



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

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

(Hansard)

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, April 18, 1994

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

APM Incorporated Remuneration and Pharmacare and Home Care Reinstatement

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of L. Meyers, N. LeBlanc, C. Cornan and others requesting the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to personally step in and order the repayment of the \$4 million paid to Connie Curran and her firm APM Incorporated and consider cancelling the recent cuts to the Pharmacare and Home Care programs.

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Fred Heiland, Alice Zdril, Rosemary Heiland and others requesting the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Premier to personally step in and order the repayment of the \$4 million paid to Connie Curran and her firm APM Incorporated and consider cancelling the recent cuts to the Pharmacare and Home Care programs.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Curran Contract Cancellation and Pharmacare and Home Care Reinstatement

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mr. Clif Evans). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned citizens of the Province of Manitoba, humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the Manitoba government has repeatedly broken promises to support the Pharmacare program and has in fact cut benefits and increased deductibles far above the inflation rate; and

WHEREAS the Pharmacare program was brought in by the NDP as a preventative program which keeps people out of costly hospital beds and institutions; and

WHEREAS rather than cutting benefits and increasing deductibles the provincial government should be demanding the federal government cancel recent cuts to generic drugs that occurred under the Drug Patent Act; and

WHEREAS at the same time Manitoba government has also cut home care and implemented user fees; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba government is giving an American health care consultant over \$4 million to implement further cuts in health care.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly urge the Premier to personally step in and order the cancellation of the Connie Curran contract; and consider cancelling the recent cuts to the Pharmacare and Home Care programs.

* (1335)

APM Incorporated Remuneration and Pharmacare and Home Care Reinstatement

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mr. Dewar). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the Province of Manitoba, humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the Manitoba government has repeatedly broken promises to support the Pharmacare program and has in fact cut benefits and increased deductibles far above the inflation rate; and

WHEREAS the Pharmacare program was brought in by the NDP as a preventative program which keeps people out of costly hospital beds and institutions; and

WHEREAS rather than cutting benefits and increasing deductibles the provincial government should be demanding the federal government cancel recent cuts to generic drugs that occurred under the Drug Patent Act; and

WHEREAS at the same time Manitoba government has also cut home care and implemented user fees; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba government paid an American health care consultant over \$4 million to implement further cuts in health care.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly urge the Premier to personally step in and order the repayment of the \$4 million paid to Connie Curran and her firm APM Incorporated and consider cancelling the recent cuts to the Pharmacare and Home Care programs.

Curran Contract Cancellation and Pharmacare and Home Care Reinstatement

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mr. Hickes). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

Some Honourable Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the Province of Manitoba, humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the Manitoba government has repeatedly broken promises to support the Pharmacare program and has in fact cut benefits

and increased deductibles far above the inflation rate; and

WHEREAS the Pharmacare program was brought in by the NDP as a preventative program which keeps people out of costly hospital beds and institutions; and

WHEREAS rather than cutting benefits and increasing deductibles the provincial government should be demanding the federal government cancel recent cuts to generic drugs that occurred under the Drug Patent Act; and

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WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly urge the Premier to personally step in and order the cancellation of the Connie Curran contract; and consider cancelling the recent cuts to the Pharmacare and Home Care programs.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Government Services): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Government Services Annual Report 1992-93; the Annual Report of the Fleet Vehicles Special Operating Agency for the year ended March 31, 1993; and the Seniors Directorate Annual Report 1992-93.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Northern Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table today the 1992-93 Annual Report of the Department of Northern Affairs, as well as the Annual Report for the Communities Economic Development Fund for the year ended March 31, 1993.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have with us this afternoon, from the Red River Community College, 18 Secondary Language Program students under the direction of Ms. Lucy Epp. This school is located in the

constituency of the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes).

Also this afternoon, from the Nelson McIntyre Collegiate we have twenty-two Grades 8 to 12 students under the direction of Ms. Faye Barsy, Mr. Jordy Cameron and Mr. Garth Collier. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry).

On behalf of all honourable members, I would like to welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Lerner Report Release Request

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier.

Over the weekend, again we had some problems in the emergency wards with closures of some emergency wards on a temporary basis, patients backed up in the hallways and considerable public concern about the impact on their ability to access our emergency wards.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a new issue in terms of Manitoba and the urban hospital emergency wards.

In response to a similar problem, four years after being elected, in 1992, the government commissioned a review committee dealing with both the emergency ward situation at Concordia Hospital and a review of all the hospital emergency wards in Winnipeg. They announced that in a press release on May 19, 1992.

Of course, because this is such a very major public issue for people in terms of the emergency ward situations, I would like to ask the Premier: Does his government have a copy of the report that they announced in May of 1992? Will he make that report available to members of the Legislature and members of the public so we can deal with some of the recommendations of emergency wards and their impact on patient care in Manitoba?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that is a question that would be more appropriately asked of the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae).

Just because in the preamble the member tries to always bring in the spectre of budget cuts in the health care field, I just want to quote the Grace General Hospital president, Major Harold Thornhill, in the newspaper this morning where he said that "health-care cutbacks had nothing to do with yesterday's situation. 'Cutbacks don't increase the number of patients coming to hospital,' . . . 'It was just a hectic day,' " adding that there have been no recent cuts in the number of beds.

Rather than try and tie this all in to another political issue, I wish that the member would be much more candid and honest in the way in which he tries to bring issues to this Legislature.

Point of Order

Mr. Doer: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the only dishonesty in this House is the Premier has stated something that I never asked in my question. I never raised the issue of budget cutbacks. I would ask the Premier to withdraw his comments about honesty and keep his comments straight and to the record here published.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. To deal with the point of order raised, the honourable First Minister in his response made reference to the fact about honest and honesty, and I believe there have been several occasions where I have asked the member to withdraw the unparliamentary word "honest."

At this point in time, I am going to ask the honourable First Minister to withdraw the word "honest" that he has just used in his answer.

* (1340)

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, I will be happy to withdraw the word "honest" in any reference to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, sir. [interjection] Order, please. We have another issue here now.

The official opposition House leader in his point of order used the word "dishonest." This also, sir, is unparliamentary. [interjection] Order, please. I will decide this. Now I would ask the Leader of the official opposition to withdraw the word "dishonest."

Mr. Doer: I withdraw it unequivocally.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, sir.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Now, getting on with Question Period, the official opposition Leader.

Mr. Doer: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sorry to start off the Monday in such a cantankerous way, but these are very important issues.

Lerner Report Release Request

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Now I asked the Premier a specific question dealing with the Moe Lerner Committee that the government commissioned some two years ago. The government has a copy of the report that they commissioned. It does have a number of recommendations based on the terms of reference that they released in 1992.

I would like to ask the government: Will they now make public this report that they now have so that we can deal with the issues in our emergency wards in terms of the pressure on emergency wards, the manpower issues that we have on the weekends, releasing patients on Sundays, which was one of the issues raised, the issue of bed closures and what impact that has on patients in the hallway, and what issue patients in the hallway has on the emergency ward itself?

Will the government now release the report that it commissioned two years ago dealing with the urban hospitals and the emergency wards?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, indeed, this past weekend, because we had some very lovely weather as a matter of fact, I think a lot of Winnipeggers were out doing things perhaps they have not had the opportunity to do for some time. That did lead to some things that occurred over the weekend, and it put pressure on emergency rooms in Winnipeg. I am advised that nobody who was prioritized as needing emergent care went without that care.

I would like to point out that one point raised perhaps in the public media and repeated by the

Leader of the Opposition having to do with discharge policy at Grace Hospital, I am advised that the discharge policy at Grace is the same every day of the week, so that needs to be said too.

With respect to the emergency services report, we are using the report and the people involved with it to help us in the development of policy. That report will be forthcoming in due course.

Lerner Report Release Request

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the government is using a report that they commissioned on behalf of the public. We have community-based hospitals that have made proposals to the government to close emergency wards in the midnight period of time at Concordia Hospital. It is in the minutes. At Seven Oaks Hospital, there was reference to that awhile ago.

There is a lot of confusion about where the government is going on the whole issue of emergency wards and how bed closures and hallway line-ups impact on emergency wards.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the government to release the report that they have so that the total public that is affected by changes in health care can be involved. One of the fundamental principles of dealing and changing our health care system is that we do it in consensus together, not in a back room in the minister's office.

I would ask the government to release the report so we can have a debate about our health care services and we can all be involved, not just the selective government.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I know that the Leader of the Opposition has been, in the course of his discussions—in fact, he is quoted in the Selkirk Journal and on Richard Cloutier's program as promoting a better answer from British Columbia in the way they are dealing with health care.

I would like to bring to his attention the article in yesterday's Vancouver Province entitled, Hospitals lose beds. Vancouver's major hospitals

have announced they will close 172 of their combined 2,260 beds as a cost-cutting measure.

It quotes the Liberal Health critic as, of course, condemning the government for the lack of funding to the hospitals and so on.

I just say that the difficulty all Manitobans will have is that every province in Canada is embarked on a mission to try and ensure that we can preserve medicare for the future generation. The only way we can do that is if we intelligently review all of the operations of all of our health care institutions to ensure that we are getting the maximum benefit from the significant dollars that we are spending in those, a half billion dollars more since this government took office, I might say, in 1988, a major increase in funding beyond the increases in funding of almost any other area of government, Mr. Speaker.

That kind of initiative is there, is being pursued by every government in Canada, and it is one that is aimed at trying to make health care better for the future generations of Manitobans.

* (1345)

Lerner Report Release Request

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that if what the Premier says is true, they should be willing to release the report, not be afraid to release that report, because apparently it will justify their position. I think that to the average Manitoban, more bed cuts seem to indicate there are more line-ups in the hallways and difficulty getting to the hospitals.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Health is: Why has the government not released the task force report by Dr. Moe Lerner, since the government has hired Dr. Moe Lerner to do something in health reform, or at the department, full time, anyway? Why have they not released the report, since they hired the author of the report to work for them full time?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): I answered the question when I answered the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer)

about the use we will be making of the report and of the services of Dr. Lerner, and have been using.

The honourable member, the other day in relation to health care, raised the issue of We Care home services, and referred to that as the Americanization of health care. I remind the honourable member that We Care home services 10 years ago began its operations in Brandon, Manitoba, and since then, Mr. Speaker, have expanded to 31 franchises throughout this country. The honourable member might be interested in, just to bring this back to emergency services—

An Honourable Member: Relevance?

Mr. McCrae: Relevance—the honourable member might be interested in knowing, in response to the question—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I remind you and would like to raise the question of Beauséjour again in terms of relevance of answers. I mean, quite frankly, on this side, we are not interested in how many franchises We Care or McDonald's or anyone else has. We want answers to the specific questions asked by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak).

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, I believe the honourable Minister of Health had just made reference that he was going to answer the question now.

Mr. McCrae: Yes, Sir, the We Care contract at Seven Oaks also assisted this past weekend in making available eight additional beds in the hospital. If that had not happened, the 90-minute closure might have been much longer, except for the fact that we were able to discharge eight people from the hospital and put them into appropriate services at home.

These are the kinds of things the honourable member opposite wants to be against. I am going to be for the patient; he is going to be for something else, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, the minister tries to answer the question three days later. He finally tried to get his facts there. He did not even answer the question I asked.

I will ask him: When will they release the Moe Lerner task force recommendations? Can he confirm whether or not the 13 recommendations that were recommended in the interim report about Concordia Hospital emergency room have been implemented, because they include things that the government has not done, like expand home care and expand social workers to ease the load on emergency wards?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, I think, in conjunction with emergency services, we have to examine issues like bed availability, about bed usage and developing the most co-ordinated and efficient emergency system here in this city that we can co-ordinate. The more emergency services personnel who are knowledgeable and aware of what is going on in every corner of this city, the better we are all going to be served in emergency services.

The report to which the honourable member refers is assisting us as we develop policy. As I have said to the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), that report will be made public in due course.

Health Care System Consultations

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary to the minister, who is refusing to make public reports paid for at public expense, is: Will the minister start working with patients and the public?

We have recommendations by MARN that say that by instituting services such as having community health nurses provide immunization we could save the province \$800,000. We have the MNU saying that by going to more development, primary nursing care demonstrations, instituting long-term human resources strategy and supporting the role of all nurses, LPNs, RNs and RPNs, we can improve the system.

When will the government start working with people in the system and listening to people in the system, not their private friends?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, we are already doing all of those things the honourable member refers to, and as reported in the media the other day with respect to the services provided at Seven Oaks Hospital, the patients like it. The NDP hates it. I guess if we know what the NDP hate we can serve the people better.

