, Cliff | Interlake | ND |
| EVANS, Leonard S. | Brandon East | ND |
| FILMON, Gary, Hon. | Tuxedo | PC |
| FINDLAY, Glen, Hon. | Springfield | PC |
| FRIESEN, Jean | Wolseley | ND |
| GAUDRY, Neil | St. Boniface | LIB |
| GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon. | Minnedosa | PC |
| HARPER, Elijah | Rupertsland | ND |
| HELWER, Edward R. | Gimli | PC |
| HICKES, George | Point Douglas | ND |
| LAMOUREUX, Kevin | Inkster | LIB |
| LATHLIN, Oscar | The Pas | ND |
| LAURENDEAU, Marcel | St. Norbert | PC |
| MALOWAY, Jim | Elmwood | ND |
| MANNES, Clayton, Hon. | Morris | PC |
| MARTINDALE, Doug | Burrows | ND |
| McALPINE, Gerry | Sturgeon Creek | PC |
| McCRAE, James, Hon. | Brandon West | PC |
| McINTOSH, Linda, Hon. | Assiniboia | PC |
| MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon. | River East | PC |
| NEUFELD, Harold, Hon. | Rossmere | PC |
| ORCHARD, Donald, Hon. | Pembina | PC |
| PENNER, Jack | Emerson | PC |
| PLOHMAN, John | Dauphin | ND |
| PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon. | Lac du Bonnet | PC |
| REID, Daryl | Transcona | ND |
| REIMER, Jack | Niakwa | PC |
| RENDER, Shirley | St. Vital | PC |
| ROCAN, Denis, Hon. | Gladstone | PC |
| ROSE, Bob | Turtle Mountain | PC |
| SANTOS, Conrad | Broadway | ND |
| STEFANSON, Eric, Hon. | Kirkfield Park | PC |
| STORIE, Jerry | Flin Flon | ND |
| SVEINSON, Ben | La Verendrye | PC |
| VODREY, Rosemary | Fort Garry | PC |
| WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy | St. Johns | ND |
| WOWCHUK, Rosann | Swan River | ND |

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, June 28, 1991

The House met at 10 a.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Child and Family Services Restructuring—Legal Opinion

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Last night, I had the opportunity to attend a second meeting of Child and Family Services agencies in the last couple of weeks. Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives may think it is funny, but there is a lot of pain and there is a lot of hurt out there with the volunteers right across the city of Winnipeg who have participated for hundreds and hundreds of hours, working with kids and families in the city of Winnipeg, who are very hurt about the unilateral and overnight decisions of this government.

Mr. Speaker, the feeling last night was one of hurt. The feeling of two weeks ago in NEW FACES agency, when the agency was still in existence, was one of optimism, was one of working together with families and parents in terms of their community, dealing with the problems of sexual abuse and dealing with the other problems for kids, a totally different feeling than we saw last night after the government's unilateral action.

We were also told last night, Mr. Speaker, by a lawyer at the meeting, and I am sure the minister has heard about it since, that the action of the government may indeed be illegal.

I would ask the Deputy Premier: Did they have legal advice when they proceeded with their decision to unilaterally close the six Child and Family Services agencies in the city of Winnipeg and move to the one super-agency that the government has established with its actions?

* (1005)

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): I think the Leader of the Opposition is well aware that what we have said about community involvement is that the board will be working with the creation of community committees to allow the

community to have input into the new centralized board.

These will be developed in four areas of the city to allow for the public input and allow for the election of board members from those areas. That will be moving forward in the coming months. The volunteers and the public input will be provided for.

In answer to the latter part of his question, the act does allow for the establishment and the dissolution of agencies. The answer is, yes, we do have legal advice on that.

Mr. Doer: I heard the community input last night, and everybody who was volunteering in the city of Winnipeg called this minister and this government a group of interventionist dictators, Mr. Speaker. We heard from the volunteers working last night.

I find it rather shocking that no Conservatives were in attendance, Mr. Speaker. Five MLAs represent the southeast area of the city of Winnipeg. Not one of them cared enough about the volunteers in the city of Winnipeg, in that region an 86-year-old agency. Not one of the Tory MLAs in southeast Winnipeg had the nerve or the principle to attend that meeting.

Mr. Speaker, would the minister, in light of the fact that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) -(interjection)- well, when you stop heckling, I will ask the question. The minister says he has legal advice on the position, the unilateral action he took over the weekend to disband these six community agencies and establish the Conservative super-agency in the city of Winnipeg.

In light of the fact that the Minister of Finance last week tabled a legal opinion about Bill 70, will the Minister of Family Services today table his legal opinion that gave his government the authority to take away the six community-based agencies and for the cabinet to make a decision that would overrule, in some lawyers' opinion, the legislative direction that was established in The Child and Family Services Act of 1985? Will he table the legal opinion?

Mr. Gillehammer: Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that the Leader of the Opposition does not want to

talk about service. We have said very clearly that what has worked in the agency—and I am sure my honourable friend from the Liberals will have a chance to ask a question. We will give him an opportunity, and I always listen to what he says, and I would appreciate if he would listen to my answer.

The Leader of the Opposition does not seem to recognize that there were service problems in the agencies. What we have left in place is the decentralized delivery of service because we have consistently said that is what works. We have left that in place, the same offices, the same personnel are there to provide that service.

What was missing was the lack of a co-ordinated approach. I would reference him to comments made by a spokesperson for the city police the other day in the paper and the concerns they had about the lack of co-ordination that existed in the system. Under a new centralized administration, we are going to have a more co-ordinated approach. We are going to have a sharing of information, and we are going to see that service standards are in place for people who want to access the system, no matter what part of the city they live in.

It is surprising to me that members do not want to acknowledge and talk about the problems with service, and the corrections we are making in administration are wholly there to provide better service to children and families in the city of Winnipeg.

Mr. Doer: If I have to listen to the minister tell me his system is better for service for kids or listen to the 300 volunteers whom I listened to last night who said the former system was better for kids and families, I will take the 300 volunteers any day of the week over this minister and his action—any day of the week.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I asked the minister to table a legal opinion. The government has tabled a legal opinion last week on Bill 70. If this minister has a legal opinion, he should make it public now, because the last thing we -(interjection)- well, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) asks why. The last thing we want is for agencies to take the government to court, get an injunction, stop the super-agency for a few months, and then the government would have to come back a few months later with another overnight takeover, as they did in the last weekend.

Will the minister now table his legal opinion if he has it? If he does not, what is he going to do about the legal issues that are raised?

Mr. Gilleshammer: The member continues to want to stay away from service and service improvements in the system. If there are legal issues, they will be handled in due course in the proper place. Those legal issues will take place in the courts and those questions will be answered.

We have also talked about improving the system in terms of appointing a Child Advocate, about the creation of a family fund. -(interjection)- Well, again, my honourable friend does not want to listen. He just wants to talk. I am sure that his Leader will give him a chance to ask a question today.

We will be proceeding with reform in the system to provide better service to children and families including a Child Advocate, including a family fund and including the adoption of high-risk indicators so that social workers will have that specific tool to work with in identifying which children should be taken into care.

Also, we have talked about the automated information system as part of this reform to give social workers the best information possible for them to do their work, that the previous system that worked was the decentralized delivery system. We have left that in place.

People were asking for reform. We have come forward with reform, and we will be proceeding with that in the near future.

* (1010)

Child and Family Services Government Interference

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Last night, Mr. Speaker, at the meeting that nobody from the government side deigned to attend, even though they are interested in communicating and consulting, a woman spoke out saying that she was a client of one of the Child and Family Services agencies that has been taken over by the government, that her Conservative MLA told her that if she spoke out sharing her concerns about the recentralization, she ran the risk of losing her services. I am prepared to share the information regarding the name and address and particulars of this case.

Will the Deputy Premier investigate the situation and take disciplinary action about this unbelievable

interference in the work of what should be an autonomous agency?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, without accepting any of the premise of what the member has said, I will ask the minister to review the situation which the member has brought to the Assembly.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that assurance on the part of the Deputy Premier.

Child and Family Services Information Release

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Family Services talks a lot about services in this new system. One of the abilities of children to be serviced by this new organization is that an MLA was told by a worker in one of these new—what used to be an independent autonomous agency, that the MLA could no longer talk to the worker about anything but a specific case.

I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services—I cannot talk about policy or any issues other than a specific case—how the minister can expect this type of gag order to be conducive to service provision to children in this city. Will he rescind that order? Will he tell his—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the member that there are no gag orders, that we want to hear from the community. We are going to be setting up community committees to allow the community to bring forward ideas to the board.

I would caution the member in her extent of fearmongering with the public here. We have said very clearly that what we are here for is to provide—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, our rules are very clear in terms of not imputing motive. If that minister had the courtesy to attend the meeting yesterday, he would have heard directly from the people—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order.

Point of Order

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on a new point of order, I ask you how much longer the chair will tolerate the member rising on the guise of a point of order and then attacking, making political cheap shots toward the minister?

When he rises on a point of order, he is supposed to deal with the mechanics of the situation at the point in time and not introduce extraneous debate. That is not the purpose for rising on a point of order. The House leader of the opposition knows fully well, and he is abusing the rules under the guise of a point of order.

Mr. Ashton: If the government House leader had been listening to the comments of the minister, he had accused our critic of fearmongering. He has accused our critic of bringing information to this House which was not verified.

I indicated that if the minister had been at the meeting yesterday, he would have heard firsthand from the people who stated the statements that had been made to them by Conservative MLAs. That is why I made that. It was quite relevant to the point of order I raised because the minister was accusing our critic of fearmongering. What our critic did was relay the direct comments made by volunteers and individuals who were at that meeting yesterday. She was fulfilling her responsibilities as an MLA—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind all honourable members of our Rule 38(2): "The Speaker may permit debate on the point of order before giving his decision, but the debate must be strictly relevant to the point of order." Also, a point of order is used to draw the attention of the House to a breach of the rules, not as a way to gain the floor for debate.

* (1015)

Child Abuse Prevention Programs Funding

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Family Services assure the House today that the money that has been raised in this year's Fight Back Against Child Abuse program will be set aside for services directed to child abuse prevention and service and not put into any global budget of the super-agency and used to pay for the salaries of the board of directors?