* (1350)

Personal Care Homes Staffing

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, by correspondence dated March 29, 1994, Mrs. Margaret Redston, the Acting Director of the Long Term Care Branch, advised all chief executive officers of freestanding, nonproprietary personal care homes that the government, and I quote, was going to be implementing a one-time reduction in their 1994-95 rate recommendation representing the net anticipated savings to be realized through the application of Bill 22 and that the policy would apply to all employees with the exception of nurses who agreed to the 2 percent reduction under Bill 22.

This recommendation, which is going to result in a decrease in staffing in personal care homes, goes against every piece of medical information in evidence which suggests quite the contrary, that staffing needs to be increased in these personal care homes due to the increasing acuity of the patients.

My question for the minister: Given this policy which apparently his department is intent on implementing, on what medical basis are they suggesting to personal care homes that they can decrease staffing levels and still do the right thing for the patients?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, no medical basis. The honourable member is referring to the same issue referred to earlier with respect to community health centres.

We have demonstrated in Manitoba that Bill 22, contrary to some of the things some people have to say about it, has saved hundreds and hundreds of jobs for my fellow Manitobans and the honourable member's fellow Manitobans.

I am very interested in ensuring that care provided at personal care homes is not adversely impacted by Bill 22. We are hearing from various care home providers as to their proposals for how they might comply.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I would still appreciate hearing from the minister, advised by whom, because I want to table as well the report of last week of Judge Rusen, his inquest findings on the tragic death of Anne Sands back in 1992.

I want to quote from that report which sets out three recommendations. Judge Rusen specifically indicated: "In my opinion, the staffing at the time of Mrs. Sands' death, namely, five (5) people for eighty-five (85) residents was woefully inadequate."

Judge Rusen goes on to talk about the lack of regulations and lack of enforcement by the provincial government on staffing issues. This has come, granted, a week or so after the edict was issued to reduce the funding and staffing levels at those personal care homes.

Will the minister now withdraw his policy of implementing staff reduction of personal care homes in view of the clear indication from Judge Rusen who studied this issue that the staffing is woefully inadequate in personal care homes in this province, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member will also note that Judge Rusen's inquest response or report also came after we announced last week that we are setting up a review mechanism to review standards and levels of care at our personal care homes in Manitoba. I am referring to the task force headed up by the Seniors Directorate, Judge Rusen's inquest report, so that that task force can take that into account in its assessment of the situation in Manitoba.

We are very mindful, Mr. Speaker, that in recent years, with shifts from acute care and more

emphasis being placed on home care, this is an obvious piece of evidence that home care is keeping people home longer and that in our personal care homes, the acuity levels are rising. We recognize that. We are asking the task force to take that into account, too, in making its findings.

Mr. Edwards: Why does this government, Mr. Speaker, always review after they have done the cuts? The fact is there are thousands of residents in these homes today who need the protection of this government.

Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude by asking the minister to respond specifically to Judge Rusen's comments talking about staffing in the hallways. It is hoped, he says, that the recommendations will be implemented so as to contribute to the well-being, care and comfort of the residents of personal care homes in the province of Manitoba and that families of these elderly and infirm people shall find peace of mind knowing that their loved ones are being properly cared for.

Why is he implementing the cuts before he has done the review, Mr. Speaker?

* (1355)

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, before the honourable Leader of the Liberal Party gets carried away with this, the report referred to last week by the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray), of the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation, Dr. Evelyn Shapiro, contains this short paragraph which I remind honourable members is contained in that report: Overall, the care in Manitoba's nursing homes appears to be very good.

The honourable member ought to bear that in mind, and the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation went on to review various comparisons.

The honourable member also heard me announce last week that we are asking the task force composed of Health, Seniors Directorate and Family Services people to consult with various regulatory agencies to ensure that appropriate levels of care are provided to senior citizens and others who are resident in personal care homes in Manitoba.

Domestic Violence Court Backlog

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice.

Back in 1990, the then Attorney General said that family violence and dealing with it was a No. 1 priority of the government. By September of '93, the backlog in the Family Violence Court had grown to 10 months which led the then chief judge to say the problems are now so severe that the very existence of the court is threatened.

It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that today the backlog in the Family Violence Court is anywhere from nine months to one year from the date of the offence until the hearing.

My question to the minister is: In the face of this historical crisis, Manitobans want to know if it is this minister's way of getting tough on crime by reducing severely the number of judges in this province and ordering layoffs in the Crown attorneys' department.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I would like to start by reminding the honourable member that it was this government and this government's commitment to the concerns of family violence that began the Family Violence Court in 1990. We retain that commitment to the Family Violence Court that concerns around zero tolerance in this province are not a wish; they are a fact.

Relating to the issue of the number of judges, the honourable member has obviously done his in-depth research into this very serious issue of domestic violence and the courts operations through reading an article in the newspaper. So I can tell him that I believe he has some incorrect facts.

Provincial Court Vacancies

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): My question to the minister then is: Will she advise this House and advise Manitobans how many vacancies are currently on the Provincial Court, which I

understand to be three and that there are six resignations that are now in the works?

Would the minister advise the House just how many vacancies, in real terms, will be on the Provincial Court in the next few months?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): At the moment, there are three vacancies because judges, in those positions—one has been promoted to the position of chief provincial court judge, one judge has resigned and another has moved to another court.

We have at the moment now in progress the mechanism to fill those vacancies.

Mr. Mackintosh: The minister never answered my question. My question was, how many vacancies in total will there be on the Provincial Court? How many judges would be available to serve Manitobans to ensure our safety?

Does she think that backlogs in the Provincial Court will bring any meaningful consequences to bear on offenders?

Mrs. Vodrey: I can also inform the member that as a result of the judicial compensation package, we do expect some judges to take advantage of a retirement package. However, the member may not know that when judges retire in Manitoba, they also are able to work in a part-time capacity. So the chief judge is now working with the judges who will be indicating their desire to retire and to see the level that they wish to participate in terms of working on a part-time basis.

But the member yesterday at an open forum made a very interesting comment of his concerns and this government's interest in listening to the people of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the honourable member referred to listening to Manitobans as "pandering."

I would like to tell all Manitobans that that will be the way that the NDP will deal with this issue, and not this government. We will pay attention to Manitobans.

Point of Order

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, the minister is misconstruing any words that I ever said entirely.

What I said yesterday was that this minister was bringing in policies which would threaten the further safety of Manitobans. That is what I said.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. That is clearly a dispute over the facts.

* (1400)

Education System Transportation Policy

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education must be held accountable for the inequities, the chaos and the dismantling of the public education system that is occurring in the province, including the elimination of school busing which is disrupting families and creating unsafe situations for young people in the province, especially in areas of my constituency of Harbour View South and south Transcona.

I would like to ask the Minister of Education: Does the Minister of Education think it is reasonable to eliminate school busing to a new subdivision so that young people have to take a Transit bus across Highway 59 at a cost of \$300 per student for three bus stops and still have to walk over a kilometre to their school?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the latest Education critic for the New Democratic Party should know fully well that I do not make decisions with respect to school busing. These are matters that are left totally to the discretion of the local school division.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, it is this minister who has eliminated funding for Grades 7 to 12 school busings in the River East School Division.

I would like to ask the minister to respond to my letter of February 24, which I wrote on behalf of my constituents, and be accountable to explain what his government is willing to do to ensure that this area, which is a very isolated area in a new subdivision, is going to have equal and safe school transit service.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, was it the River East School Division that the member referenced? If it

was, I cannot remember exactly how many dollars of the \$750 million that was directed towards all the school divisions in this province went particularly to that school division. The very essence of local decision making and local autonomy means if a school division has to make determinations around the priorities, if that school division has decided that school busing is of lesser priority than some of the other educational issues, then I say that it is within their power to do so.

Transcona-Springfield School Division Meeting Request

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, this minister is cutting funding and then leaving school boards and families and the City to pick up the pieces to ensure that children get to school safely.

Will the minister at least send a representative, as he has been asked to do, to a community meeting tomorrow night so he can be held accountable for the change in funding policy to the people in East Kildonan-Transcona?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I will be held accountable for the 2.6 percent reduction in funding to the public school system. I will be held accountable for that, but I will not be held accountable for decisions that the local school board have entered into and deciding how it is they want to allocate their funding and into what specific services they provide to the students in their school division. I am sorry, I am not accountable for that.

Legislative Offices Appropriate Use

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): First it was Preston Manning's suits, now it is the Liberal lotto—a party that has been so critical of gambling running what has been called Club 600 out of its legislative offices. Just as there is some element of hypocrisy in criticizing lotteries so strongly and operating one, there is also a question of public policy—a party that appoints an ethics

commissioner and then runs a lottery out of its legislative office.

My question is to the government House leader (Mr. Ernst) or to the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the opposition House leader has forgotten that the purpose of Question Period is to answer questions of the government. If he wanted to talk about hypocrisy, we could talk about the Leader of the New Democratic Party and staff saying yes to a casino in The Pas and saying, in the city of Winnipeg, no.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts. There was no point of order.

On a new point of order? [interjection] Okay, then, on the point of order that was raised by the honourable member for Inkster, I believe the honourable member for Thompson was just premising his comments to either the government House leader (Mr. Ernst) or the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme).

* * *

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I would have loved to ask the Liberal ethics critic about this, but our rules require I ask it to a government minister.

I would like to ask whether it is legitimate practice to use government offices, legislative offices, for fundraising purposes?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act): Mr. Speaker, while that does not directly fall under my jurisdiction, the fact of the matter is I find it inappropriate, in my view at least. I think the Legislative Assembly Management Commission will also find it inappropriate to be using government offices for the purposes of running a lottery scheme.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate that we will be raising this with the Legislative Assembly Management Commission.

As a further question, Mr. Speaker, has the government House leader been able to determine whether indeed this was being conducted on government time, in terms of public time, because, indeed, my understanding is that government offices and, in this case, legislative offices cannot be used, once again, for the purposes, in this case, of raising funds for a political party?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, this matter came to my attention, of course, after the fact. In fact, the scheme had already been conducted, so I have no way of determining whether or how a government office was used, other than the fact that on the brochure that was distributed related to this matter, which I would be pleased to table, appears a government phone number, so I would assume that at some point during this lottery the phone calls were placed to that office.

Liberal Fundraiser Lottery Licensing

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I have a question, Mr. Speaker, and this is to the same minister who is also minister responsible for Lotteries.

I did, indeed, provide notice to the minister of this question some one week ago, and I would like to ask if the minister could indicate whether this lottery was licensed.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act): Mr. Speaker, all lottery schemes in the province of Manitoba are required to be licensed.

Those that are \$3,000 in total prize money or less are not required to be licensed by the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation, but are required to either be licensed by a municipality in which that lottery scheme is conducted or by the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation. If it is a province-wide, it is obviously difficult to go to 200 municipalities to try and license these activities. So

I do know that this was not licensed by the Manitoba Lotteries Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, as a result of a newspaper article appearing in the Winnipeg Free Press this morning, we are now trying to ascertain if in fact it was licensed by municipalities in the province of Manitoba.

* (1410)

Year of the Family Initiative Budget

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Family Services.

An Honourable Member: About lotteries?

Ms. McCormick: No.

Much is being made of the government's initiatives in this the Year of the Family. Daily, our caucus receives glossy promotional literature asking us to buy pins, posters, certificates, sweat shirts and memorabilia to demonstrate our support and commitment to this celebration of the family. [interjection] Yes.

Can the minister advise this House as to the budget for this Year of the Family initiative?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, indeed, as our budget comes out within a couple of days, there will be a line that will be there in support of International Year of the Family. I am pleased and proud that we have as a government supported an initiative that promotes and encourages family participation right throughout the width and the breadth of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I take some exception to the comments made that the only information the Liberal Party has received from the IYF office is a list of pins and souvenirs and sweat shirts that they might be able to purchase to support International Year of the Family, because I do know that the volunteer council that has been appointed throughout the province has worked extremely hard and there are many, many activities ongoing within each Manitoba community in support of International Year of the Family.

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the same minister.

We have reason to believe that the budget is in the area of \$240,000 a year. We have an obligation as elected representatives to think carefully how we spend the public's money at a time when Manitoba's child poverty rate is the highest in Canada and efforts of the child-serving community are being eroded.

Can the Minister of Family Services tell us, given that her department is cutting back on subsidized daycare spaces and support for child advocacy groups, as well as other meaningful programs and services which support the family, does she believe that this public relations campaign is the best use of those dollars?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's question seeks an opinion. It is therefore out of order. I would ask the honourable member for Osborne to kindly rephrase your question, please. The honourable member's question did seek an opinion, was out of order.

Ms. McCormick: Okay. My question to the minister: Is this the most appropriate use of this money?

Mrs. Mitchelson: As I indicated in my first answer, there are many, many volunteers throughout the width and the breadth of our Manitoba community that are celebrating and promoting International Year of the Family.