Hon. Harold Gilleshamer (Minister of Family Services): I will be pleased to pass that information on to the board. We feel that the Fight Back Against Child Abuse is a very worthwhile initiative, one that we supported financially and in every other way, and we would encourage that sort of program to continue.

I would say to the member that this was a system that was crying out for reform, that every group that I met with, every individual that I met with, who wanted to discuss this particular delivery of service in the province, was saying changes have to be made.

What we have done is left in place the delivery system which was decentralized, which was working in the community. What we have changed is the administration. We have also added other reforms which are going to provide a better system for working with children and families in this province.

Child and Family Services Complaint Process

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I have raised service issues with this minister frequently. The minister says that he has left in place the service delivery system. The service delivery system is based on a supportive community that is working to intervene in problem situations before they require the high-risk indicators, before they become cases, before they come into care.

I raised an issue with this minister a while ago about a mother who was trying to recover her child. That mother had no political axe to grind. She simply wanted to get services, and her first avenue was to go to her local MLA. When she did not receive any service, she went to the press and said, I have a problem here and nobody is helping me. She got a phone call from her local MLA saying that she was not going to get help if she complained.

Mr. Speaker, is that the new policy of this brave system that this minister has created?

Hon. Harold Gilleshamer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, we have said consistently that we encourage public input, that we will be putting in place the area committees to bring information to the board and to encourage that public input.

I would remind the member that he is talking about decisions made by a previous board. That board

made decisions based on the resources that they had and the information that they had, and they decided that they had offered a level of service to that individual which was appropriate. That individual was also accessing service from one of the treatment centres. Certainly there are always parents and families who want more services from the previous agencies. The previous agency was supplying the level of service that they felt was appropriate.

* (1020)

Meeting Request

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, the minister wants public input. He has had public input. He had a lot more last night and they said that the system the minister is trying to put in place does not work and their communities do not support it.

I would ask him if he is willing to meet with those organizations, if he is willing to go and get some public input and try to understand what is happening right now. If he does that, is he prepared to take their advice and withdraw this decision before it is too late?

Hon. Harold Gilleshamer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I applaud the parents for their continuing interest and we continue to encourage public input. I had indicated to the presidents of the former agencies and the executive directors when I met with all of them on Monday that we would encourage their continued support of the system. I also indicated to the new organization which has been organized, the Concerned Citizens of Families and Children, that I would be pleased to meet with representatives of their organization in the near future.

Staff Layoffs

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), from his seat, says it was a government decision, and in the government's cabinet room they destroyed an 86-year-old agency that has been serving the Francophone community since 1905. They also did something else. They took a 12-year veteran, 12 years this man has been the executive director of that agency, and they sent him home. When this community came together to mourn that, they told him he could not attend the meeting.

Is this the kind of openness that this minister or this Finance minister is promoting now?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I do not think that we want to start discussing individual personalities in the House. There are many, many valuable people in the system who will be accommodated, and we would welcome the input and continuing support of the particular employee that the member is referencing.

Port of Churchill Grain Shipments

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, the continued viability of the Port of Churchill is of major concern for members of this side of the House. For the last three years now there have been less than adequate volumes of grain shipped via Churchill.

Considering that the port is now open and is awaiting both ships and grain, can the Minister of Highways and Transportation tell the House what information he has re grain shipments to and through the Port of Churchill for the shipping season?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, on an annual basis we go through this process of trying to see how much grain is going to be moved through the Port of Churchill and every year, together with my colleagues, we have had meetings, as we did this year. The Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Downey), the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) and myself met with the chairman of the Wheat Board. I have sent letters to the federal minister. I have sent letters to everybody who is involved indicating that we are going through this annual process again. I find it sometimes very discouraging that we always have to go through this.

We have been pushing since 1988 to see whether we could get a long-term commitment by the federal government to keep the port viable. To date we have not been successful, but I just want to indicate to the member that we have gone through the process again, as we have in the past, in terms of encouraging, hopefully, grain sales and shipment through the Port of Churchill.

Port of Churchill Grain Shipments

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, on May 8, I wrote to the federal minister responsible for the Wheat Board requesting increased volumes of grain for the Port of Churchill. The minister has failed to

respond, and one gets a sense of déjà vu considering the Shilo issue. We can continue to wait until the port freezes over, or we can put pressure on the federal government and the Wheat Board.

The question I have is for the Minister of Agriculture. What plans re the transportation issues does this minister have when he goes to the federal-provincial meetings next week?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, certainly the transportation issue is a big issue for the prairie farmers, particularly Manitoba farmers. With regard to the ability of farmers to be able to pay the costs of running the entire system right from the farm gate right to the consumer, wherever they are in the world, is a major challenge to the farm community. I am going to be addressing it from that point of view, saying the farmer has to have a fair return at the farm gate. Government programs cannot offset those costs forever and a day, and everybody in the system has to be maximizing the efficiencies of keeping the costs down.

I just met this morning with Manitoba Pool addressing exactly that issue.

Port of Churchill Grain Shipments

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, given that CN Rail has been hauling 100 tonne-plus tankers of fuel to Churchill and 100 tonne-plus hopper cars of cement to Gillam, has the Minister of Transportation communicated with CN Rail to ensure that if we export grain through Churchill that the fully loaded standard hopper cars will be utilized so that costs can be reduced as the Minister of Agriculture just mentioned?

* (1025)

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): I have grave concerns about the program that was initiated for rehabilitation of boxcars to be used for shipping to Churchill. That fleet was improved at a tremendous cost. Subsequent to that it is again depreciating to the point where I think we have slightly more than 2,000 boxcars that are still in a position to be used. I have raised this issue with CN. I have raised it with the Wheat Board as well, in terms of if we get grain moving, get sales going through the Port of

Churchill, that we can have the assurance that we will have ample cars to move the grain down there.

I have been a strong proponent of the fact that we should be using hopper cars all the way to Churchill in spite of what the engineers have indicated over a period of time that it is not feasible to do so. I still feel that if the desire was there on behalf of CN, that this could be accommodated, and I will continue to promote that aspect of it.

Civil Service Appointments Investigation

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, one of the major concerns of many Manitobans is in regard to the fairness or the lack thereof of this government. We heard yesterday from thousands of workers affected by Bill 70 by layoffs and wage freezes. As Workers Compensation critic, on a daily basis, I receive calls from injured workers, in many cases totally disabled or unable to find a job, unable to get Workers Compensation, and yet we now have allegations that an individual who was apparently totally disabled was, through political connections, able to receive a job with this government in 1988 without any posting through the Civil Service Commission.

I would like to ask the minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission whether this case and other cases that have been brought forward to this government in terms of allegations of political patronage have been investigated by the Civil Service Commission?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for The Civil Service Act): Mr. Speaker, as the member for Thompson may be aware, the Civil Service Commission is currently conducting an investigation out of the allegations that arose with respect to one individual. That is an ongoing investigation. As allegations are made, they are going to be investigated.

Investigation—Terms of Reference

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, the concern has also been expressed as to the terms of reference of that investigation, whether indeed it will get to the bottom of the issue as to the extent, the patronage under this government, which has led to abuse of the Civil Service system.

I would like to ask the minister: What are the terms of reference of the investigation? Can he

table documentation indicating exactly what those terms are?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for The Civil Service Act): Mr. Speaker, the Civil Service Commission's terms of reference, as I understand them, are to see if The Civil Service Act or any of the provisions of legislation have been violated in the hirings of individuals.

Independent Inquiry

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, as a final question to the Deputy Premier, there are really two issues here. One is a question as to The Civil Service Act; the second is a question of the ethics of this government in the way it has treated the process.

I would like to ask the Deputy Premier if the government has now reconsidered its refusal to conduct an independent investigation into these allegations, many of which have been verified. Will the Deputy Premier now announce today that there will be an independent investigation of all aspects of this very serious matter?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, let the member listen to the answers he has heard of past in that there are two independent investigations already being carried out, one by the RCMP and the other by the Civil Service Commission, of which all information has been forwarded to. If the member has further information, he is quite free to forward it and advance that information for the full investigation that is in fact taking place, and it is independent.

Northern Flood Agreements Global Settlements

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, when the Northern Flood Committee negotiated the Northern Flood Agreement, they did so in good faith. They also thought that the province, the federal government and the Manitoba Hydro would do the same. When the negotiations were taking place to implement this agreement, they thought the NFA would be left intact and that the further negotiations would result in the implementation of that agreement. Instead, the Northern Flood Committee was shown something called a proposed basis of settlement.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Northern Affairs. Why is this minister, knowing the

consensus reached in the Northern Flood Agreement, undermining that treaty and trying to buy it out with a once-for-all flat fee in the proposed basis of settlement?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs, responsible for Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the member does not understand the issue and has not done very much work on it. If he clearly did understand the issue, he would be aware that some, probably three to four years ago, the five Northern Flood Committees came forward and asked for a global settlement to the Northern Flood Agreement. It was not the government that went to the Northern Flood Committee. It was the flood committee bands that came to government asking for a global negotiation.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, it is not a treaty. It is a contractual agreement between Hydro and the government and the bands. We are continuing to work with the Split Lake Band that have decided to continue on a global negotiation, and we are continuing to negotiate with the other four bands on an issue-by-issue basis under the original flood agreement.

* (1030)

Northern Flood Committee Funding

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, why was the minister not there in the meeting of February '90 and '91 with Canada and Manitoba Hydro then?

My second question, Mr. Speaker, is this: Why has this minister now reneged on all previous assurances and seen to it that the Northern Flood Committee will receive no further funding until it knuckles under the proposed basis of this settlement?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs, responsible for Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, at any meeting dealing with negotiations on the flood committee, either I or a representative of my office, the negotiators, have been at those meetings. At any time that there has been a request for the principals of the agreement to meet, we have met.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, there is no attempt—and I say this very sincerely—to do anything but live under the original flood agreement. In fact, I believe there are 15 separate articles which are now being worked on with the four bands, and there is a global

negotiation, which I understand is going very well, with Split Lake. It is only in the mind of the Liberals, at this particular time, that things are not progressing.

Mr. Gaudry: Maybe, if the Premier would take time and answer the letters of February of 1991.