I was just at a forum in my constituency on the weekend that was organized by the River East Teachers Association, and it had the International Year of the Family logo on it. Their conference, and many of the conferences that are being held throughout the province this year, Mr. Speaker, do have a focus on the family.

I believe that the office that has been put in place by this government has provided support to the thousands and thousands of volunteers right throughout Manitoba who are promoting family and taking pride in our province.

**Year of the Family Initiative
Staffing/Salary Information**

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): My final question is to the Premier.

Will the Premier identify the names of the people who have been seconded, employed or contracted to the Year of the Family office and the salaries they are being paid?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Because that is a question of detail which I do not have available to me, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the member that she might want to pose that question during the course of the Estimates debate that is coming forward in a matter of weeks.

**Workforce 2000
IBM Canada Ltd.**

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): According to lists provided by the Minister of Education, IBM Canada received \$50,000 under Workforce 2000 program to train 87 people in what the government calls human relations.

It is my understanding that IBM maintains no education or training department in Manitoba but that generally all training is conducted through Toronto where they do have more than 400 courses and seminars that run year-round.

Could the minister explain why he has added \$50,000 to a fully developed corporate training program and cut community colleges, New Careers and the Transcona School Division?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Again, the essence of the question is that the NDP is against market-driven training and wants to drive all of the training into the traditional institutions.

Since 1991, the basic criterion, to help the member for Wolseley with this—training has been, under Workforce 2000, supplied to those companies who introduce new technologies, equipment and processes, and/or high-demand skill shortage, occupations and high-demand skills.

That has been the overriding and some would say, general, some might say too general, criteria

that have been in place. But that has allowed the expenditure of several millions of dollars, some of it as an offset against payroll tax but still directed towards the training of 60,000 to 80,000 people over the period of time.

I do not know what point the member is trying to make, as I have indicated to her that we now, given the experience of the success of the program and yet bearing in mind there should probably be some greater focus around some of the criteria, have entered into those changes. That will be brought into place as of May 1994.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, the point of my first question clearly is the priorities of this government.

The point of my second question is the issue of accountability.

Will the minister make a commitment to table the curriculum of this human resources course paid for in part by the people of Manitoba? Will he undertake to indicate what certification occurred for those individuals involved?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, let me again deal with the process. I am led to believe an employer training program is required for each training contract and is maintained on file. We do not provide any grant money until, of course, there is this training plan that is on file and, secondly, the training has already taken place.

With respect to the larger companies, and obviously IBM would be one of them, because there probably is a tremendous commitment to payroll tax by that company in this province, the amount that we are talking about here might be a fraction as an offset against that significantly high 2.25 percent payroll tax that they pay.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, do I understand the minister then to say that the government and people of Manitoba have paid \$50,000 for this human relations course and he is not prepared to table the curriculum?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I doubt very much that I have the curriculum. What I probably have and obviously have on file is the training plan.

When the member says, pay a large amount of money, no, exactly the opposite has happened. The company has paid a significant amount of payroll tax, and what we have done is taken a fraction of that amount, in this case using the member's amount, \$50,000, and rebated it as against that tax.

Provincial Sales Tax Arrears

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance.

Over three years ago, under pressure from the opposition and the public, the former Minister of Finance was forced to act on problems with the sales tax arrears at the time. In fact, the Provincial Auditor did a special report later in that year.

My question for the Minister of Finance is this: What is the current amount of sales tax arrears in this province?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I will have to obtain the exact figure to provide the honourable member for Elmwood, but I can assure him that I received a report recently on sales tax arrears in Manitoba and we are in good shape.

Clancy's Ventures Group

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary to the same minister is: Given that two months ago the Clancy's Ventures group of restaurants closed, owing over \$350,000 in sales tax to the province, can the minister tell the House when his department realized that the firm was behind in payments and what efforts they made to collect this outstanding amount?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice and provide the honourable member with the detail.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

* (1420)

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the loge to my left where we have with us this afternoon Mrs. June

Westbury, the former MLA for Fort Rouge. On behalf of all honourable members, I would like to welcome you here this afternoon, madam.

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS

Volunteer Week

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Niakwa have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Jack Reimer (Niakwa): Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of the House to join me today in recognizing the beginning of Volunteer Week here in Manitoba and in Canada. The contributions that volunteers make to our communities are immense, and it would be difficult to imagine them without the services that volunteers provide. It is the sacrifice and efforts of these volunteers that make our communities beautiful and friendly places to live.

Volunteers in Manitoba come in all shapes and sizes and fill a variety of roles in their communities. Volunteers provide the essential fire and ambulance service in rural communities. They give their time and their efforts to community centres, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, as well as helping with youth sports and church activities. Volunteers of all kinds are a boon to Manitoba.

It should be recognized, Mr. Speaker, that Manitobans are particularly generous with their time as 37 percent of Manitobans volunteer in some way or another, whereas the average for Canada is only 27 percent. In the city of Winnipeg over 175,000 people volunteer their time each year which is fourth out of 24 Canadian cities. All these volunteers should be proud of their contributions to Manitoba.

In economic terms, the efforts of volunteers in Manitoba has been valued at over \$531 million, but it is impossible to put a price on the contributions of volunteers since they are priceless resources to our communities. Many nonprofit agencies across Manitoba will be holding recognition events for their volunteers this week. It is in that spirit that I ask all members of this House to join in recognizing the efforts of Manitoba's

volunteers and to encourage them for the valued work that they do and continue to do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Radisson have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, I would like to echo the member opposite's comments with regard to Volunteer Week. It is indeed significant to recognize the contributions of the many volunteers across the province who give of their time and their talents to benefit their community. Volunteerism benefits not only the volunteers in the organizations that they are involved in, but the community as a whole by forging links which ensure that people are actually involved and participating in their community which benefits everyone.

I would like to commend the ongoing involvement of the provincial government in supporting volunteer training and volunteer co-ordination in the province of Manitoba and that also throughout the many nonprofit and volunteer organizations throughout the province. Thank you very much.

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

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, I, too, join the other two parties in celebrating Volunteer Week and in saying congratulations to the many thousands of volunteers in the province of Manitoba.

Having come from rural Manitoba, where certainly volunteerism was a way of life in many activities, and having had an opportunity to live in northern Manitoba and now in the city of Winnipeg, I certainly recognize and realize that we, as a province, would not be what we are today if it were not for the many, many thousands of volunteers in every walk of life.

Certainly, when you look at volunteerism here in Manitoba, and we think of what we do in any particular day or any given week, we run across people who provide volunteer activities and, in

fact, devote their very lives to the aspect of volunteerism, whether it is in the health care field, whether it is in assisting church organizations or cultural organizations.

We must say thank you to all of those volunteers. I know many of us, as well, probably have and do provide volunteerism to some of our community organizations as well, so we certainly celebrate Volunteer Week with the volunteers. We wish them all well. We say to them, thank you for all of the work that you have done for us in the past, and, as importantly, thank you for all the work that you will do for us in the future. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Family Services have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I want to join with other members of the House as we look to Volunteer Week and recognition of volunteers right throughout the province of Manitoba, realizing that people do volunteer on a regular basis right throughout the year in many community events and activities.

The last few months, we have just had volunteers around to our doors and our houses canvassing for the Heart and Stroke Foundation and for the Cancer Foundation, just this past week I had someone at my door. This is the month for cancer fundraising.

Mr. Speaker, we have to look to this year as being a very special year for volunteers, in that it is International Year of the Family and there will be volunteers right throughout this province that will be committing and dedicating a lot of their volunteer activities and a lot of their initiatives throughout the province, recognizing families and the importance of families in our province.

I would encourage all members of this Legislature to become very actively involved in International Year of the Family in their own communities and in their constituencies, because I do not believe there is a community throughout Manitoba that will not be celebrating, in some

way, International Year of the Family. I encourage all of you to become actively involved and to volunteer for families in your communities. Thank you.

World Curling Championships Canadian Winners

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Portage la Prairie have leave to make a non-political statement? Does he have leave? [agreed]

Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Canada's representatives on the world curling scene.

Yesterday was truly an historic day in the history of our nation. This is the first time that any nation on this earth has had representatives sweep the men's, women's, juniormen's and junior women's titles in the same year.

At the World Curling Championships in Oberstdorf, Germany yesterday, the Canadian women's team from Regina won their second consecutive title. That is the first Canadian women's team to accomplish that feat. Skip Sandra Peterson, her team of Joan McCusker, Jan Betker and Marcia Gudereit are to be praised not only for their talents on the ice, Mr. Speaker, but also for their qualities of sportsmanship off the ice. They were excellent ambassadors for our country, and we know that they must have been talented because they defeated Manitoba's own Connie Laliberte in the finals the last two years in a row.

On the men's side, a former confrere of ours, a former MLA in Saskatchewan Rick Folk, who now resides in British Columbia, led his team of Pat Ryan, Bert Gretzinger and Gerry Richard to a world title by beating Sweden. Both Pat and Gerry are originally from Manitoba and have family connections here. I know we are all pleased with their accomplishments.

Also, I am happy to say that earlier this curling season Ontario's Kim Gellard and Colin Davison of Alberta were the winners of the world junior titles respectively.

An Honourable Member: You were almost there, Brian.

Mr. Pallister: I will keep working on it.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all members of this Legislature will join with me in applauding our Canadian curlers for this 1994 record-breaking year. With more than one million Canadians taking part in the sport of curling, it is no surprise that we are the strongest nation in the world when it comes to that sport.

* (1430)

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Interlake have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, I would also like to join with the honourable member for Portage la Prairie and members from the opposite side, and I am sure that members from our side as well as the Liberal Party agree to the fact that we do have probably one of the finest countries for curling. We, too, want to extend our wishes and our congratulations to the men's team from Kelowna, Rick Folk and his members, Sandra Peterson on the women's side and her rink and, of course, the two young junior men's and women's teams who participated this year.

I know, and I certainly do agree with the honourable member for Portage that Manitoba, not only Manitoba but Canada is a hotbed for curling, a sport that I think, even though we are around the million mark as far as curlers go, is a sport that could be expanded and should be expanded to our junior level more so that we have more opportunity to represent this province and this country in world championships such as this.

Mr. Speaker, again, on behalf of our members, we congratulate these four teams. Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (Seventh Day of Debate)

Mr. Speaker: On the adjourned debate, the seventh day of debate, on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), for an address to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, in answer to his speech at

the opening of the session, and the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the official opposition in amendment thereto, standing in the name of the honourable member for Transcona, who has 34 minutes remaining.

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to continue my comments from where I left off on Friday.

Before I get to that point, I would first like to welcome the new members of the Legislature. It is a challenging job that they have undertaken by letting their names stand for nomination, of course, being successful in the recent by-elections. I am sure they will hopefully enjoy their time in the Legislature, and they will gain not only many new friends and make many acquaintances but actually learn more about the province, as I believe we all have during our time here when we have had to meet many Manitobans.

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

I would like to welcome the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson). It has been a pleasure to travel to the northern parts of Manitoba with him since his election. I have appreciated very much his insight into the issues facing northern Manitobans, and I look forward to working with him in this Legislature.

I also, Madam Deputy Speaker, would like to welcome the member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg). I listened to his speech in the throne speech debate and appreciate very much the facts that he brings to this House and the perspective that he brings to this House with respect to his own constituency of Rossmere. I know he will do credit to uphold the tradition of the previous elected representatives from Rossmere, of course, one of whom was the Premier of Manitoba and also a prior representative was the Attorney General for the province of Manitoba. So there was strong history there of representation from Rossmere.

I would also like to welcome, Madam Deputy Speaker, the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), of course, who has brought to this House the perspective dealing with the judicial

system of our province, and I know he has been working in an advisory capacity with our caucus and advising and consulting with us on various matters relating to justice and to community issues. We look forward to further consultations with him on that and, of course, the perspective that he brings.

I would also like to welcome the new members for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) and Osborne (Ms. McCormick), who I am sure will fulfill their duties to the best of their ability and, of course, they have taken on the very difficult task, I believe, and the challenge that it is in trying to represent the wishes of their constituents. I had the opportunity to work with the member for Osborne on various issues prior to her election to this House relating to environmental matters when they affected my community, and we thank her for the opportunity to have her expertise and guidance on those matters. I know the member for The Maples, as well, whose spouse and my spouse also have a relationship that goes back quite a number of years, and it was only upon his election that I found out that our two spouses knew each other from past times.

Madam Deputy Speaker, on February 19 of this year, we had the good fortune not only from the community of Transcona and the city of Winnipeg, but for the province and the country as a whole, we had the opportunity to witness an event that took place in the Olympics wherein a young woman from the community of Transcona represented our country, Canada, at the Canadian speed skating races in the Olympics.

Susan Auch, a 27-year-old woman, represented Canada in those Olympics and set a Canadian record in doing so. She set a Canadian record with the time of 39.61 seconds for the women's 500 metres. Susan Auch had been working diligently to further her sport and her own abilities within speed skating and had been working at that for some 17 years.

I had the honour to represent the community of Transcona, the people of Transcona, on March 3 of this year at the Manitoba Sports Federation to honour Susan's accomplishments, and we are very

proud of her in the community for what she has been able to accomplish. Susan brought home the silver medal, and she was quite proud in displaying that silver medal. I know, in welcoming Susan back to Winnipeg and to Transcona, that there were signs proudly displayed throughout the community recognizing Susan's accomplishments and congratulating her on being the successful winner of the silver medal.

I know I talked with Susan's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Auch, as well, and they were bubbling over with enthusiasm and pride for the accomplishments of their daughter.

On the one note, though, I was a little bit disappointed that the Manitoba Sports Federation did not see fit to have Susan come and visit some of the schools in the community. It would have been nice if she could have come back to her own home community, talked with the young students there and encouraged them to take on the challenges of life, as Susan has herself. But I am hopeful that Susan will come back and have an opportunity some time in the future to visit the various schools and to talk with the young people.

During my comments on Friday about the throne speech and also some of the issues that have been facing us not only as a province but as a country, I made reference to some of the decisions that have been made by the federal government, the Liberal government, and how they are impacting upon the province of Manitoba, whether it be cruise missile testing that they said they would not undertake if they were elected, to the fact that they would not sign the North American Free Trade Agreement without considerable renegotiation of issues affecting Canadians, in particular the energy portion of that agreement.

Of course, that did not come to pass and the Liberals eventually capitulated on that and did sign the agreement. But there were also other issues.

I know and I have talked to many people in my community on this particular issue. It is dealing with smoking and how it affects the health of our young people and people in general in our various communities.

I was very much disappointed to see that the Liberal government chose to listen to the wishes of only one province in Canada and did not listen to the other provinces and went ahead and instead of dealing with the issue of the time, which was smuggling of cigarettes, chose to put pressure on the province to reduce the taxation on cigarettes.

One only needs to talk to young people in our various communities through this province to find out that if the cost of cigarettes goes down, there will be an encouragement because through peer pressure and the reduction of prices for this product, more young people are taking up the habit of smoking. I think that it will lead to a deterioration of the health of these young people, putting pressure on the families, the individuals themselves, and of course on the health care system of our province.

I wish that the Liberal Party had chosen to go a different course of action and to not reduce the taxation level on cigarette taxes. Of course, I think that if they had addressed the problem itself, instead of looking at another issue that was away from the problem, we would have been further ahead on this issue.

I hope that my Liberal colleagues in the House here will take this message back to their party in Parliament and have them make some changes. I do not mean just cosmetic changes to the colour of cigarette packages; I mean real substantive changes to the smoking policies of this country. Putting more money into an advertising budget that can be eroded with one federal budget is not the answer. We need long-term solutions to this problem, not short-term, knee-jerk reactions as we saw took place.

During the course of time, Madam Deputy Speaker, when we were out of session, I took the opportunity not only to talk with many of my constituents in Transcona but also to travel with some of my colleagues to various parts of the province.

I am quite fortunate to have had that opportunity on several occasions over the last three and a half, four years. I have had the opportunity to see the

lifestyle that northern Manitobans live with and the conditions that they live under. I find it is unfortunate that we have not taken some steps to correct the deficiencies that we find in our northern communities.

Many of the northern communities are living without sewer and water, and I find it difficult to comprehend how we could not have done something over a period of time to help correct, at least move in a direction where we were bringing forward similar services to what we have in the southern parts of the province so that our northern Manitobans can live in a similar quality of life.

With the infrastructure program that we saw come out we saw very little money go to the northern part of our province. Even the geese coming back in spring flying over the Golden Boy here know the direction the province is headed in, and that is to the northern part of our province. Even the geese are smart enough to recognize that.

* (1440)

Unfortunately, our Minister of Northern Affairs, and Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Praznik), as my colleague the member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) said—[interjection] I guess maybe that is what it is, that the people of northern Manitoba maybe do not know how to vote, in the minds or the estimation of the government. That is unfortunate. I thought the ministers, when they got into their various portfolios, were there to represent all of the people of the province, not just special or selective interests.

I hope, when the second round of grants are announced to the infrastructure program, that there will be monies to recognize the inadequacies of the various northern communities as they attempt to eke out a living and to live without the services that we have come to take for granted in southern Manitoba. We do not need to have more overpasses in certain parts of the city when we have communities without sewer and water programs. I think we need to take care of the basic human needs first before we look at building more overpasses.

Also, Madam Deputy Speaker, when I was in northern Manitoba, I had a chance to talk with many northern Manitobans who were making their living off the railways by working in railway jobs. While we were up there the federal Liberal government cut over 30 of these jobs. In some of these communities, like Thicket Portage, Pikwitonei and Ilford, these are the only full-time jobs that these communities have.

When we attended the public meetings that were in these communities, because the people want to have a chance to talk with us as we toured, we found that there were several comments. The one comment that stuck in my mind the most was—and this was from one of the residents, and I believe it was in Thicket Portage, if my memory serves me correctly—that the Liberals had cut more jobs in the railway in four months than the previous Conservative government had done in nine and a half years.

It is obvious the discussions that took place during the federal election campaign, wherein the Liberals said they were going to restore Manitoba as the transportation hub of Canada, certainly appears at this point in time to be nothing but pure rhetoric, and we have seen a further erosion of the railway jobs.

I asked the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay) last week, since there was a shortage of hopper cars for grain transportation in this province and indeed western Canada, to look at constructing hopper cars in the Transcona CN Shops. The minister said this was a responsibility of the railway and that he was not even going to raise this issue with the railways. This would have created, I am sure, over a year's employment for the thousand-plus people in the Transcona CN Shops, would have met the needs of the grain producers of our province and allowed them to move their grain to export position.

I do not know why the minister would not want to raise that issue with the railways and indeed the federal government, to try and have this work brought to the province of Manitoba and ensure long-term prosperity and employment for the railway people who have been under attack by the

federal government for a number of years now, much to my dismay in that the provincial minister has sat idly by and has not raised these issues and has not taken—[interjection] The Minister of Transport, to be fair, the Minister of Transport had not raised these issues. This current Minister of Transport has not raised these issues, and I would hope that he would do that when he meets with CN, because I very much want those railway jobs to come to Manitoba. Historically, Manitoba's history has been built on railway and transportation jobs, and I would like to see that continue into the future.

I listened also as well and I was shocked to hear the federal Minister of Transportation's comments on March 11 of this year where he said with respect to railways in this country that railways are nostalgia and that they have, in his estimation, no place in the future of our country. At least that is what I interpret from his comments. I have a copy of the Hansard from Parliament here in my hands and can reference it quite readily. I know for the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), if he cares to read it, I would be willing to share this with him.

The federal Minister of Transport talks about the merger of the rail lines. I believe looking at the comments that were made by the federal minister, that if he allows the CP Rail and CN Rail to merge that it is going to have a detrimental impact on the province of Manitoba, not only on the rail operations where we do maintenance and repairs on the road bed itself, but also in the fact that there will be potentially less jobs in the maintenance shop where we repair our rolling stock equipment which again puts pressure on the province of Manitoba either in CP Rail repair shops or in CN Rail repair shops.

Those jobs are essential to this province, and I think we need to take the steps to make sure that they stay here. The one way to do that is to have serious discussions with the federal Minister of Transport to ensure that Manitoba will not be negatively impacted by the merger of the two rail lines. I also raised this issue with the Minister of Transportation a number of months back—I believe it was in November of '93—with respect to

his own community that he represents because if the rail line merges—and I know the study was done in 1987 and that the CN has been working in earnest to have the rail lines merge—that the rail traffic will be shifted away from the Redditt subdivision and will move towards the CP Rail main line which runs east out of Winnipeg which is double tracked to Thunder Bay.

That will in turn put pressure on the grain elevators and Manitoba Pool operations in Dugald, Manitoba, wherein they will potentially no longer have service to meet the producer needs of that area. I brought this to the Minister of Transportation's attention so that he could take the necessary steps to represent his constituents' interests, at the same time serving the interests of the railway people that rely on these jobs. This also created problems for the Department of Highways and Transportation in that the CN would not give long-term assurances that that railway line would remain there putting pressure—[interjection] Well, it is true. The two ribbons of steel that cross this country do bind this country together, and they have since its inception.

I want that tradition to continue because I think the railways have a critical role to play in the further development of this country, and we need to have the policies in place that demonstrate that. We cannot just sit idly by and allow the federal government to further erode rail transportation jobs in Manitoba. Whether they serve the community of Portage la Prairie, where I know there are railway lines, or they serve the bayline communities in northern Manitoba or they serve the southern portion of our province, the railway lines bind the country and the province together, and we have to take steps to protect them.

An Honourable Member: What did you say, Daryl? This sounds like an old CPR speech to me.

An Honourable Member: No, CNR.

Mr. Reid: Well, I am not sure, Madam Deputy Speaker. I worked some 22 years for the railway. My father worked for the railway. My grandfather worked for the railway. My uncles work for the railway. My brothers work for the railway. We

have a history of railway in our family, and we are proud of that. We will do everything within our power to make sure that the interests of the railway workers of this province are represented. We want the railways to be here. [interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker, I am also quite proud that my grandfather was actively involved in the founding of the CCF Party when it first started up in this province. That, too, as a railway worker. The railway workers have a long tradition of working with CCF and New Democrat Parties. Of course, they know whose interests that the New Democrats represent, and it is the working people of this province.

An Honourable Member: You grandfather was shovelling coal, Daryl.

Mr. Reid: Actually, my grandfather was a machinist, a skilled tradesperson.

I know the Minister of Education, with his—and I will get to him in a minute with respect to Education issues and how they affect my community, but I am sure he recognizes the importance of railway lines for the southern part of the province in that they are essential to moving or transporting the grain that is produced in our province to export position.

An Honourable Member: That is why I rolled back the locomotive fuel tax.

Mr. Reid: The minister says that he rolled back the locomotive fuel tax.

An Honourable Member: That is right.

Mr. Reid: We never said that was a bad move at the time, Madam Deputy Speaker. I attach a caveat to that, in that I asked, at the time the minister was going to do that, that he get some assurances from the railway to protect the railway jobs in this province before he gave away the money. That is what I wanted, some assurances that railway jobs would stay in this province. He did not get that assurance; in fact, we lost more railway jobs. Railway jobs still went to Edmonton. People are still being laid off in my community. You still gave away the fuel tax and the revenue that we need to run programs, but you got no assurances of jobs.

I listened when the government made their announcement last week about CP Rail Customer Service Centre coming to Winnipeg. The government has said, and I think this was the fourth time they made the announcement about these jobs coming to Manitoba, I think they used the figure 210 jobs, but they never really tell the public what the true figure is. They do not tell the public that there were already 72 of those jobs here in the province. They always like to inflate the figure and bring in a bigger figure to make it look like they are bringing more jobs to Manitoba.

I am glad they were able to bring those jobs here, but we are still seeing—[interjection] Do not use the inflated figure to your own advantage; tell what the real story is to the public so that they know that there were not 210, but there were somewhat less than that—72 less than that.

* (1450)

At the same time, I hope that the government will take the steps to stop the further erosion of jobs that we are seeing going to Edmonton now, the announcement that is due to come out very soon, and I hope the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Findlay) is listening to this, that we are going to see, from what I am hearing now, further announcements about loss of rail jobs in this province.

There are discussions taking place right now in the Transcona main shops where we are having jobs potentially going to be cut. The numbers will be coming out soon. I am hearing 150-some jobs within the car shop facility, and there are several dozen jobs out of the motor parts facility at the Transcona CN Shops.

So we are seeing further loss of railway jobs.

The minister often says that he wants constructive ideas on how we can improve transportation in this province. So when I said, bring hopper car work to Manitoba to preserve these jobs, they are going to sit back in the chairs and warm the seat. If you do not want good ideas then do not ask for them.

These are amortized over a period of time and the minister knows it. For a \$75,000 car it does not

take long to amortize that. Even the former Minister of Finance can figure that one out.

I am sure, Madam Deputy Speaker, if the Liberal Party was interested in the ideas that we have they would come and listen to some of the meetings that we have with some of our railway workers. But we saw in the federal election where we brought out some ideas, all they did was photocopy it. This is the prime photocopier team that the Liberal Party has. They take everybody else's ideas and run with it. If they had an original idea I am sure it would be something new, and we would welcome seeing something like that.