Meeting Request

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, shortly after being elected three years ago, this Premier assured the Northern Flood committee that he wanted to be told personally if they had any problem in negotiations.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is that, since there are problems with process, will they agree to meet with the committee, answer their questions and explain the actions of the minister?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs, responsible for Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, let me make it so the member understands. I am not so sure that I can make it so clear that the member does understand, but I can tell you that there has been no Premier in the last 10 years who has done more for the work on the settlement of the Northern Flood Agreement and/or the Grand Rapids forebay settlement.

The advancement of \$10 million to the five Northern Flood committees took place under this administration, Mr. Speaker. The advancement of cash settlements to Moose Lake, Easterville and Chemawawin Bands took place under this government at the direction of this Premier. They waited 25 years for a government to acknowledge the responsibility of any settlement to them, so I do not think either the Liberals or the NDP have any room to criticize the action of this government.

I say, very sincerely, we want to see the result of the outstanding flood claims that are now before Hydro and the governments of Canada and Manitoba.

Core Area Initiative Renegotiation

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Urban Affairs.

An internationally acclaimed revitalization program, the Core Area Initiative, is slipping through our fingers as this government aggressively pursues its ideological agenda. Mr. Speaker, there is money for private schools, there is money for

corporate training programs, but every day, the welfare rolls are increasing, the gap between rich and poor in Winnipeg is growing.

Will the minister confirm that, this week, yet another trilevel meeting of ministers has been cancelled? Will he tell the House when he will be meeting with the city and federal governments to consider the deteriorating conditions for the people of the inner core of Winnipeg?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as the member for Wolseley full well knows, the Core Area Initiative agreement has been extended until March of 1992. An additional some \$20 million will be expended over that period of time for the benefit of people of the core and indeed people for the whole city.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, we are undertaking, as I have indicated on several occasions in this House, discussions with our federal and municipal counterparts with respect to a replacement for the Core Area Initiative agreement, which will expire in March of 1992. Those discussions are ongoing. In fact, those committees who are pushing for that new agreement have, in fact, indicated a time frame of the end of October for an original understanding and then January 1 for a date of implementation. We are, as I say, ongoing with those discussions and hope to be successful.

Funding Deferral

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, I cannot see how you can have ongoing meetings that are not even occurring. There are no meetings. That was my question. At the end of March, this minister froze a portion of Core Area monies for three months, until alleged cost overruns were clarified. Well, the time is up.

Will the minister agree now to lift the freeze, return the monies to the social programs and to the people of the inner city?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, what was deferred was about \$160,000 out of \$6 million in money that has been poured into the core for social programs—\$160,000. As a matter of fact, at that particular time, we approved about half a dozen other projects that had been ongoing and were about ready to be implemented. So let it not be indicated that somehow a large sum of money was not allocated for those particular programs.

Mr. Speaker, we have to live within our budget. Unfortunately, that is something that the members opposite have never been able to do, do not understand how to do it. We are going to live within our budget with respect to Core. The fact of the matter is that we have outstanding land settlements that have not been clarified yet and when they are, and when we see how much money is left in order to carry out the balance of the programs, then we will make that decision.

Land Expropriation Costs

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, the minister has had three months, at least. In fact, in many cases he has had since 1981. Will he now table the full expropriation costs of the four parcels of land he earlier indicated were involved?

There are two parcels on north Logan. There is the Air Canada site, and there are two properties in the former East Yards. Will he now table the full expropriation costs that he promised to table in this House?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to table the expropriation costs when they are not settled.

Youth Services Workers Meeting Request

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, this government does not seem to understand the situation for young people in the province. I had a very upsetting phone call the other day. I had a phone call from a former student who phoned me from a local hotel.

She is out of school; she is back on the streets; she is into the cycle of prostitution and drug abuse, common to many thousands of young people who are the victims of child abuse. The case exemplifies the frustration that was expressed by a group of youth workers whom our caucus met with. They are professionals who are frustrated with the system that this government is entrenching, an underfunded, understaffed system which further victimizes young people.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this question to any of the ministers who have a responsibility to youth services in the youth justice system, in Family Services, in Education or in Health. Will they answer their mail? Will they meet with this group of professionals who have asked to meet with them?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to answer that question. What the member is referencing is structural problems within the delivery of social services in this city, where there are social workers working in the Department of Health, the Department of Family Services, the Department of Justice, the Department of Education. We have examples where 10 and 15 social workers are working with that same child and that same family, nobody talking to each other. What we have done—

An Honourable Member: That is the old system. That is the system you set up. Exactly, thank you for agreeing with me.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* (1040)

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am glad the member acknowledges that. If you look at the inquest report that came out of the tragedy that happened in St. Boniface within the last two years, it is not a question of just putting more money in. It is a question of co-ordination.

If you read the report that came out of that inquest with 10 and 11 social workers, two and three agencies, nobody talking to each other. In fact, the inspector from the Winnipeg Police Department referenced that in his comments in the Winnipeg Sun the other day. Those are the structural problems that need the change, and that is the change that we have embarked upon.

Youth Services Workers Program Co-ordination

Ms. Marianne CerlIII (Radlsson): Mr. Speaker, caseloads have gone up and the number of staff is going down. The cuts and dismantling to the community-based Child and Family Services put pressure on all the other youth services. School counsellors are being expected to do things that they do not have the mandate or the resources to do.

Will the Minister of Education and Training co-ordinate a meeting between all of the youth-serving ministers and meet with this group that has sent letters to the government as well as a group called Schools Against Violence?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, in having listened to

the answers of the Minister of Family Services, I thought it would have been clear at this point in time that indeed the system has required a change for some time. The change that the Minister of Family Services has embarked on is one whereby we will be able to provide better services for those people who are not being served in a proper manner under the old system.

Mr. Speaker, I, along with the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), met with the Manitoba Teachers' Society, the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, the Manitoba Association of Superintendents and the Manitoba Association of School Business Officials, who jointly presented a paper on how we can better serve children at risk within our province.

The report was a positive one, one which calls upon the departments to come together and decrease the duplication and the overlap and allow for social workers to begin to communicate with one another. In that way, Mr. Speaker, we will be able to provide better services, and that is exactly what the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and I are doing—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Youth Services Workers Conference Funding

Ms. Marianne CerlIII (Radlsson): Mr. Speaker, as the system caves in on itself and on kids, these professionals have less time—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Ms. CerlIII: We know that there are problems, Mr. Speaker. As caseloads increase, workers have less time available to communicate with workers in other departments and agencies.

My question for the government is: Will they commit funds to a youth worker conference or workshop that will allow youth professional advocates to talk to each other, to problem solve together and to start to develop a multiservice approach for youth services in Manitoba?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, there is no one in this government more committed to the improvement of life quality for the young people than this government under the leadership of our Premier.

Mr. Speaker, it is a tragedy that we have seen some of the situations that we have seen develop under the system that has been in place. That is why this government and my colleague have embarked upon a change in the system that will in fact give us the resources, not just to have another conference, Mr. Speaker, but to do some real meaningful things for those young people whose lives have to be helped.

Economic Growth Provincial Comparisons

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance.

Manitoba's economy continues to lag behind most Canadian provinces. We have recent data from Statistics Canada showing that, in housing starts, urban housing starts declined by 77 percent in May over last May, which ranks us 10 out of 10; manufacturing shipments in April declined by 13.1 percent over the previous April, ranking us 10 out of 10; and again, according to a Stats Canada report, retail sales in April declined 5.4 percent, ranking us seven out of 10.

I ask this Minister of Finance, after four consecutive Conservative budgets, can the Minister of Finance tell this House why Manitoba continues to compare so poorly with the rest of Canada?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted that the member for Brandon East has been able to maintain his Friday winning streak and rush to his feet in the last five minutes to pose a question, because I know he could not live with himself, with a long weekend coming particularly, without having posed a Friday-morning question.

Mr. Speaker, I want to dwell on one aspect of manufacturing jobs. I do not have my data with me, but the members opposite would like to paint the scene that right now we are at the lowest level of full-time manufacturing jobs in our province. I want to indicate to the member that the lowest period, I understand, was in January of '87 when there were 51,000 full-time manufacturing jobs. Today it is in the area of 54,000 or 55,000, a drop, acknowledged drop from '88-89. When one looks at the monthly variation over the last 15 years in manufacturing jobs, monthly data, one sees tremendous variation as between 50,000 and 66,000 over the last 15

years. Today we are nowhere near the low level of January '87, when that number was 51,000.

Mr. Speaker, let me say firstly, with respect to Manitoba, that our manufacturing sector is obviously holding in. We wish it were more robust. We expect, with the measures that we have introduced over the last three or four years, gaining the stability that is so important in areas of taxation and labour reform, that that is occurring. Everybody is looking into Manitoba, and they are seeing it as the vanguard with respect to re-establishing in Canada confidence in reinvestment and job creation.

Mr. Speaker: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

Committee Changes

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, I have a committee change. I move, seconded by the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) for the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) for the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I also have some committee changes. I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: the member for Rossmere (Mr. Neufeld) for the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh), the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) for the member for Riel (Mr. Ducharme), the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) for the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), and the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson) for the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

* (1050)

Nonpolitical Statements

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): I would like to request leave from the House for a nonpolitical statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Leader have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Leave. Agreed.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Every Canadian knows that we live and we share in our country of Canada, the best country there is in the world as we know it. I think it is very important that we not only dwell on our differences in this Chamber, but we celebrate some of our real sharings of our country.

It is July 1 over this long weekend. This is our last opportunity to speak out in a positive way about our country before the weekend holiday. I am sure many of us will be spending time with friends, families in our communities over this long holiday weekend. I think it is just an excellent opportunity to celebrate the democracy we live in, the tremendous people who we have in our country, the tremendous resources we enjoy, the tremendous environment we have to steward to each generation and the just beautiful country that we live in in Canada on this day before the Canada Day celebrations.

I just want to add my brief words to our tremendous country, Canada. Thank you very much.

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave for a nonpolitical statement.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? Leave? Agreed.

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government I want to say, and on behalf of the people of Manitoba, that I think that we do have a country that is one of which each and every one of us are extremely proud of. We do have the freedoms, we have the resources, we have the people who I think want to continue in the manner in which we have lived together over the last one hundred and some years.

I say to the House and to the people of Manitoba, on behalf of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the government, I hope they continue to enjoy the kinds of benefits that this country has given them. We want them to enjoy the holiday season safely. We want them to take full advantages of this province and continue to make it the country that we all want to continue to be proud of.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Crescentwood have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

An Honourable Member: Leave.