The federal Minister of Transport also said, and this is something that the Liberal House leader can do something about, when he talked about railways being nostalgia and transportation of the past, even when the Liberal task force was holding hearings in this province, only at four locations, I might add, when there are dozens of other communities that are going to be adversely affected by the loss of VIA Rail services, I made a presentation to those hearings.

I travelled to the northern communities that are going to be affected by the loss of these services, but there was not one Liberal that made a presentation to any of those hearings—not one Liberal made a presentation. At the same time that those hearings were being held, the Liberal federal Minister of Transport was announcing in Parliament that VIA Rail had to cut back services. A report came out that said that Manitoba was going to be adversely affected by the loss of passenger rail routes in this province.

Now, this is something that the Liberal House leader can do something about if he wants to play an active role in preserving railway jobs in this province. I call upon him to take those steps to make sure that Manitoba does not lose more railway jobs in VIA Rail. We have over 400 jobs at the Fort Rouge VIA maintenance centre here, right in the heart of Lloyd Axworthy's country, in his own constituency.

Those jobs, if the north line services do not move down or continue into Winnipeg to The Pas

and then up to Churchill, Winnipeg is going to lose. Mark my words, Winnipeg will lose, if that decision comes to pass, a good portion of those 400 maintenance jobs in the Fort Rouge yards.

That is something you can do something about as Liberal House leader. Take that message to your colleagues in Ottawa and tell them those jobs are critical to the city of Winnipeg and to the province of Manitoba. Pick up the phone and give Lloyd a call.

I would like to spend a few minutes—I am not sure how much time I have left—of my time talking about—

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable member has nine minutes remaining.

Mr. Reid: I would like to spend a few minutes talking about issues that are important in my community with respect to education. I listened to the government's announcement with much dismay earlier this year when the government announced there was going to be 2.6 percent reduction in funding to public school education. I know what effect that had on public education in my community, to the Transcona-Springfield School Division, and what decisions had to be made last year when the government announced they were cutting back 2 percent last year.

Last year we lost 17 teaching jobs, which impacted upon the students in the Transcona-Springfield School Division. Transcona-Springfield School Division last year had the lowest per-pupil assessment of the city of Winnipeg school divisions. We had the lowest per-pupil expenditures of the city of Winnipeg school divisions. When my school division trustees came to the Minister of Education after the announcement of 2.6 percent reduction was made this year and asked the Minister of Education for some relief, some way that they could deal with the issues that they were faced with without seriously impacting on the education of our children, the only suggestion that the minister had for them was to give them an advance, a loan on next year's grant money.

Now, I am not a financial analyst or anyone with a great deal of financial experience, but anybody knows that if you keep borrowing from the future, as this government has often talked about here and has tried to turn that argument back on us from the time when we were in government, it does not make sense to use the same solutions to solve the problems of the school division by borrowing on next year's grant money when he has already told that school division, Transcona-Springfield School Division, to expect less money next year.

Now we are going to see further erosion of public education in Transcona-Springfield as we will in other communities of our province. This year we are losing over 30 jobs, some 25 of them teaching positions. The funding decrease for the Transcona-Springfield School Division—this is a sheet, not my figures, but the trustees have put out—3.6 percent decrease in provincial funding over '93-94, not 2.6 percent but 3.6 percent.

The special requirement 2 percent cap that the government brought in by way of their legislation only allowed the school division to increase about \$218,000. Now, \$218,000 is not going to cover the retention of those 30 jobs that were lost. We are losing two child guidance clinician positions. We all know the difficulties that the teachers and the schools are facing with either special-needs students or children that have emotional problems within the school, whether it be family breakup or other issues that are facing them. We need these people in the schools. We are losing para-professional positions, a significant number of them. The funding for this has been reduced by \$100,000. On top of that we are losing some of the quality-of-life programs, where we talk about music instruction, library services. These are the services that we have within the school that make the schools what they are, a sense of community in there.

I know the minister has told us over and over again that funding decisions are difficult. All I am asking of this Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) is that he have some sense of fairness when he distributes the education dollars in our province, and when he made the decision to

increase the funding to the private schools, the private elite schools of our province, he has essentially taken dollars away from school divisions like Transcona-Springfield and shifted those into the private elite schools, the people that can afford it. I have many single families in my community that can ill afford to send their children to these elite schools.

It was your own announcement, Mr. Minister, that made that decision. Now it is affecting the number of teachers within my school division, and how is that going to have any long-term positive impact for the children of my community? All I am asking is for you to take some action to bring in a fair funding formula. If you say you do not have more money, distribute it equitably to the school divisions of this province. That is what I am asking you to do.

* (1500)

The trustees of my school division met with you; they met with the former Minister of Education. She promised at that time to take some steps to review the circumstances under which the Transcona-Springfield School Division was operating. Obviously that never came to pass, and I am asking this minister to take the same action. The trustees brought forward options that this minister wants, to make a fair funding formula, and if this minister does not like that proposal that they have brought forward, then come up with his own ideas that will make it fair. Now, I have listened to the trustees in my division at several meetings that I have attended over the last three and a half years. The one thing that they tell me is that the funding formula that was there prior to this government coming in was essentially fairer than the funding formula that you have there right now.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Reid: You know, Madam Deputy Speaker, the interesting part is—[interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Reid: What the government members do not know is that the people who were making those decisions were members of their party. It is not people who have the same political persuasion that

I do, Madam Deputy Speaker; it was people who have the same political bent that these people opposite do, the government members.

An Honourable Member: What has that got to do with anything?

Mr. Reid: Well, you are talking that you do not like the formulas that were there before. It was your own people who were saying that the formula that was there before was a lot better than the one we are seeing right now.

An Honourable Member: Our people? Who are our people?

Mr. Reid: I will tell you later, off the record, who these people are.

An Honourable Member: Put it on the record. Do not make allegations and leave it off the record.

Mr. Reid: No, I am not going to put that on the record. It would be unfair to these people. These people want to see some changes in the funding formula. Now it may be too late for this government, Madam Deputy Speaker. They may not have the time to make some changes prior to the election, and I hope that—[interjection] Well, maybe it would be unfair for me to speculate at this time, but I can only go on what has happened in the past and that there has been no action to improve the situation for the funding, even though my trustees have requested it for a number of—[interjection] 1900, keep that number in mind.

I ask the minister, in all seriousness, to look at changing the funding formula that he has or at least have some alternate action in place so that the school divisions that are being adversely affected and have essentially no surplus—because my division, from what I have been told and the figures that I have been given here, show that the Transcona-Springfield School Division has only \$450,000 in its surplus account which does not come anywhere close to the surplus that would be required to sustain the programs that were in place prior to the budget cuts.

When the government talked about health care reform, I can tell the government members that I am still getting calls from seniors in my community quite worried about the cutbacks to

home care services. They see the announcements about cutbacks to hospital beds, surgical beds and the further erosion of our health care services in this province. It worries the people of my community.

Health care services are essential and are the one thing that distinguishes us from many other countries of the world. If we do not take all the steps within our power to preserve and protect health care, we are going to see ourselves led down the same path and we are going to end up in the same position as our American counterparts to the south, where I believe we have some 35 million people without health care services. Those that can afford will have it; those that do not will not have it.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has expired.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): I am very pleased to have the opportunity today to respond to the throne speech. I would like to begin by welcoming back all members of the Legislature and look forward to a working relationship with those members in this coming session.

I would also like to extend a special welcome to those new members of the Legislature who have taken their places for the first time. The member for The Maples, Mr. Kowalski, who in addition to being a new member is also the Justice critic for his party. I look forward to working with that member on the many issues and challenges that I face as Minister of Justice. I welcome input in the House and also as we are doing our work in the community.

I also would like to welcome the member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg), the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), who is also Justice critic for his party. I welcome his input also and look forward to working with him on the very serious issues that we have before us in the next few months.

I also would like to welcome the member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick). She is an individual that I have known for a good many years and in the

many kinds of work that she has done. I welcome her to her place in the Legislature for the first time also. I would like to welcome also the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson).

Madam Deputy Speaker, I also welcome you back to your position and also I welcome the Speaker back. In the past, you have both carried out your responsibilities with wisdom and with honour and with the best interests of this House in mind. I am sure that you will continue to do so in this coming session.

I extend my welcome and thanks to the Pages and to the legislative interns. Your contributions here are appreciated by all the members of the House. I know you will have the opportunity to learn a great deal and become very familiar with the issues, and I hope that you find it a very enjoyable experience.

I also must extend my sincere thanks to the residents of Fort Garry constituency who have given me their input and their guidance since I was elected in 1990. It is truly an honour to represent the constituency of Fort Garry and the people of Fort Garry, and I take a great deal of pride in being their MLA. I wish to express my gratitude to them on behalf of this government for their advice and their input, which they, on a very regular basis, make sure that I receive as a benefit. Input and advice from the community are essential for an effective and responsible government, and I take pride in this government's record of public consultation.

Madam Deputy Speaker, one of the primary roles of government is to listen to the people, and Manitobans have told us a great deal as we have been listening. Manitobans have told us that taxes during the Pawley years were crippling families and the provincial economy, and we have responded by holding the line on provincial income tax, sales tax and corporate income tax for six consecutive budgets. Given the record of other provincial governments and the federal government, Premier Filmon and this government certainly deserve some recognition for that achievement.

Manitobans, after six years of responsible provincial government, now have the third lowest combined federal and provincial income tax rate. This is an amazing feat given the onerous tax burdens that Manitobans faced during the Pawley years. Manitobans have said also that the deficit and the debt have to be brought under control. This government under the leadership of our Premier has done just that. Many major financial institutions have praised this government and our responsible approach to our financial affairs. Our containment of the deficit is even more remarkable given our freeze on major taxes.

Manitobans have praised this government's record on job creation. In addition to freezing all major taxes since taking office, we have further enhanced the tax environment through incentives such as the manufacturing investment tax credit, the research and development tax credit and the mineral exploration incentive program. These incentives have spurred investments in small business jobs. In addition, we have progressively raised the payroll exemption. Now 90 percent of the taxable businesses are exempt from the payroll tax. This government has successfully created a positive environment for small business growth, and our incentives are working.

In 1993, Madam Deputy Speaker, there were 6,000 more jobs in the private sector in Manitoba than in 1992. Manitobans have said that government spending should be allocated to the delivery of the most essential services. Again, this government has listened to the people of Manitoba and allocated increasing percentages of our budget to Health, Education and Family Services. Despite the opposition's deliberate attempt to mislead the public, this government, since taking office, has increased funding to the social safety net. It is worth saying again that this is being done without raising major taxes or running up our deficit.

Madam Deputy Speaker, recently at Manitoba's first ever summit on youth violence and crime, Manitobans stressed their dissatisfaction with the Young Offenders Act and the handling of young offenders in general. This government understood and heard the people of Manitoba, and, again, we

took action. I have communicated to the Liberal federal Justice minister that Manitoba desires a tough approach to the Young Offenders Act in order to enhance the public safety in our community.

* (1510)

Madam Deputy Speaker, about eight months ago, I became the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General, as well as the Minister responsible for the Status of Women. The mantle of this office, of the Minister of Justice, has been worn by many distinguished Manitobans over the past 122 years. As the first woman to hold this office, I feel very honoured to be given the opportunity to contribute to that legacy.

Every Attorney General has shared one common and recurring challenge, the challenge to identify and to respond to the safety needs of the people of Manitoba: their safety, their rights, and an access to a justice system that is sensitive to their needs. I truly believe, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I have inherited one of the most effective and innovative justice systems in all of Canada. I know that my predecessor, who is now the Minister of Health, has earned a tremendous amount of respect in Manitoba and throughout Canada and that his achievements have served Manitoba well.

As the Minister of Justice, I have made the growing problem of youth crime and violence a top priority on my agenda. For this reason, I hosted the first-ever summit on youth crime and violence on December 4. This summit came about because of the public's ever-increasing concern for their public safety and an expressed concern about public confidence in the Young Offenders Act and in what happened to young people who came into conflict with the law.

That summit, Madam Deputy Speaker, included 500 Manitobans. It was over 500 Manitobans on the actual day. Those Manitobans came together in small working groups, and they looked at issues of particular concern. They looked, first of all, at prevention and what could be done to prevent young people from coming into conflict with the law. Then they looked at intervention strategies,

and they said for young people who are highly at risk: What kind of intervention could be provided to steer those young people onto the right path and away from coming into conflict with the justice system?

Then they looked at consequences, and they said that, when young people do come into conflict with the justice system, it should not just be a brush with the law, but they gave very specific recommendations of what should occur as consequences when young people came into contact with the justice system and into conflict with the law.

Flowing from that summit, Madam Deputy Speaker, were a series of 700 recommendations that came from the people of Manitoba. We put those recommendations together in a booklet called Community Voices, Community Action. It is a very simple booklet. It is held together by a staple, and it is meant to be used by the community. It is not bound in glossy print and difficult to take apart, but is instead a working document. It is a document that the people of Manitoba can take apart, can look at specific areas of interest for their community and begin to make changes.

The document itself addresses recommendations that the people of Manitoba put toward, yes the justice system, but also to the community, to the education system and to the family because they recognize that the family is a place to start, that families have responsibility and that it is very important to include the family and the community as we are looking at how we can deal with youth crime and violence.

Government came out with a nine-point plan which is based on the 700 recommendations that the people of Manitoba provided to us. The nine-point plan is an important one because it addresses the whole spectrum of concern with youth crime and violence. It deals at the prevention end. It looks at a program which in fact was conducted April 7 which is a train-the-trainer program to assist front-line community workers and teachers who are dealing with those at-risk youth on a regular basis to help them in their work.

It also deals with the community. It is very important that the community take part in dealing with the issues of youth crime and violence.

So I appreciate the support that I have received from the members of the NDP caucus and the Liberal caucus because they have accepted the fact that youth justice committees are an important part of involving the community in dealing with youth crime and violence.

I said in the nine-point plan that I would like to even expand the role of youth justice committees so they could do the most effective work and that each youth justice committee would be able to sit down and examine what it is in their community that would be effective, how they would like to become involved.

I have met with the chairs of the youth justice committees. My probation side of Corrections meets with the youth justice committees on a regular basis, and we are looking to make them an extremely effective mechanism within the community and a way to involve Manitobans across this province in the concerns of youth crime and violence.

We also, in the nine-point plan, are setting up a youth council. We recognize that the voice of young people themselves is absolutely essential if we are going to deal with the issues of youth crime and violence, and so by putting together a youth council chaired by a youth, a young man from Thompson, youth will then be able to have their ideas and their views and their concerns funneled through to government in a very formal way, so that government will be able to attend to and listen to what the concerns of young people are.

We will also support that provincial youth council and the community youth justice committees with a provincial council. The purpose of that is to bring together a series of experts and people with experience and ability to act as a resource for the youth justice committees and for the youth council. That committee is being chaired by Mr. Gill Tyrrell. He lives in the city of Winnipeg. He has taken a very active role in terms of dealing with youth crime and violence in his

community. He has been asked across Canada to speak on the model that he has put in place.

So we look forward to those councils becoming very effective in our assistance and in our plan to deal with youth crime and violence at the prevention end.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I have another message. In the nine-point plan I made my position clear, and I also made it clear to Manitobans that I had heard them and that I would take their message to Ottawa.

Manitobans said that they were not satisfied with the Young Offenders Act, that they were concerned that young people did not see the Young Offenders Act as an effective piece of legislation. They asked that we take a much stronger and tougher position to the federal government. The Liberal federal government made as a commitment during the last election that it would bring forward changes to the Young Offenders Act. We will be holding them to that promise, and we will be watching, as Manitobans, that the Liberal federal government will in fact do what they said they would do.

Manitoba's position was made very clear. We had a five-point plan. The five-point plan dealt with, first of all, the age at which people would come into the criminal justice system. At the moment, people who are under 12 years of age are not part of the criminal justice system but remain the responsibility of the child welfare system.

The people of Manitoba said that we needed a mechanism to reach down for people who are under 12, who had committed heinous crimes such as homicide, and be able to bring them up into the justice system. I asked the federal government to consider that.

The people of Manitoba also said that for older young offenders, those young offenders who are sixteen and seventeen years old, where they commit a very heinous crime such as a homicide, that there be a presumption in favour of their trial at the adult court level.

We know that young people sixteen and seventeen years old also will use children younger

than twelve to commit crimes. The people of Manitoba have said that that is unacceptable and that there must be a deterrent and that people who are sixteen and seventeen years old who use those young children because they do not fall into the justice system as it stands under the Young Offenders Act, that there should be a presumption of those young people being tried in adult court.

* (1520)

Madam Deputy Speaker, they also asked, and the position I took was for a category of dangerous young offenders so that there could be an increase in sentencing options for those young people who had committed very serious crimes and would in fact be dangerous in our community.

Publication of names was another of the five points that I took to Ottawa. At the moment it is not possible for us to know the names and identity of young offenders who may in fact be a threat to our communities. So I asked the federal minister to consider changes in the publication of names, that names be made available at a minimum to helping agencies, but that where young people were a danger and a constant threat to the community that their names be made available so the people of Manitoba could protect themselves and they would know who they should protect themselves against.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the people of Manitoba also said that parents and the role of family were important and that parents should somehow be brought back into a responsibility on behalf of their young person. So I took a position to Ottawa that asked the federal minister to consider making parents responsible, along with their young person, through the criminal justice system, not just a financial responsibility, but a responsibility to be with that child, to attend the court with that child, to be responsible during the probation period with that child, and to make sure that parents were taking a responsibility with their child.

Some people have accused us of presenting an old-fashioned idea, bringing parents back in and making parents responsible, but I do not think there is anything wrong with that old-fashioned idea, Madam Deputy Speaker. In fact, I think it is

an important one, and the people of Manitoba have said that they believe so, too. But that is a federal act, and we will continue pressing the federal government.

I received a petition about two weeks ago from 4,000 Manitobans, who said that they wanted changes to the Young Offenders Act, and I promised, when that petition was delivered to my office, that I would write to the federal minister and again say to the federal minister, the people of Manitoba have made themselves clear. But because the Young Offenders Act is a federal act, the people of Manitoba then said, what can you do as a government, a provincial government and as a Minister of Justice?

So I can look at our corrections system because that is our provincial responsibility. When young people are sentenced under the Young Offenders Act, they come into the corrections system in which I, as Minister of Justice, become responsible.

So I have said in corrections that it is very important for young people who receive this sentence to believe that what they are experiencing is important. It provides them with a structure that when they leave corrections, they will not want to return, they will not want to re-offend.

So I am looking across our corrections system for both adults and young people and a rigorous correction, but I have said that for some young people, they need a highly structured environment, and they need an experience which we look to provide them with a future benefit. So we introduced the concepts of wilderness camps and boot camps. The underlying principle of those particular corrections facilities will be that there is a well-known structure, that the rules will be well known to the young person.

Sometimes young people have problems because they just do not know what the rules are. They get mixed messages. In this case, we are saying the rules should be very well known. We are saying that the consequences should also be well known, when young people break a rule, that they know what the effect of breaking that rule will

be and what the consequence to themselves will be, that also they will be characterized by a very high activity level.

Young people, particularly adolescent young people, do require a great deal of activity, and a high level of activity will be an important part of the rigorous confinement within the wilderness camps and the boot camps. In addition, we have said an austere environment, a stay within these facilities should be a stay which is not as comfortable as people have at home, or more comfortable in some cases, but should be an austere environment. The basis of this is to provide structure for young people and to help them experience the structure which some young people have not experienced in their lives. This provides the opportunity.

We recognize also that young people need rehabilitation, and the opportunity to experience structure can be rehabilitative in itself, but also some young people will come into the corrections facilities with a need for assistance with drug and alcohol dependency and also require some assistance for insight to their criminal behaviour. These will all be considered.

We are also meeting with Manitobans. Manitobans have expressed a great deal of interest and a great deal of support for these particular initiatives, and so we have taken very seriously that Manitobans have things that they want to tell us. I have met with several aboriginal groups, and my corrections people continue to meet with the aboriginal community so that their special concerns can be considered.

Manitobans are making themselves very clear. They want to make sure that young people recognize that when they are sentenced, it is a consequence. Manitobans have also said repeatedly that youths must be made more accountable for their actions. A stronger Young Offenders Act is essential to make the wishes of Manitobans a reality.

The throne speech also outlined that government will bring forward legislative amendments to deny drivers' licences to young people who have shown

that they cannot be responsible. The issue of public safety is one of the most important issues that Manitobans have asked us to consider. Public safety is dealt with by, in this case, looking at responsible drivers.

We have a program that deals with drinking and driving. We are saying now, where actions of young people lead us to believe that they will not be responsible drivers, and we know that there is a very high accident rate for young people, sixteen, seventeen and eighteen, in that group of young people, where we believe that they will not be responsible drivers in the interests of public safety, we will be denying a driver's licence. A driver's licence is very important to young people, and so we look to increase the responsibility of young people and also the public safety of Manitobans.

I know that the Minister responsible for MPIC (Mr. Cummings) is also looking at some initiatives where young people owe money to MPIC and where they are required to pay that money back, that we will be seeking to have that debt settled before young people are able to drive.

Youthcrime is a top priority for this government and a top priority for Manitobans, but we have also enhanced the public safety of Manitobans in other areas. Our zero-tolerance policy has shown that this government has a commitment to the victims of domestic violence. We have introduced guidelines which charge offenders in all cases of domestic violence and oppose bail in each case. Zero tolerance in Manitoba is not a wish, it is a fact, a fact that we will enforce to our utmost ability.

This government's achievements in the area of antistalking are also well known across Canada. This government, the minister before me, pressured the federal government to strengthen the antistalking laws as defined in Section 264 of the Criminal Code. I take that very seriously and also have a strong concern for victims, so when I recently met with the federal Minister of Justice, I presented additional refinements on the stalking legislation. These refinements include requiring authorities to contact the victim if the stalker is

released or escapes from jail. That one allows us to attend to the concerns of the victim.

We have asked for an enhanced penalty if the stalker violated a protective order while stalking. We have asked for a bail-reverse onus where evidence demonstrates that the accused poses a threat to the safety of the victim. We have asked that those charged should be required to surrender all firearms and firearms acquisition certificates.

This government's action in the area of stalking and domestic violence demonstrates our commitment to the victims of violent crime. In addition, Madam Deputy Speaker, we have introduced other legislation in the interests of public safety. The drinking and driving laws have been expanded, enforced and made a lot tougher under this government. It has made it possible for Crown attorneys and the courts to deal harshly with drinking drivers. Just as our domestic violence and our zero tolerance policy says no to domestic violence, our anti-drinking-and-driving legislation spells out the consequences for disregarding public safety.

This government has also made policing of Manitoba's communities a high priority. I met with the federal Solicitor General to indicate to him Manitoba's interest and willingness to get going and participate in a First Nations policing policy. This policy calls for Canada and Manitoba and each individual First Nations community to meet and to reach a tripartite agreement on the type of police service desired by each First Nations community. Officials of this government have, since February of this year, met with representatives of 27 First Nations communities with respect to this policy. The First Nations policing policy, Madam Deputy Speaker, is good news for Manitoba.

* (1530)

As the Minister of Justice, I have made public safety a No. 1 priority. The public must have confidence in the laws that govern our province. The public has told me, again particularly in the area of young offenders, that they do lack confidence in this legislation, and we look to the

federal government to assist in this way. In the interests of public safety, as I said, we have come forward with a nine-point plan to make young people responsible for their actions. The government is committed to safe communities. Our measures on youth crime will enhance public safety. Sadly, the opposition parties seem to stress less importance for safe communities.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is also my honour and privilege to represent the women of Manitoba and to ensure that women's issues continue to receive importance in government policy. My colleague the former Minister for the Status of Women should be congratulated on her accomplishments when she held this ministry. This government is committed to the women of this province. I would like to highlight some of the initiatives that the Status of Women has implemented over the past year: In celebration of the second annual Women's History Month, facilitated the issuing of a provincial proclamation. We developed and distributed information kits to junior and senior high school students throughout the province, and we encouraged and supported community initiatives to celebrate Women's History Month, most particularly Eaton's salute to Manitoba women.

We also facilitated the appearance of Heather Jane Robertson as the keynote speaker for the guidance counsellors' annual special area grouping conference on socialization of girls and boys. She made a very good presentation and obviously impressed people in Manitoba so that she has been brought back, I believe, on two other occasions to speak to Manitobans.

We worked with Winnipeg School Division No. 1 to co-sponsor a school-based antiviolence program called ASAP, a pilot program to train teachers, and it was developed and presented by the London family court system. On the day of that workshop, I went to say a few words and also to have an opportunity to speak informally to the participants. It was really very rewarding to hear that the participants believed that they gained new knowledge and that in some of the work that they were doing they felt reinforced by colleagues in

the room. So the opportunity to have communities involved and to be able to take that direct action at the time when an incident occurs is extremely important to Manitobans.