Mr. Speaker: Leave? Agreed.

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, as we all look forward to the holiday weekend, it is a time for us to reflect on the good luck that all of us had to be born in Canada. Not all of our parents and grandparents had such good fortune and unlike us, or many of us who were born here, they chose Canada. They chose Canada because they knew it was a society and a country where their own particular difference, their own religion, their own culture, their own language could be shared with others who came here from all over the world.

What we share as Canadians is the freedom to be different and sometimes it takes the focus of a Canada Day celebration for us to remind ourselves. We do not even need the United Nations development agency report that says Canada is the second greatest country in the world to live in to be our guide. We know it because we live here. As we prepare for the celebrations of this weekend, all Canadians from all walks of life and from coast to coast should rededicate themselves to make sure that our future is as glorious as our past has been. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I would ask for leave to revert to tabling just for a moment.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable minister have leave to revert to Tabling of Reports? Leave.

Mr. McCrae: I am pleased to table Supplementary Information for Legislative Review for the Department of Justice, 1991-1992.

House Business

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): I just want to review some of the house business for next week. Just to reconfirm, it is my understanding that all members have agreed to take Monday's agenda to Tuesday. It will be Tuesday, Mr. Speaker, but we will sit Monday hours.

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreed? That is agreed.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources, at this point, I would seek the leave of the House to call it, sitting at this time, for Tuesday at 10 a.m. I would seek leave to also call it for

Tuesday evening, even though we will be sitting in the House.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable government House leader have leave? No? Leave is denied.

Mr. Manness: That committee will sit then on Tuesday morning and Thursday morning at this point in time, and that was announced yesterday.

Also, that committee, Public Utilities and Natural Resources, given that Bill 44 has completed its review, the meeting for 1 p.m. today will no longer be necessary.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you call the bills in the following order: Second Readings, Bill 60; Report Stage, Bill 38; Bill 49, Bill 35, and I will see how time goes on. It is my intent to, again, call Bill 70 toward the end of the morning sitting.

SECOND READINGS

Bill 60—The Law Society Amendment Act

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that Bill 60, The Law Society Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société du Barreau, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, the Law Society of Manitoba is empowered by legislation to regulate the legal profession in the province. In doing so, the society like other professional bodies must obtain amendments to their act from time to time. In fact The Law Society Act is frequently amended at the request of the benchers who govern the society. Lawyers, it seems, are constantly finding something wrong even with their own governing legislation.

The Department of Justice receives and reviews the requests from the Law Society for amendments. Where the government is satisfied that the amendments are in the public interest, the government brings forward a bill.

(Mrs. Louise Dacquay, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair)

Bill 60 is one of those bills that is developed at the request of the Law Society. Most of the changes

contained in the bill are of a technical nature. We will be providing to the opposition critics an explanation of all changes for use at committee where we can explain them in as much detail as honourable members require.

At this stage, I merely want to give honourable members some idea of the contents of the bill. Some changes are the result of changes in other aspects of the law. For example, we have some concern that the existing Law Society Act may be in violation of the Charter of Rights by insisting upon citizenship as a requirement for membership. Court decisions have made it clear that landed immigrants and other residents of Canada are also normally entitled to pursue their livelihoods. Accordingly, the requirement for lawyers to be citizens is being eliminated.

Other changes deal with the workings of the Law Society but raise no issues of public policy. For example, the society has asked for a reduction in the number of terms a bencher must serve before becoming a life bencher. We see no reason not to accept the wishes of the benchers in this respect. There are several such minor changes in the legislation.

Some of the changes are, however, substantive. The society has requested changes in the sections dealing with testimony of witnesses at inquiries and the permissible scope of practice by an articling student. Both of these have potential impact on the public, but the government is satisfied that the new rules proposed by the Law Society properly balance the interests of the legal profession and the interests of the public at large.

In many ways, Bill 60 is a routine bill and I look forward to detailed discussion of its provisions in committee. I, of course, commend Bill 60 to the House. Before I finish, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to talk for just a moment about what is not in this bill.

Not so many weeks ago the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) raised, in the House, questions relating the Law Foundation and monies granted by the Law Foundation to various community agencies and groups which carry out important work in our communities. There is a current concern for the operation of the legal libraries operated by the Department of Justice. The concern was that we might need to make a change in the legislation governing the Law

Foundation so that the department and the Great Library and other libraries run by the Department of Justice could be adequately financed.

That presented quite a problem for the government, a problem for the Law Society, a problem for the Law Foundation and a problem for the Law School of Manitoba. That problem has been resolved, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Before I sit down, I want to pay tribute to the leadership of the agencies that I have just referred to. I will single out Mr. Colin MacArthur of the Law Society, Mr. John Burgess of the Law Foundation and Mr. Roland Penner, dean of the law school of Manitoba. I thank those gentlemen, as well Tom Hague and others from the Department of Justice, for the good assistance that we have received and the co-operative attitude displayed by all of those people in helping us to resolve this problem. With that, Madam Deputy Speaker, I will sit down and hope for speedy passage of Bill 60.

* (1100)

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): I move, seconded by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

REPORT STAGE

Bill 38—The Wildlife Amendment Act

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Madam Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that Bill 38, The Wildlife Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la conservation de la faune, reported from the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

Bill 49—The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading of Bill 49 (The Colleges and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi sur les collèges et modifiant diverses dispositions législatives), standing in the name of the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), on the

proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach).

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): If we can have that matter stand, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Mr. Ashton: I have a number of comments I would like to add to the record on Bill 49, which is really part of the government's agenda, not really just in terms of education, but in terms of the way it is dealing with the public service of this province. I want to indicate that we are very concerned about Bill 49 and some of the implications of the type of system that this government is going to move toward.

Essentially, this bill allows this government to set up another layer of patronage, another level of patronage through the fact that under this college governance board the government will be allowed to appoint boards, will be in the position of, through its political connections which we have seen are fairly extensive, will be able to put its political control on the community college system of this province in a way that has never occurred before.

Up until this point our community college system has been an arm of government, and we know that particularly with this government that there are indeed limitations even with that. We saw allegations today brought forward. We have seen allegations for the last several weeks of individuals, campaign workers for the Premier (Mr. Filmon) when he ran for the Conservative leadership, appointed to Civil Service positions, including allegations an individual was totally disabled, according to court documents with MPIC, who was able to obtain a position with the government.

Concerns have been expressed that can only be dealt with through an independent investigation, and that is very relevant because I say there are even concerns with the way this government is running the public service, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is not to say there has not been patronage in other governments and other levels of government. That is an obvious fact, but this government has taken it to an extreme that we have never seen, some of the connections that we are seeing in terms of this government, in terms of key officials.

One individual in particular, who is under investigation currently, who I would say along with

perhaps one or two other individuals, was more responsible for giving the leadership to the Premier than anybody else. In fact the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) covered it as a journalist. It was key in the north end of Winnipeg, along with my former predecessor in Thompson, Ken MacMaster, who essentially delivered much of the North. That one individual, who is now under investigation, is more responsible probably than anyone for making the Premier the Leader then of the opposition and the Leader of this government.

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Just ask Brian Ransom.

Mr. Ashton: Just ask Brian Ransom, says the member for Crescentwood, because the Brian Ransom running at the time had support in many of the traditional Conservative constituencies, but it was the organization in many of the areas of the city of Winnipeg where the Conservatives had no organization previously. The stacking of meetings that took place—in fact the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), as the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) said, fully well knows the type of tactics that were used by the Premier, and he was a candidate who suffered as well because of the kind of tactics used by the now Premier and by his political associates.

Anyone who looks at what happened in that period will see the common thread between 1983 and promises that were made at that time to individuals, and see the common thread with the Premier who then, Madam Deputy Speaker, was Leader of the Opposition but became Premier on the delivery of those promises.

I want to point out for the record that at the time the current Premier (Mr. Filmon) was running for election, what we saw, and he has said at that time and others have said or have said subsequently, was that he was not in the position to be able to influence anything, to be able to guarantee jobs for anyone. I would invite members to look at the scenario when the current Premier was elected Leader of the Conservative Party. It was during the French language services debate.

If one looks at the situation politically at the time, I believe the Conservatives had a 25 percent, a 30 percent, a 35 percent lead in the opinion polls. Anyone at that time who was to have predicted who would have formed the next government, I am sure would have predicted it was the Conservatives.

They were wrong. The Premier managed to throw away a 35-point lead and lose the 1986 election, but that, Madam Deputy Speaker, was the type of scenario at the time and promises appear clearly to have been made.

That is why we have such a concern about this government having any opportunity for additional patronage. Bill 49 gives them that opportunity. We have seen the kind of promises made in 1983. We have seen very major allegations about, Madam Deputy Speaker, in terms of immigration, influence peddling in terms of positions.

Here we have the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) talking from his seat. I hope he will be one of the first in Cabinet to ensure that there is a complete and independent investigation of the political ethics of this government in terms of its political appointments, in terms of connections that go straight to the Premier's Office, straight to the Premier himself, before he brings in Bill 49 which allows yet one more opportunity for the Premier and whatever political associates, hacks and cronies whom he made deals with in 1983, whom he worked with in the election in 1983, to now once again be able to access the public purse for their own personal benefit to the detriment of the public of Manitoba.

I am not saying that there has not been patronage before. There has been at all levels of government. I think one of the most bizarre statements on patronage that has ever been made was made by the current Prime Minister. Who can forget the 1984 election, the current Prime Minister saying to John Turner, you, sir, had a choice? Most Canadians took from that, that the Prime Minister was opposed to patronage.

* (1110)

Mr. Carr: He said he was going to appoint every living, breathing Tory.

Mr. Ashton: That is right, Madam Deputy Speaker, as the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) points out, he said he would appoint every living, breathing Tory to positions, before he was elected. As is not unusual, I will say it proved out that he did indeed, once he formed government, try to appoint every living, breathing Tory to any position that he could and is still continuing to do that.

Mr. Carr: He has a problem now because there are not any left.

Mr. Ashton: As the member for Crescentwood points out, he indicates there are not any left. There are very few left and I notice that with the progress of the federal government, it is rapidly getting to the point in the opinion polls where I think the 14 percent of Canadians who support them probably are the people they have appointed to government boards, commissions and jobs, or want them. Senators, potential senators, et cetera, that is the only thing that is maintaining their profile in the polls at all before they sink out of sight.