Madam Deputy Speaker, also in keeping with our directorate's mandate to provide province-wide information, we have established a central 1-800 women's information line. We produced two expanded issues of the About Women publication, and those who have taken the time to read about women will see that it highlights careers and work of women across this province. It will also show that the women of the province of Manitoba take part in a whole range of types of work and that young women, in particular, looking ahead to plan, can see the women who have taken on these challenges and will have the opportunity to read about the kind of work that they do.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this government is committed to the women of our province. Many changes and accomplishments have been initiated across government also to reflect our commitment to women. I would like to just mention a few because I believe they are important to restate so that women who will read this and women who need information can have it. Health benefits are extended to disabled persons and sole-support parents moving to employment. That was a very important change which occurred last year and which allowed for, particularly, sole-support parents to move into employment. Funding for women's crisis shelters and resource centres has been increased. Funding for child care has increased from 1987 to 1993 by \$21.1 million. Manitoba Health has implemented a breast-screening program. This is an important initiative on behalf of women's health. It is an area in which women can now participate for their own benefit and the benefit of their families and have access to a health program which, we hope, will lengthen their lives.

Manitoba also maintains its commitment to the policy of zero tolerance. Family Violence Court as well, Madam Deputy Speaker, was a creation of this government; it did not exist when the party across the way was in government. But this

government took the issues of domestic violence very seriously, violence that occurs within a partnership, violence that occurs between a child and a parent and violence that occurs towards the elderly, and we acted. We created this court, and it is a model for courts across Canada. We have visitors to the province of Manitoba who come to look at how our court was created and what the training is for people within our court so that we can show Canadians what a commitment to the area of domestic violence and to reducing domestic violence looks like.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we also have the Women's Advocacy Program in the Department of Justice. We also have increased resources for counselling of male abusers, and I am very proud to say, Manitoba appointed its first ever female chief judge of the provincial court. I know that Manitoba Education and Training includes as an integral part of its planning and program a focus on equality of access and opportunity for women.

Over the past eight months, I have had the opportunity to meet with many women's groups and many organizations throughout our province, and I know as the weeks go by, I will have the opportunity to visit and to meet with many more. It is important to hear firsthand what the issues of Manitoba's women are. I make every effort and a commitment to do that, and also to attempt to work with those issues and to make improvements. I am proud of our government's accomplishments, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I am extremely proud to have the chance to work on behalf of the women of Manitoba.

As I outlined, this government has poised Manitoba to face the needs and the challenges of the 21st Century. Our record is strong. Manitobans have benefitted from our six years in government. The throne speech outlined priorities and visions of this government. Our government has a record of doing the right thing. We will continue to implement positive initiatives and bring responsible government to Manitoba.

I look forward to the coming months, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I thank you for the opportunity to speak here today.

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland): Madam Deputy Speaker, allow me to express my gratitude to yourself and also to the Speaker of the House for the kind assistance that has been rendered to myself and the other new members of this House. I am standing here this afternoon both honoured and to some degree humbled. It is not every day that our people are elected to the Legislature like this, to any Legislature in Canada. It has only been in recent years that First Nations people have been making an effort to have their voices heard in Legislatures and also in Parliaments in this great country of ours.

Allow me to begin this afternoon by talking in a language that I am more acquainted with. It will be a repeat of what I have previously said.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Cree spoken.

[English]

Mr. Speaker, I would like to, as well, express my respects and express my hand in friendship to all members of this House. I would like to join other people who have spoken in acknowledging the new members for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg), St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), Osborne (Ms. McCormick) and The Maples (Mr. Kowalski). We are indeed, I believe, in for an experience. We are all here to represent our people's concerns, our constituents. That is the bottom line as to why we were elected. We want to do that in the most effective way.

* (1540)

I come from a society that was almost destroyed. I come from a group of people, a nation that entered into an arrangement called a treaty with the British Crown in 1875. I am a proud member of the Cree Nation, and I always am mindful not to forget about the elders, the children and the women that belong to the society that I do.

We are told in the community that I am from—and having been raised in a traditional home—that we are always to acknowledge the Creator in all our affairs. That is the mind that I speak today, hopefully. We are told in our spiritual understanding that the spirit of the eagle is the one that

we offer our prayers to, because we are told in my society that there is no man or woman who is holy enough for them to talk to God, the Great Spirit or the Creator. We are taught in the culture that I am accustomed to that the sacred things Mother Earth provides for us, ultimately, we must give thanks to the Great Spirit.

One of the ways we express our appreciation to the Great Spirit is offering our prayers and our humble words through the spirit of the eagle. That is signified by the eagle feathers that most members here have seen. We are given these feathers upon earning them. We sacrifice a little bit of our life. We sacrifice by going without food or water for periods of up to four to 10 days to pray for the ones who are less fortunate than we are. That is the society I come from—to again pray for strength for our people, to again pray for the strength for our children to be reunited with their families, those ones who have been taken away in years gone by.

In our treaty arrangement, we agreed, our forefathers, to share our land and resources with the new Europeans. We have never claimed this land as our own. We have simply claimed the role of being caretakers for the land that we shared with the new settlers, in my case in 1875, and my forefathers when they entered into the treaty arrangement. My people have endured a lot of suffering and continue to this day. We are no stranger to the abuses that are talked about in everyday society. We have been through the residential school system and, literally, we have numbers from the time we are born till the day we die. We have experienced sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, but it is not my purpose to lay the blame or put my finger to blame on another culture or another society. It is my role to speak on behalf of my constituents of Rupertsland to prevent these things from happening again in our society.

It is not a good feeling to stand here, realizing the fact that many of my people are suffering under the influence of alcoholism, drug abuse, solvent abuse where family violence is rampant, when some of the communities that I represent are 98

percent unemployed, when there is no hope for a better tomorrow. In spite of all of that, we are here, and no matter what our political colours or political stripes may be, we are here to make a better tomorrow for all Manitobans, particularly the children.

I have been raised by my elders to show respect to all in spite of my differences in philosophy, to always listen and to always show respect, and I hope that teaching will carry on during my tenure in this House.

I also come from a society where we were regarded as Indians. Later we were regarded as natives. Now we are regarded, commonly, as aboriginal people. We have a very complicated yet a very beautiful society where I come from. We had our own traditional systems of governing ourselves. We have our teachings, and we always believed, in the society that I come from, that all things are divided equally between men and women, unlike the society that we all know commonly today.

Some of us from the society that I am from have been chosen to stand for political office in the big world, meaning this House here. It has been through dialogue with our elders who have influenced us and asked us that it is time that we have made our contribution to our society, to our community and to our province. That is why I am here today, Mr. Speaker.

I am also told by the wiser ones from our communities never to forget about our veterans that went to war to protect this country, this province. Many of our aboriginal veterans were willing to give the ultimate sacrifice. Many are buried throughout Europe, and very little attention and respect is given to the memory of those veterans from our First Nations communities who did not come home. Many men and women went off to war with the notion in mind that they were protecting this country, so it is unfortunate that only today, in 1994, we are slowly starting to express our respect for those men and women who did not return home to their families. I have family members, grandparents and uncles, that served in the wars of years gone by as well.

The traditional economies of our people, hunting, trapping, fishing, gathering, traditional activities of my people are slowly disappearing. Our people have told me that they want to retain those economies, the traditional economy. Such things as commercial fishing should not be looked upon any differently than farming. We are told as well that we have our own systems of reintroducing and perhaps restimulating our economies within our own communities with our traditional activities, and I am a firm believer in that.

* (1550)

I want to talk about the diversity of Rupertsland. As many know here I represent roughly 28 communities starting in Sagkeeng First Nation to the south and all the way up to Churchill to the northern part of this province, to the Territories. In between we have many different concerns, many different needs that the people want, Manitobans want, and want to catch up on with the rest of this province and the rest of this country. A lot of the communities that I represent do not have the luxury of highways or roads, and everything has to be flown in, supplies, and it is not uncommon for our people to live with the high cost of living, substandard housing in many communities. It is not uncommon to meet our people who pay two and three times higher the price of goods and commodities than southern Manitobans are accustomed to. It is also not uncommon to meet individuals who pay between \$400 and \$800 a month for hydro. It is a situation that requires examining.

The Third World conditions that do exist in the communities that I represent, as I said earlier, do not make me feel good. I am committed, and the party that I stand with is committed, to establishing a government-to-government relationship with the First Nations communities of this province. I do not believe that we can tolerate the big-daddy, little-Indian syndrome any longer. We have to treat First Nations leaders with a bit of respect and First Nations people in general with a little respect and northern Manitobans as well.

The riding that I represent is not only First Nations people, nor Metis people, but we have a number of northern people that have been there for a long time that are not necessarily native, and I am representing their concerns as well. We have in the different communities of Rupertsland different concerns. We are all acquainted with the issue of the chemical spill recently in Pine Falls. It affected and is affecting the people of Sagkeeng. Certainly, I am open to further dialogue on that on behalf of my constituents with the appropriate ministers in this government. We have other communities such as Manigotagan and Seymourville that require infrastructure. Unfortunately, they have not realized some of those dreams that they have in order to improve the lives of the people that they represent.

We have the matter of solvent abuse in some of the communities that I represent as well. As I said, it is not a good feeling to stand here when I consider the suffering that is going on and the Third World conditions that people are forced to live in in the constituency of Rupertsland.

I commend the government of Manitoba for the recent treaty land entitlement signing in Garden Hill. I believe that is a first step in rectifying some wrongs that have occurred in the past, and will encourage this government at every given opportunity to continue its dialogue with First Nations communities.

We have a situation in northern Manitoba with one of the communities that I represent, and airstrips, I might add, are something that is lacking in northern communities. At one point we did not have the luxury of flying out of our communities, but we took traditional means of transportation, either a dog team or by waterways to get to the next communities for medical attention and for other needs as well. We have airstrips today which enable our people to fly in and out of communities, and some people still do not have the luxury of an airstrip in their communities. We have an example where we need to build upon the community infrastructure. We need airstrips to be improved for the safety of all people in those communities. One community in particular is Gods River, where

we have an airstrip and at the same time it is used as a right-of-way or a road as an access to the other part of the community. Why there has not been an accident—and certainly we pray that there be no accident—up until this time is a miracle, in my opinion.

We have an activity that is going on in Churchill right now, the spaceport development. We look forward to good things happening there. We will continue asking the government in a good way that they support the initiatives of the people in Churchill with respect to job creation, developmental activities of that nature. We will encourage this government as well, on matters that relate to the federal government, to stand with the people of Rupertsland by intervening and writing letters on behalf of the communities in Rupertsland.

In Gillam we have a crisis centre, and certainly family violence is no stranger to the communities that I represent as well, but we need this government to be proactive in this activity in Gillam as well. We need them to be a willing partner to the community of Gillam and also to the First Nations people of Fox Lake who have undertaken a joint initiative to attack this issue and deal with it at the community level. I look forward to this government's co-operation in this initiative by the people of Gillam.

St. Theresa Point has also over the past several years now been running their own youth justice court system. I had the opportunity of visiting the people that work there, and it is a system of justice that I believe works for the people in that area. I believe that initiative should be further supported, and again I give acknowledgments where they are wanted or needed. I do commend this government for supporting the St. Theresa Point people up until now, and I look forward to their further support of that activity in St. Theresa Point.

We have many outstanding issues in this province that require our collective attention as a matter of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. We have many excellent recommendations, and we need to be in partnership with government to ensure that the recommendations are carried out that are contained in the AJI. As well, we have had the

recently released First Nations child welfare task force report, and I was pleased to hear the Justice minister talk this afternoon and the discussions that she has undertaken with First Nations communities with respect to policing. We certainly need that in Rupertsland as well, and I do encourage her. I am glad to hear that the dialogue has begun with respect to having the tripartite arrangement become a reality in the province of Manitoba.

I talked about the gains that my people have made, and at the same time I am also very careful that there is still a lot of work to be done and there is still a lot of need in our communities. I talked a little while ago about some of the diseases that do exist in the communities that I represent. Alcoholism, drug abuse, solvent abuse, those things I talked about earlier, family violence, sexual abuse.

* (1600)

It is my belief that people be empowered to deal with those things. An example of how they have dealt with that is in Hollow Water, by allowing the community to come up with their own arrangements with respect to dealing with some of those issues in that community. I certainly encourage them as well to carry on.

In Rupertsland too, I am happy to say that we have wilderness camps that have been operating for the last several years. It is a way of taking our youth from the environment, we can call the negative environment, of some of the communities where they are exposed to drinking and family violence, those sort of things.

We have Gods River, St. Theresa Point, Bloodvein, Shamattawa, who have undertaken initiatives to develop wilderness camps where our kids are given back a little bit of their culture, are given back a little bit of their pride, a restoration of pride and a restoration of their lives and the way their forefathers and grandfathers lived and given a sense of pride that they should be proud of their First Nationhood.

We had the opportunity of being in Gods River, and they have operated without any support for the

last several years. Soon they will be coming to the government for some support and looking for a partnership arrangement to deal with some of the youth activities in that community and, as well, the other communities that I mentioned will be coming to this government to seek a partnership and to seek a little bit of respect in some of the things that they are embarking upon for the good of our people.