I point to that because we are seeing the same thing in Manitoba. We are seeing the same thing from this Premier (Mr. Filmon). I remember some of the criticisms this Premier made about patronage and political connections. Look at this Premier—elected in 1983, fundamentally through the support of a number of individuals. Look at the subsequent connections involving that individual, both in terms of questions of legality which are being investigated and connections in terms of political appointments.

Now I ask you, Madam Deputy Speaker, I ask anyone in this House with an objective view—even a modicum of objectivity on this would indicate that there is a connection. It would also indicate that there is something wrong in what has happened when it goes directly to the Premier's Office. Let us not forget, it is not just 1983 we are talking about. It is other indications in 1991, in subsequent years from 1983 through to 1991, connections that are continually made to the Premier's Office.

What has the response of the Premier been, Madam Deputy Speaker? Has it been to accept the types of allegations that have been made and put forward a proper investigation? No. In fact, we are seeing the classic case of when anyone in the media brings forth matters of this kind, or any member of this House, the Premier, the first thing he does is, he maligns the person who is bringing the allegations forth. He shoots the messenger, Madam Deputy Speaker, and such is the type of activity one would expect from a government that is on the ropes. I will say that all governments probably fall victim to that.

I would say that the New Democratic Party government that I was a part of, in its latter years, did develop that difficulty of perspective, some might even say something of a bunker mentality. You know, I would say this government has within a record period of time developed that bunker

mentality, largely because this is essentially their second term, but now also because they have a majority.

We see the Premier (Mr. Filmon) maligning certain media outlets, maligning the reporters themselves for bringing forth these very severe allegations. I ask the Premier, when he was Leader of the Opposition and when allegations were made about the previous government, did he criticize the press at that time for bringing forth some of the criticisms that took place in the previous government? No, he was the first one to take advantage of that.

I also ask the Premier to put into perspective the degree of concern that exists about the types of connections that are in place, when you have people, in particular, who have been alleged to have preyed on refugees, potential immigrants and families wishing to see relatives immigrate to this country. When you look at those types of connections and see the connections to the Premier's Office, I ask you, Madam Deputy Speaker, is it really all that difficult for the Premier to understand that something is wrong?

I ask you, Madam Deputy Speaker, on this whole question, because once again we have a very major concern with this act, if it is passed, for more opportunities for patronage, and particularly this type of patronage, not people being appointed because they have ability to implement the policies of government. I think that is legitimate. I think it is quite legitimate for individuals to be appointed to boards and commissions that share the philosophical outlook of the government.

If you want to call that patronage, so be it, but for people to be appointed to Civil Service positions because of back-room deals, because of political connections going back to the 1983 leadership, debts incurred, political debts, political IOUs incurred out of a party leadership, I ask you, if it is not illegal, is it not unethical? It is the type of thing that we normally associate with other provinces.

I do not mean to malign Nova Scotia, for example, but I know many residents, former residents of Nova Scotia, who have said until even the current time, that is the way it works there. If you are a Liberal and there is a Liberal government, you are working on the highways. Conservatives get elected, you are fired.

Thank God, Madam Deputy Speaker, that we eliminated that type of patronage in Manitoba a long time ago. Even as partisan as the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) can be, he would never dream, I am sure, of hiring or firing Department of Highways employees based on their political persuasion. -(interjection)- He says never, and I believe him. I know he is a man of integrity and would not do that.

What concerns me though, and that is why I look to the minister, who has shown on a number of issues that he is not unwilling to take a stand based on integrity and principle even at the risk of being isolated from other members of the cabinet, for him to apply that same sense of integrity to the types of proceedings we are seeing with the political connections that are being made, that go right back to the Conservative leadership of 1983.

Madam Deputy Speaker, that is why I am so concerned when we see Bill 49, the opportunity for yet more appointments of this nature and more direct political control. As I said, there is influence in terms of the Civil Service but it is more limited. In terms of appointments in this particular case, there is nothing to stop, under this legislation, this government from appointing an entire board made up of people who have political IOUs from the 1983 Conservative leadership.

I look to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). He was part of that leadership campaign, and I have talked to many of my Conservative friends who were involved in that leadership. He knows what happened and the importance of certain individuals in that campaign, the key influence they had in terms of organization. I point to the Minister of Finance, because I know he was a candidate at the time, a relative newcomer, Madam Deputy Speaker, who I am sure must have believed in 1983 in the sense of some sort of integrity of the process.

I know it because I also have talked to the other leadership candidate, Brian Ransom, at the time, who fundamentally did not believe in the integrity of the process. In fact, there was media coverage of that. I really feel, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I say this not out of making any political points, but I felt sorry as an outside observer who knew Brian Ransom well, who was a man of integrity. I feel sorry, not that he did not win or lose a leadership, quite frankly, but in the process that was followed. The process that was followed, I feel, was very

unfair. I feel his departure from politics was premature because of that disillusionment he felt.

That is the type of process that can now have its ramifications eight years later with our community college system. This bill allows for direct appointment to boards and commissions, more government-appointed boards when, in fact, I ask the question, do we really want more opportunities for the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to be able to appoint political connections? I believe the answer is no.

I want to say that there are other issues of concern. I really want to ask the government to look specifically at what is happening. I am very concerned about the implications of this bill for the employees of our community colleges. I am very concerned about the implications of this bill in terms of their pensions.

* (1120)

I look to the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), and I ask the minister whether there will be protection of the pension rights of those individuals, whether they will be able to continue to be a part of our Civil Service pension system, whether individuals with 15 or 20 years will be able to continue to access. I ask the Minister of Education as well, and I look forward to a response from the minister. What are the implications going to be on the employees in terms of their pensions? It is the first major concern I wish to raise.

The second concern I wish to raise, Madam Deputy Speaker, is as to the status of those individuals themselves. What will happen to them in an organizational sense? They are currently members of the MGEA. Will those rights continue? What will happen to them in terms of employment? Our community college system has already been devastated by this government with recent layoffs. What will happen in terms of employment to these individuals? What will happen? Will they indeed be able to have any level of job security? I am concerned about those issues on behalf of the employees themselves.

I will say that there are other concerns I have too that go beyond the employees to the public of Manitoba. I am not convinced that this system will improve, particularly with the diminished resources that are available to the community college system, the delivery of community college education for Manitobans.

I say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that this, in fact, will be a detriment. There are changes that could have been made by this government and I have outlined them in the Legislature. I talked about a northern university, an umbrella structure that would maintain the integrity of our community college system and our university system through its universities in the north. I have indicated in this House that I believe that system will be the appropriate way to reform the system, and I say it would maintain the integrity of the system, maintain the type of delivery that the community college system has proven that it can come forward with.

I say that because this government argues that this is reform. This is not reform, this is not the reform of the community college system - (interjection) - That is right, to the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) I am keeping notes of my speech as I go along and I am glad that he is listening because I have concerns about the implication of Bill 49. I have concerns about it in terms of the context of northern Manitoba in particular.

I do not believe it will lead to an improved delivery service. I believe that the model was there for this government to follow, in terms of improved delivery service that could complement the community college system, and that, indeed, was the Limestone training employment agency. I do not want to get into the discussion about its success or failure and I will argue with anyone that it was well on the path to success. I will say, Madam Deputy Speaker, it was a far more accurate reflection of what was needed, in terms of the ability to expedite the process, than the current situation. What this current situation does is establish a new layer of bureaucracy for education in Manitoba. What we need is not a new layer of bureaucracy; what we need is improved program delivery. I will say this will do nothing for program delivery.

The minister talks about market-driven training. That is not a new concept in Manitoba, the influence of the market, in terms of providing—it is not the only influence, it should never be the only influence in terms of education. We should be looking at more than just market-driven training, we should be looking at the needs of our society as a whole, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I want to indicate this does really nothing to improve the market-driven training. There are already boards involved, not boards that are politically appointed, but advisory

boards. Keewatin Community College in northern Manitoba has had an advisory board for a considerable period of time. It has not always been listened to by this government, in fact, it has been ignored. There are advisory boards in other areas in terms of Women's Studies, for example, other areas.

I want to say to the minister, that is the thing that is missing in this bill, is a real opportunity for consultation, a real opportunity. I want to say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that this is the most unfortunate aspect of this bill. The minister will call this reform, and indeed it will be an excuse for this government to avoid the challenge of real reform of our community college system, real reform.

I want to indicate that there, indeed, is need for reform of the system. No one is disputing that. In northern Manitoba, the community college system there has had some success in recent years, but I believe needs improved success in terms of training for aboriginal people. One of the concerns I have received over the years from many communities is about the ability of an institutionalized community college system to provide appropriate education and training for aboriginal people. That is where the Limestone training made a number of significant departures in terms of training modes, in terms of training supports, Madam Deputy Speaker, to ensure that kind of training was far more effective.

Instead of building on that, what did this government do? Did this government take the Limestone training, improve it further? Did it amalgamate it with the community college system and combine perhaps the best features of both? No. What it did was, it eliminated the Limestone training. It eliminated what had become a model for training for northern aboriginal communities, being looked at by the Territories, being looked at by Ontario.

Madam Deputy Speaker, they eliminated that and now what they are doing is they are eliminating the community college system itself. They are establishing a board that gives them one more opportunity to pay off the leadership campaign, election debts of the Premier (Mr. Filmon), and whatever other political IOUs this government has, by adding now to a system that no longer has even the protection of the integrity of the Civil Service Commission—the degree that that is provided when you have this government in power.

Yet it now sets up autonomous boards governed by government-appointed boards, individuals, Madam Deputy Speaker, who are appointed by government. The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh), if she had been listening earlier would have heard my concern in that regard. I would hope that if she did not have the opportunity to listen directly to those comments, we will take the opportunity to peruse them. I really believe that what she misses in this point is, if the government was going to have a board structure, why not develop a board structure that is community-based?

I raise that as an issue because I have had some experience. I have sat on a major board, Madam Deputy Speaker, in this province—

An Honourable Member: Hydro's.

Mr. Ashton: Well, not the Hydro board, actually, I am talking about the University of Manitoba Board of Governors. I sat as a student representative, as UMSU president. That was in the days, incidentally, of the Sterling Lyon government, yet even then there was the provision built in, which was accepted and acknowledged by the Sterling Lyon government, of allowing for the appointment by the students of a representative to the board, over and above the president of UMSU, who sat on that board and participated in all discussions as a full and complete—essentially as an observer, Madam Deputy Speaker—but had full and complete access to all board discussions.

That was then, and this is now. We have a government now that seems to feel it can ignore the wishes of the students of the University of Manitoba, the Board of Governors, and indeed we saw the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) appoint an individual whose political connections were obvious to all, conservatively connected, over and above someone who was recommended by the University of Manitoba Students' Union.

So even in the limited degree to which we have some ability for community representation through direct recommendation, indeed to the government, this government has ignored that. Given its record, can anyone doubt that this board will be nothing more than a board that reflects the political IOUs of this government? Can there be any guarantee from this government that there will be anything other than that, when with an established board, with

established precedent for community-based appointment that will not be happening?

I raise that because we see in other issues the same process. We see it with the Child and Family Services agencies, the midnight dissolution of those agencies. I was there yesterday, Madam Deputy Speaker, at a meeting of the eastern Child and Family Services agency, which has been in place for 85 years, heard of some of the political manipulation that took place and heard the executive director of the board, who had been offered a position on this new super-agency board but was told not to release that to the public. What kind of manipulation?

She said no because she did not want to be part of a board that did not have community-based representation; she did not want to be part of a board that did not reflect the community. She had principle, and I admire her for doing it—

* (1130)

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for Thompson that debate on second reading of a bill should be explicitly relevant to the bill under debate.

Mr. Ashton: I am addressing the question of the appointment of a new board system and the policies of this government in appointments to boards, which indeed is part of the principle of the bill. I thank you for advice.

I make the point, Madam Deputy Speaker, again, that one of my major concerns is that, when you are going to have a newly appointed board structure, which is an integral part of this act, you will not have community-based representation. I have used the example of other boards appointed in this week to indicate the type of policies this government will follow. That is part of the problem. This board's structure is not community based. This board's structure is not community based whatsoever.

It will not have representation from northern groups, aboriginal groups, in the case of northern Manitoba. It will not have representation from cities and communities around Brandon, in the case of Assiniboine Community College. It will not have representation from residents of the city of Winnipeg at a community-based level, in terms of the Red River Community College. It will have no representation other than what is appointed by Order-in-Council by the provincial government.

That is indeed my point, Madam Deputy Speaker. Not only are they moving in an area that is not going to be to the benefit of the education system, but they are not even going to improve community access to this, whatsoever. They are instead moving into a system that allows them, by stroke of the pen, to make appointments, by stroke of the pen, to make appointments to a board that will indeed not represent the people of Manitoba, that will only represent the political needs, the political IOUs of this government.

Well, I want to indicate that this bill is of major concern to us. Indeed, of the bills that are before us, I would say that this, perhaps Bill 70 and Bill 38, Bill 35—there are about four or five bills in this session that are of particular concern because they are bills that are based on principles, if one can ascribe any principles to the government at the current time, the way it is acting, that we fundamentally disagree with. In this case, we fundamentally disagree with the dismantling of a system that, yes, could be improved. It can only be improved, to my mind, based on two principles. One is, yes, to improve community input, but the second is to maintain the integrity of its day-to-day management and operations, and not to insert, not to impose political agendas, political agendas that will only work to the detriment of community college students of this province.

I want to say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I believe that that is going to be the result of this bill. One only has to look at what has happened in other provinces to see that that indeed has been the experience. I believe that is the unfortunate aspect of this particular move. I believe this is the privatization of our community college system.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to indicate that we oppose that privatization of our education system. This is the real agenda. You can call it what you want. I can indicate that the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Derkach) will call it reform. This is essentially dismantling of the community college system as we know it. It can be no clearer than that. That is why we have fundamental opposition to the principle of this bill.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

I want to indicate, beyond that, that we also believe it is a bad bill, regardless of the principle. It does not deal with the very significant concerns of the employees in terms of their security of

employment, in terms of the rights to organize, continue to be organized with the Manitoba Government Employees' Association, in terms of pension rights.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that even given our opposition to the principle, we will be proposing amendments, as we will be doing on other bills, to try and make a bad bill somewhat less bad. I cannot be much more charitable than that. We believe this is a bad bill in principle, but it is also a bad bill because, once again, this government is making decisions behind a closed cabinet door, behind the closed caucus door, as they did with Child and Family Services agencies, decisions that impact on many people, decisions that have been done without consultation and decisions that have far reaching implications for the people involved both in terms of the delivery of the service and the receipt of the service, whether it be the Child and Family Services agencies, whether it be civil servants who have been impacted by layoffs and Bill 70, whether it be an increasing number of Manitobans that this government seems to feel it can make decisions with the stroke of a pen.

They are making decisions behind closed doors. They are falling into a bunker mentality, and I have referenced this before, where they make decisions. They will not even face the people who have been affected by those decisions, whether it be at the meeting last night, whether it indeed be with people who were affected by this bill in the community college system.

In fact, the sad part about this bill is that many community college instructors are not going to be working during the time in which this bill is being debated currently, will have limited opportunity to make expressions of their views known to committee. The bottom line is, they are in a position where, as a government, they feel they can manipulate the media agenda. They are doing it.

They bring in Bill 70. They bring in Bill 49 in a way in which they feel there will be limited discussion. I suppose that is what the Premier (Mr. Filmon) really meant when he said a majority is a majority is a majority.

Indeed governments, when they have majorities, have the ability to, behind closed doors, make decisions that are binding on this Legislature, because we all know that, due to the party discipline that holds more or less in the Canadian parliamentary system, once a decision is made in

caucus, it is very unlikely to be overruled, Mr. Speaker, by the members of this Legislature.

There is a responsibility incumbent on governments, particularly on governments who have a majority, to reflect the fact that that majority was given to them during a 35-day period, to reflect that indeed it represented a mandate of sorts, to reflect that indeed majorities that are given can and will be taken away in elections, to reflect indeed that majorities given during an election, in terms of popular support, can dissipate quickly. I point to the federal government, which has sunk out of sight in terms of public support indicated by the Spicer commission. I notice that about 99 percent of calls that have referenced, the Prime Minister and the government have been negative. Who can blame them? I say that once again, in terms of this government, I believe they are headed in that direction.

I believe that the process that is happening here is that the more they make these back-room decisions, Mr. Speaker, the more isolated they become from people, the more angry and upset people become, the more of these types of decisions that are made behind closed doors, it becomes a cyclical process. If they do not understand the meaning of that anger and frustration, I wish they could have been at the meeting I attended last night or the rally in front of the steps of the Legislature yesterday.

I think one of the most appropriate comments came last night in a context of another move, which in many ways reflects the policies of this government on this particular bill, when that individual said that their first reaction was one of anger. He was a former executive director of the Child and Family Services agency that had been dissolved after 85 years and said that, basically, these were not people who were radical, who were protesting, or had a vested interest. These were just ordinary citizens who were volunteers, workers, clients of that particular service.

* (1140)

It is the same thing in the community college system. The people who are angry about this bill are just ordinary citizens. They are not radical for the sake of being radical on this or any other matter, although this may in a way politicize them in a way this government does not realize, Mr. Speaker, and may radicalize them in a sense. It is a difficult word

to apply. Some people accept it, some people do not, as a description of their actions. That is what is happening in terms of this particular bill, is that people are being politicized. They are seeing the true political agenda of this government, and this government, instead of responding, is becoming more and more defensive.

It is time this government stopped making decisions behind closed doors. It is time this government stopped making decisions that impact on people without considering their own needs. This is one opportunity really. I believe, this session of the Legislature is a watershed for this government, a watershed. They have some opportunity, some limited opportunity left, Mr. Speaker, on this bill and others to withdraw from that particular stance they have adopted. The opportunity is only based on one thing. It is based on the ability of this government to listen, to even enact or support amendments that are brought in by the opposition caucus, the most limited amendments that could provide some sort of amelioration of the type of negative impacts on the employees. I believe it will be a watershed. I am not saying that this will be the road to the government's political salvation. I feel their problems go beyond that, in terms of the economic circumstances of the province, in terms of other issues that have developed that I referenced, in terms of the political ethics of the government, in terms of its priorities. Those issues will continue.

What they have come across, Mr. Speaker, what they do not realize is that what is at issue here is not strictly the issue of the basic principle of this bill. It is also an issue of the way it is treating the people who are involved in the delivery of this system and the receipt of this system.

I ask this government, and I say it, as I have said, in the full knowledge that this is indeed a watershed and may not really be the entire problem, I ask them to do one thing at least.

I will say that we will oppose this bill, we will debate it vigorously. We look forward to presentations at committee on this bill to hear what members of the public say, but I ask this government to at least consider amendments at committee stage that will ensure that even if this is a bad bill in principle, even if it sets up a structure that will not improve education in this province, the immediate victims will not be the many dedicated civil servants who have worked in the community college system

for many years, Mr. Speaker, and whose job security and whose rights to organize and whose rights to receive the pension to which they have been contributing are potentially at risk in this bill.

I ask them at least for that. If they will not change their mind on the principles of the bill, would they at least make sure they do not make those dedicated civil servants, who delivered community college programs for all these years, the victims of this poorly drafted bill? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Was it previously agreed that this matter remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman)? No? Okay.

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Mr. Speaker, this Bill 49 seeks to change one of the community colleges, the structure of governance of that institution so as to allegedly give more autonomy for self-governance to the Red River Community College. In so doing there are certain consequences and implications that we should analyze, because they lead to some unexpected and sometimes adverse results.

For example, what would happen to the displaced members of the teaching staff in the community colleges with respect to their pension and their hope for security after many, many years of service to the institution? It seems that this legislation does not provide any protection to the employee pension plan which presently is under the Civil Service Superannuation Board for administration. Would this employee be allowed to continue with their pension under The Civil Service Superannuation Act? Obviously, the purpose is precisely to cut them off from such institutional arrangements.

However, it can be done if there is a will on the part of the government to protect the future of these people who have been spending their life in the service of education, particularly in that area of technical training to prepare people for jobs and job opportunities in life. Unless there is some kind of guarantee that their pension system will be kept intact, the integrity of the pension will be preserved, their future security be assured, there might be some need for a rational pause to consider some amendments as to allow the employee to continue on with their pension arrangement as if they are still under The Civil Service Superannuation Act simply to assure some kind of vested rights in their pension benefits.

If that can be negotiated and arranged, there might be some kind of smooth transition from the old institutional arrangement of being completely under the structure of the present government of the province into a semi-autonomous or fully autonomous institution of learning just like any of the established universities in this province.

There is also some provision in this legislation which will allow the repeal of the applicable provision of The Labour Relations Act permitting the employees and members of the Red River Community College to be represented by a single bargaining unit. If this relationship is cut off, that means that it will no longer be possible for all the different sectors and segments of the membership of the community college to be represented by one bargaining unit.

It will allow then the government to break up the various organizational units into several unions. This is an attempt clearly to break up unity among the workers and employees of the Red River Community College. This is a policy of divide and conquer. If you can split up united organizations opposed to your ideology or your policy and you can bring about divisions and differences among them, then they become weaker, because we know that only in unity there is some strength. If you can destroy the solidarity and unity of any group, then you weaken their position with respect to bargaining for the rights as members of an organization.

There again, on this score, it might be reasonable and indeed advisable that there be an amendment to allow the provision of The Labour Relations Act to continue to apply so that all individuals there in the community colleges may be represented by a single bargaining unit in the same manner and fashion as it is presently legally possible under the provisions of The Labour Relations Act.

Education is one of the functions of government, with respect to its own people in our society. An education generally can be categorized into two forms. The higher level—they call it the university type of education—which does not lead to any particular job or any particular training. It is simply a lifelong process of orienting the values and attitudes of people so that they can have the flexibility and adaptability to the conditions that are always changing in their life's environment.

* (1150)

A university education does not lead to any particular job. There are so many university students who finish B.A. and other degrees, who do not know how to type a letter, but they know how to think, they know how to adjust, they know how to adapt to the changing conditions of life.

On the other hand, we have these community colleges which are geared to the specific job training and job skills. The purpose is to develop them into efficient, effective members of the working force so that they can fit into the job categories and they can carry out the expected responsibilities and duties of our industrialized society so that they can earn their livelihood and prepare themselves for some life career or job.

This is the role of the community colleges that have been established during the first regime of the New Democratic Party under the Honourable Edward Schreyer. We have established the community colleges because it is an essential part of training for skills and development for our human capital, the resources for our economy, mutual prosperity of our province. Precisely, they have been placed under the direct governance of the government in power because the government is in charge of economic planning, of charting out what kind of activities to undertake in order to plan the future and prosperity of the province.

Since there is that relationship between jobs and manpower and allocation of resources and the productivity of the province and the country, it is the responsibility of government to maintain these community colleges and knit them nicely into the manpower planning, into industrialization and economic growth and development of the province.

By granting the community colleges the autonomy comparable to the established three universities in this province, it appears that they are now—there might be some kind of reorientation of the basic goals and objectives of community colleges. They will be behaving just like any of the three universities. There might be some changes in the curriculum, some kind of changes in their purposes, in their objectives, that they no longer can be reasonably distinguished from the three other universities.

It also is implied that they will have to come up with their own established financing. They no longer can depend on the budgetary allocations of the government of the day, whenever they pass their

annual budget to run the various structures and organs of government. They have to have a separate source of fund to run the established community colleges.

It means, in practical terms, there will be tuition fee increases to shoulder all the increased costs that no longer can be met by the budgetary allocations of government. They have to come up with their own funding, scheme and fundraising activities, in order to come up with separate pools of money quite distinguishable and separable from the annual allocations that they can expect if they are part of the structure of government.

Obviously we can expect tuition fee increases in the community colleges, as it has been happening now in our university system. Recently in the university system there has been an increase of up to 20 percent in tuition fees. Again, there are some implications to this as to the kind and type of students that can have access to the educational training and development that they desire in order to prepare for the future. If a poor student from a poor family can no longer raise the necessary family resources to help him out in his educational endeavour, to improve his chances in life and prepare himself for a career, he cannot even enter the university. He cannot even enter the community colleges for lack of resources if tuition fees are no longer bearable by the ordinary rank and file members of our province.

Therefore, there will be different kinds of people who will be able to access the education system. The poorer segments of the population will not be able to do so; the richer, more affluent members of society would, and can easily enter these educational institutions, whether they are universities or community colleges. There will be a different opportunity for people of different socioeconomic status in our society. There will no longer be equality of opportunity to get into this kind of education, the technical, job-oriented, career-related kind of training to find a reasonably self-satisfying job that is suitable to their personal capacities and abilities and skills.

The increases in tuition fees obviously will depend on the discretion of the governing boards that will be established to run these separate and autonomous institutions in our society. If the tuition level that they will charge will depend upon the cost of running the institutions, and if they can no longer depend on government grants or government allocations as

part of the normal annual budgets of governments, that means tuition fees will escalate even among the community colleges as they are escalating now in the university system.

The trend is clear for the future. Education will be more and more expensive to undertake. Without any public funding, the community colleges will have to be run on its own feet financially. They will have to engage in community fundraising and other kinds of activities in order to sustain their curriculum and to continue on teaching the courses that they have been teaching. Who will then assure that the increases will be reasonable? Who will give them the necessary wisdom and discretion so that it will be within the reach of the ordinary Manitobans, especially the younger set in our society, to be able to prepare themselves for some kind of skills in a technically rapidly changing society?

* (1200)

Nowadays the skills that are required for a successful job career in our society have been rapidly changing all along. Many people have been displaced because the knowledge they have, the skills they possess, the abilities they have as individuals, are no longer relevant in a technically oriented computerized kind of society that we are facing in the future. Nowadays if you have certain skills that are obsolete, you find yourself jobless, and when you do, you have to rely upon the public assistance system and you cannot depend on it for a lifetime sustenance. You lose all initiative as an individual to improve yourself economically and socially. You become almost always dependent on the existing social system.

People nowadays need more than one skill in order to be able to adapt to the changing conditions of life. Almost everybody now, especially the younger people, are expected to be trained in some kind of computer knowledge, at least literate understanding of the computer system. It seems that the computer and technological machines are rapidly changing taking the place of some of the employees in many of the institutions and firms and other organizations in society. Management information systems are now the source of intelligence, source of data, source of information. If you do not know how to talk with a computer, you are left behind and you fit nowhere and you do not understand the ongoing changing technological system in our society.

If the tuition fees that will be charged to students in the community colleges should increase in such a manner that they exclude practically the majority of our youth to have the opportunity to get into some kind of training for the future, then you could see the implications of that in terms of the society that we shall have after so many decades when they are unable to improve themselves because of the cost of education.

Education may be expensive, true it is. If you compare the cost of the education as it is happening now across the border in the United States, we should be very thankful that the level of tuition fees we charge in Canadian universities is still within reasonable limits compared to those being charged by some well-known universities and institutions of higher learning in the United States.

For example, I understand that in the Ivy League colleges in the eastern seaboard, the well-known universities like Chicago or Harvard or other well-known institutions, you need no less than \$25,000 a year as a student to pay all the fees, tuition, board, lodging and all the expenses that entail a college education. That is just for one year. In our country, Canada, this is still within reasonable limits.

An Honourable Member: How much do your children pay?

Mr. Santos: My children are all finished. They are done.

An Honourable Member: How much did they pay when you were a professor? Zero.

Mr. Santos: Oh, they paid a reasonable amount.

Now, if these community colleges become privately endowed institutions and if they now become an independent, privately managed educational system, then they will have to submit to the economic law of supply and demand. There will be escalating costs of running the colleges. Only the well to do will be able to afford it. The poor and the helpless cannot access that system. There will be lots of dependents in our social assistance programs. It will be worse for this province and for our society.

The government is indeed renegeing on its obligation for the proper education and proper training of its own citizens, because then it would be too expensive for the members of the public to be able to access either the university or the public

educational system, and they will be unable to prepare themselves, unable to train properly for their proper role in our industrial society—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, given my honourable friend's great concerns about education costs that he just expressed, I wonder if he might pause for a question that I would like to pose to him.

Mr. Santos: Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to do that after I am done with my speech but not before. Just like the member does not want to be interrupted when he is speaking, so do I.

Now I lost my train of—education is not merely a matter of knowing something. Of course, it is absorption of information and knowledge, but information alone is not enough. As soon as we acquire the knowledge through proper training, education, reading and study, it is also part of education that we should know how to apply what we know in a proper way so that we may also know how to live our life in a manner that will be suitable to human fulfillment and human development and self-satisfaction.

There are so many educated people, supposedly, who have acquired excellent technical knowledge and yet so lacking in common sense when it comes to the preservation of our society to the pursuits of individual, preservation of individual and personal values. The things that make life enjoyable, they have forgotten. They are so bereft of moral constraint that they will do anything that violates the sensibilities of people for the sake of advancing some short-term, short-run objectives and goals that are not worth pursuing, because they are so oriented to the materialistic achievements forgetting all the finer values of human existence.

Now this board, supposedly the board that will govern the community colleges, supposedly will contain some 10 or 12 members who will be appointed by the government. Now who will be represented in the board? The proposal is that there will be one student and one employee. If the students as a body, as a group, are compared to the body of customers—and in business education they say, customers are always right—if the business firm is to survive and prosper and grow, it must please its own customers and it must satisfy the wishes and demands of those customers.

So with proper education, if education is compatible, then the education should gear its objectives and goals to the satisfaction and meeting the needs of the student body. The student body are the clientele of the educational system. They are the consumers of their services. They are the ones who sustain the development of the educational institution.

I think that one representation, one student member of the boards and colleges is simply nominal representation. It is of no meaning, because the majority of the board will be business-oriented people who have no understanding at all of the student needs and student aspirations and hopes in the pursuit of education.

Consequently, for this board to be publicly accountable, it should be a macrocosm. It should be a mirror image of the community itself. The various interest groups in society should be represented in that board, so that there will be a well-rounded perspective about the needs of community colleges, the needs of society, the needs of industrialization, the needs for job training, the needs for job skills and development.

The requirements in our industrial society will be considered in the deliberations of the board, if the board is truly representative of the various segments and interest groups in our society. There is a need for more student representation in the board. There is a need for more employee representation in the board. There is a need for more public representation in the board and less representation by the political hacks and appointees of any party, whether in power or not. -(interjection)- Well, they are all fair segments of our society. Appropriately, they should be reflected in the board's representation in the appropriate proportion.

Any governing board in our society, whether it is the higher education, whether it is a business firm, whether it is the government, the only democratic and sensible way of governing any organization, any institution in society, is a reflection of the people that they serve. If the students are the people that are being served by the community colleges, by definition the students should be properly and appropriately represented in the governing board of all the social institutions, not the people who get defeated. Of course, they have sacrificed their career to help in serving the community.

* (1210)

This list led to a discussion of the debate concerning appointing people who belong to the same ideological group of the governing responsible party. It seems, no matter how much we try all across history to stamp out political appointments, it cannot be done, because it is only sensible that the government in power wants to carry out its objective, its platform and its policy. The only reasonable and sensible way to do this is to seek the help of people who believe in the same way, in the same fashion, in the same point of view, in the same outlook in life.

If you appoint people who are opposed to your view of how society should progress, how society should be structured, then you are, in effect, making it more difficult for you to carry out your political mandate.

Does it mean that we have to institutionalize political appointments? No. It means simply that, in addition to merit, political affiliation should be one of the considerations, but not the only nor the dominant consideration. People who have abilities, people who have the skills, people who have knowledge, people who have foresight, who can meet the challenge of the job, those are the people who should be selected. If it so happens that they belong to the same political party, all the better, because they will be able to help out the government carry out its mandate and its objective.

The appropriate thing is the morality of it. Are we appointing people who are capable of doing the job? Are we appointing people who know the area of the field of expertise that they are supposed to be monitoring. They are supposed to be helping that minister. If their only qualification is the political affiliation and nothing more, I think it is the worst kind of position there is, because it will be injecting into the system people who cannot carry out nor understand their responsibilities at all. That is the worst kind that could happen in any kind of system of government.

The danger in this restructuring of the community college is that precisely that may happen in the institution and the composition of the governing board of the community colleges. People who have no understanding at all of education may be appointed into the board simply because they have a strong political tie. They do not understand why the community colleges are established in the first

place. They do not understand the needs of the students. They do not understand the needs of the community. They do not understand the prospect of our industrial society, the need for skills and the need for jobs that will be needed, the kind of categories of employment that will be required for the changing, rapidly changing, society of ours.

If they do not understand all these things and they get appointed to the board, then there will be policies there that will not be suitable for the prosperity and progress and economic development of this province.

It is very important that people who are able, who are knowledgeable, who are qualified, be appointed to the board, the governing board of our community colleges. More important, the governing board should be reflective of the various interests and views of the various segments of the population who have always a stake in the development and prosperity of our province.

The more representative the board will be, the more it will be conscious of its responsibility to the community and to society at large, the more it will perform such responsibility dutifully and responsibly and then the purpose of government will be served.

It is the purpose of government to educate its own citizens in the proper way. As soon as the government abdicates and gives this responsibility to some private groups in society, the private group will not pursue the public interest any more. The private group, by definition, is motivated by its own particular interest group, quite distinguishable from the group of the general interest of society. If the group takes over, the vested interest group in society, then there will be a serious kind of situation. The more they pursue their own private interest group, the more they neglect the general interests of society at large.

It can be expected because the basic motivation of any individual or any group in society is to promote his or its own self-interest. The only way that can be circumvented is to make the board representative of the public at large so that even if they do pursue their own self-interests, if they are representative of the public at large, their self-interest will coincide with the general interests of all. That is the reason why we had to adapt a universal kind of criteria in order to select the appropriate people who will run the various institutions in our society, universal criteria that are

more or less accepted by all, shared by all, that the appointee should have the necessary skill, the necessary knowledge, the necessary training that is suited to the requirements of the job to which he is being appointed, in addition to his other political qualifications.

So there is this question of accountability. Will the board be meeting once it is institutionalized? Will the board be meeting openly? Will its minutes of meetings be accessible to the general public at large? Can the board designate certain matters confidential? Can they close their door and meet in secret and then decide on some policies, on some programs with no access at all on the part of the public? That is another issue in this matter of restructuring and reorganization. There must be some kind of access by the public to attend the meetings of the board, to be able to hear their deliberations, participate even in the deliberations of the board so that they will arrive at some decision that will be shared by everyone in society and will be acceptable to everyone.

* (1220)

Education is not simply a stage in the life of an individual. We begin our education as soon as we are born into this world. We start learning as soon as we have the capacity to understand ourselves in relation to our environment. A child learns how to walk, he learns how to talk, he learns how to feed himself and he learns to do all of the things that need to be done in order to survive. So even if a person is already mature, even if he belongs to the middle-age group, even if he belongs to the seniors group, he is still in the process of education. There should be an understanding in our society that education should be open and accessible to all age groups, to all gender groups, to everyone. Anybody who wants to improve himself, to improve his skills, to change jobs and change his skills should have the opportunity to do so.

The only way it can be done in our society is for the government to give its support to the educational institutions that already exist to help all these educational institutions perform that function of educating its people. The more enlightened the people are, the more literate they are, the more knowledgeable they are, compared to other peoples of the world, the more easy it is for the governments of these people. Democracy can only thrive, can only be practised, can only succeed when the

people have a high level of literacy and a high level of knowledge and learning.

If the people are kept in the dark because they have no access to public education, they have no access to educational opportunities and they have a level of knowledge that they can easily be duped by their leaders, then democracy will be at risk. If you correlate the level of education among the greatest nations of the world, all the more democratic governments and the more democratic societies in the world, necessarily by definition, have a higher level of education compared to the less educated countries in society. If people are not educated there will be more opportunities for oppression and more opportunities for leaders to exploit their own people for their own selfish purposes.

We have seen the advent of authoritarianism and despotism simply because the people are too ignorant to understand what is going on. The vigilance of the citizens depends upon their knowledge and their public awareness of what is going on around them. If the citizens are knowledgeable, they are well educated, they have opportunity in the basic educational system to access those public educational systems, then they will be more vigilant when the leaders in society are no longer serving the public interest.

As soon as we acquire the necessary level of training and the necessary education that we need, it is our responsibility to put into use the knowledge that we have and to help assure that the society that we like, the society we envision, the society of enlightened citizens will continue on by adhering to the higher and finer values of human society.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for—

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend, in the course of his remarks, said that he would take time to answer a question.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to allow the honourable member for Broadway (Mr. Santos)? Leave? Leave. Agreed.

Mr. Orchard: A very short question. My honourable friend expressed concerns about education costs in Manitoba going out of the affordable range of the ordinary Manitoban. I would presume. Could my honourable friend indicate

whether the free university education his children receive helps that problem or makes it worse?

Mr. Santos: If this government knows its own priority, if this government had been wisely developing its policy according to rationality, they will not be giving more money to those who already have in our society, making the rich richer and subtracting from the poor senior citizens whatever little help and assistance they get by cutting them off. What kind of government is this that makes the rich richer and makes the poor poorer?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman).

House Business

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, I would ask for leave to move that we rescind a motion that was made by the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) yesterday, seconded by the honourable member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey), that the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be changed.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave? Leave.

Mr. Penner: I would like to move then that we, seconded by the honourable member for LaVerendrye (Mr. Sveinson), rescind the motion to change the standing composition of Public Utilities and Natural Resources.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 35—The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst), Bill 35, The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la ville de Winnipeg, standing in the name of the honourable member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen). Stand?

Some Honourable Members: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

* * *

Bill 38—The Wildlife Amendment Act

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): I would move, seconded by the Minister of Health

(Mr. Orchard), that Bill 38 (The Wildlife Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la conservation de la faune) be now read for a third time and passed.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave of the House to allow Bill 38 third reading? Is there leave?

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Speaker: Leave is denied.

* * *

Bill 70—The Public Sector Compensation Management Act

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill 70, The Public Sector Compensation Management Act; Loi sur la gestion des salaires du secteur public.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I know the minister would like to call it 12:30, but after what happened yesterday, we will debate this even if it is three minutes to the adjournment time. This being the fifth day I have had the opportunity to debate this, I want to say to the Minister of Finance, who had the opportunity yesterday of seeing the faces of some of the people he has impacted on with Bill 70, seeing thousands of Manitobans who the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) said do not care about this bill, seeing the thousands of Manitobans who are being—I do not know if this is polite or parliamentary—shafted by this government, by this vicious Draconian piece of legislation.

After saying that, I hope the minister, over this weekend, thinks about the error of his ways in raising the stakes of labour relations in this province to a point where we are seeing and will see in the future unprecedented labour unrest in this province. If the minister had taken the time to talk to people after the demonstration, to talk to the Hydroworkers, the MTS workers, the public sector workers employed by the province directly, he would have found that the next time they will not be walking a picket line in a demonstration; they will be walking a picket line against this government.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would remind all honourable members that we do have some guests up in the gallery. Although it might be Friday afternoon, a little bit of decorum.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I must apologize if I had to raise my voice. I was trying to get above the din across the way to make sure the Minister of Finance

(Mr. Manness) thought very carefully over the weekend about what happened yesterday, as he saw the workers and their families who are being shafted by this government. I hope he thinks about that. I hope the Minister of Hydro (Mr. Neufeld), who said that Hydro workers are overpaid—he said that in the House when we debated this last time—I wish he had been there to see the Hydro workers who are saying to this government, next time they will not believe their word. They will not go to final offer selection or another mechanism to solve their disputes. They told me yesterday, next time they are going to be walking a picket line on strike because they have had enough from this government.

I hope the Minister responsible for MTS (Mr. Findlay) will take the time or would have taken time yesterday to talk to the MTS employees, because that will be the next step. That is the logical conclusion of this bill. In terms of MTS and Hydro, where there has been an unprecedented history of

labour harmony; in terms of the MGEA, where there has been unprecedented history of labour harmony; in terms of unions in the public sector with CUPE and many other organizations, where there has been unprecedented labour harmony in this province, the message yesterday from those workers from the many Manitoba families impacted by this bill is that Bill 70 is going to be a watershed for this government, because from now on in—we may have had one of the lowest strike rates in the country, but with Bill 70 and the despicable way in which this government—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

The hour being 12:30 p.m., this House now adjourns and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. Tuesday.

You all have a great long weekend.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, June 28, 1991

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