Throughout Rupertsland, both for aboriginal and nonaboriginal people, there is a sense that we want to have economic and training opportunities and we want to be able to give our children an opportunity to see into the future, give them some hope as opposed to revisiting the residential school system by way of boot camps.

I am no stranger to residential schools. I have witnessed the abuses that go on there, having been a student at a residential school; perhaps not many here have had that opportunity.

We are—I am anyway—and so are the people that I sit with, will be constructive in our criticism for the needs of northern Manitobans. If I wanted to fight somebody, we would do that somewhere else.

I want to explain a few things that I am very proud of. The diversity of the caucus that I sit with—we have two First Nations people here, we have a Metis, an Inuit, and women in this caucus, all with their own training, their own experience and their own talents. I commend them for that, but I do not ignore the talents of other people in this House as well. That is the traditional respect that I was talking about earlier. Each and every one of the people in this House have their own separate talents, and I admire that.

We are in the process in this province of dismantling the Department of Indian Affairs, Manitoba being used as a model across this country. We are certainly monitoring the activities there. We will be watching out to see what develops with respect to the dismantling of the Department of Indian Affairs.

We are, as well, in support of the dismantling of Indian Affairs, on this side anyway, but at the same

time we must assure First Nations governments that they will be dealt with with respect on matters and on issues that relate to the province.

When the throne speech was talked about, we did not hear a whole lot about northern Manitoba. There was some reference to northern communities. We heard about the Port of Churchill and certainly, I think, that is a motherhood issue, treaty land entitlement, co-management agreements. That is fine, but there is greater urgency in a lot of other areas, the chronic unemployment and the need to restore some respect and some pride among northern Manitobans, no matter what colour they may be.

We have as well some healing programs that are happening in northern Manitoba. It is through this way that I believe northern Manitoba will again be proud of their own communities, but we in positions that we are in must make every effort to work with these people in partnership.

I do not think it is the desire of the people I represent that they live on welfare. As I indicated earlier, 98 percent of our people are unemployed in Rupertsland and social assistance is certainly not the answer for the people that I have talked with in detail. We must make every effort to ensure that opportunities are given to northern Manitobans as other northern Manitobans have been given that respect.

I think many times particularly First Nations people, Indian people, have been regarded as a drain on the taxpayers' dollar. I want to go on record as saying that my people have been proud and are proud people and have been willing contributors to this society and to the development of this province.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I cannot make any apology for being a part of a social democratic party. To me it is a natural parallel from the traditional First Nations government that I am familiar with. I cannot be anything else, because I believe in the good of all and I do not base my thinking for myself and my own individual needs.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you for your kind help, to the members of this House for

showing their respect. I know that is part of the way it is done here on a person's initial speech. I want to thank the members of this House for rendering that respect to me.

It is my commitment to speak on behalf of the people who have elected me to work, hopefully, in a good way with people who are in government in this House so that the people whom I represent in northern Manitoba will get just a small, small piece of what is going on in this province overall. That is all we ask for, the First Nations people and all other people in Rupertsland.

Cree spoken

[English]

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your honourable way of conducting yourself and, as well, I thank all members in this House.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to thank the honourable member for Rupertsland with his comments on his first speech, and as we have customarily done, we have allowed a member to speak in a language other than English or French. The only thing we would ask the honourable member for Rupertsland is that he would provide Hansard with a translation of what he actually said in the Cree language. Thank you.

* (1610)

Point of Order

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray), that the member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick) be now heard.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, under Rule 32, I want to indicate I am not debating the motion; it is not debatable. But it is a rather unusual motion, and I am just wondering with leave of the House if there might be some way in which we could get some explanation from the Liberal House leader informing members of the House why the motion is being made. We have a normal speaking rotation. It might assist in terms of dealing with

this motion. Once again, it is by leave. I understand there is no possibility of debating this.

Speaker's Ruling

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) rose on a point of order to move a motion that the member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick) be now heard.

I am ruling the honourable member's motion out of order. The reason for ruling it out of order is that on January 24, 1984, Mr. Graham, the then-member for Virden, rose on a point of order and moved that the member for Morris at that time be now heard.

In making his motion Mr. Graham referred to Rule 32, which states very clearly: "When two or more members rise to speak, the Speaker shall call upon the member who first rose in his place; but a motion may be made that any other member who has risen 'be now heard' or 'do now speak,' and the motion shall forthwith be put without debate."

Mr. Speaker Walding ruled as follows: "The Honourable Member for Virden will no doubt be aware that it is not permissible to rise on a point of order to move an amendment or a motion or a resolution."

Therefore, the honourable member's point of order is out of order.

* * *

Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, it is my extreme pleasure to rise and to comment on the Speech from the Throne in this year of the House; and, before I begin, I would like to sincerely welcome all members of the House back into action and tell them that I wish them the very best of luck in this coming session, which promises to be a very challenging session in many respects.

I would also like to especially welcome the new members of our House. Being the only true sophomore, I guess, in this House, I am very sympathetic to the decisions that those members made to let their names stand for election, and I recognize the difficulties that their families and

themselves will face in their first full year in the House, so I congratulate them.

At the same time I would like to congratulate the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) for a fine speech in his first speech in the House, and as well all the other new members in their first speeches, those who have spoken thus far. They have been very good, and I congratulate them as well.

* (1620)

I also would like to welcome back the Pages, legislative staff, and Mr. Speaker, you yourself, in what promises to be a most demanding session for you certainly.

Also, I would like to, not congratulate, I guess, Mr. Speaker, but just support the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) in his decision to leave this House. I know that it must have been a difficult decision for him. Just as it is a difficult decision to enter politics, I am sure it is also a difficult decision to leave. Finally, I would like to, at this opportunity, congratulate and offer thanks to all the spouses and, in particular, to my wife for the support that they have to show for this difficult and very demanding position that we all have here.

Mr. Speaker, there is a prayer I think most members of the House are familiar with that says: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change those things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. I believe that this throne speech illustrates that this government has the wisdom to know the difference. I think it is very important to know the difference. On a personal level, we only have so much time; we only have so many resources; and it is vitally important that we focus those resources in a meaningful way for the achievement of betterment in our lives. It is important that we do not squander our resources and dilute them and reduce our effectiveness as individuals. It is doubly important, of course, that governments learn that lesson themselves. I believe this government understands that.

Based on the opposition remarks thus far, I am not convinced that they do, however, Mr. Speaker. I believe that many of the comments indicate a

support of and a belief in big government and a return to such big government as we had during the NDP term in the 1980s.

Mr. Speaker, my father was a farmer. He farmed for 50 years. He put in a lot of crops. He was a good farmer, and he understood the importance of knowing your role and your responsibilities when you farm. My father never once claimed to create a good crop, yet governments of all political stripes would claim that they create jobs. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Mr. Speaker, a good farmer is responsible for creating an environment where good crops can grow, and a good government understands that, and this is a good government. We have the third highest job creation in '93, the second best employment record consistently over the last two and a half years in this country, and even the most partisan of observers would understand and realize that what we are doing is beginning to work. It is working. Through such key measures as reintroducing sanity to the Workers Compensation Board, reducing the payroll tax to over 90 percent of Manitoba's businesses, holding the line on all major taxes, we have created an environment where Manitobans can have jobs and where Manitobans can create jobs.

I do not believe that Liberal and New Democrat members have illustrated their understanding of the correct role of government in terms of job creation. I believe they lack the wisdom to know the difference. I do not believe that they have a full understanding or appreciation of the power of the private sector in our society. A recent example would be the federal Liberals. The federal Liberal red book proposed a \$6-billion infrastructure program that would create 20,000 jobs in the first year and 60,000 jobs over a three-year period. However, Mr. Speaker, before one shovel hit the ground, in March of 1994, Statistics Canada tells us that employment jumped 62,000 in construction and manufacturing in Canada—62,000 in one month. What the quick-fix strategy would purportedly have accomplished over a three-year period, the private sector did in one month and all

of that without the aid of dollars stolen from the future.

Our government's framework for economic development and economic growth accepts the importance of strong public sector leadership, but we understand that the bulk of new jobs and investment will be the creation of the private sector. I was formerly employed in a private business, Mr. Speaker, one of my own, as I believe you were. A number of my colleagues on this side of the House have owned and operated small businesses.

I understand the challenges of running a small business very well. I understand them first-hand, because I have faced those challenges in my own life. I understand the day-to-day stresses of running a small business. I understand the insecurities. I understand that there is no guaranteed pay cheque. I understand that there is no negotiated specific job description to which I can adhere in my small business, and I understand that if I work very hard and I work very smart and I satisfy my customers' every need, I might get paid.

Over the 12 years prior to entering politics, Mr. Speaker, my little one-person company started out of my house grew to have seven employees. I created jobs. I had no assistance from government whatsoever. I had no grants. I asked for no handouts, nor did I receive any. Never a dollar went from the taxpayer to government and some pennies back to me.

I remember, however, my first experience in dealing with government. After four years in private business, I made the major decision to risk some cash and hire someone to work with me, to create a job. This is a difficult decision when one realizes that there is no way to resell that asset to recoup some of your investment. Certainly, I chose, after some long deliberations, to hire an employee and did so. My employee is a single mother with two children to support, and in exchange for her skills in my business, I was able to give her some economic self-sufficiency. We both benefited from that exchange, and that is the way job creation works.

So, after the first four months of us working together in our little business, Mr. Speaker, I was quite surprised to receive a letter from the government of the day. It was with some excitement that my assistant and I opened this letter, thinking perhaps that it might be a letter of congratulations for creating a job. I was wrong. When I opened it, it was not a letter of congratulations. In fact, what it was was a notice from the Finance department of Eugene Kostyra, I believe, saying that I should pay a tax. Because I created a job, I should pay a tax.

Mr. Speaker, I must say this disappointed me, as I am sure it did disappoint many in the private sector, whom now today all parties in this House recognize as being the key to job creation. This was the New Democratic Party's method of encouraging small business, to give the real creators of wealth a bill when they hired someone. No wonder people refer to it as a dying movement.

This particular dynasty, a short-term duration fortunate for the people of Manitoba, was creative in very few areas, but it was very creative in one area. That was in finding ways to tax Manitobans. Five new taxes and 16 increased levels of taxation in a very short term in office show us that particular party does understand what private sector business is all about. Their view is that private sector businesses are cows to be milked. That is an unfortunate view and one we cannot afford to have in Manitoba again.

Someone who should know said, in September of 1993, that the New Democratic Party suffers from not enough people who bring with them a business sense. That was someone who should know, Mr. Speaker. That was former Premier Howard Pawley. Unfortunately, there is all too much evidence of that contention in this House on a day-to-day basis.

This government has an understanding of the importance of private sector investment and trade. It understands where our jobs are going to be coming from in future. The policies of this government are beginning to work. They are working, and it is nowhere more clear than in my home town of Portage la Prairie.

It has been said that tough times make for better managers, and we certainly have improved management skills in Portage la Prairie in the last four years. Like all of this province and this nation, we have come through the second worst recession in the history of our country in the last few years. In Portage la Prairie of course, with the closing of two of our major employers in a short time period, we were faced with some incredible challenges, and we have improved our management skills because of those challenges.

But for many reasons, because of the agricultural diversity of our area perhaps, because of our willingness to be innovative, because of our willingness to face up to the fears we have and respond to the opportunities that we see, because of our location perhaps as a transportation centre on the main rail lines, both CN and CP and on the Trans-Canada Highway and the junction with the Yellowhead route, we are well positioned for business development.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, with some pride, that I obtained last week the employment figures from Canada Employment for our community of Portage la Prairie. I would like to share these with the members of the House if I could. Between 1990 and January of this year, it will be of no surprise to the members opposite that we lost a number of jobs, in particular with the Campbell Soup closure and the Canadian Forces base at Southport closing. The total job loss in that time period was 390. That would be similar to the city of Winnipeg losing 60,000 jobs. So the challenges faced by my home town have been incredible in the last three years.

* (1630)

Now the good news, Mr. Speaker. The number of private sector businesses that have created jobs is many, over 40 new small businesses in my community in the last three years. The total number of jobs, according to Canada Employment, that have been created in Portage la Prairie in the last three years is 503.

Mr. Speaker, I have a list here of all the small businesses that have opened, the businesses that

have expanded. I tell you I am very thankful and very impressed and very honoured to represent a constituency that responds so well to the employment challenges that our community has faced. We have responded well as a community. Our community leadership deserves congratulations for their planning initiatives, for their willingness to co-operate with one another so that we could more capably use our resources.

Also I think we, as a government, deserve some credit as well, because it is in the environment that this government has created and allowed to perpetuate that this community and area that I make my home in has been able to create these many jobs. I am very thankful that we did not have an antibusiness NDP government in power when we were faced with these challenges.

Churchill said nothing recalls the past so potently as a smell. When I think of the NDP I think of the odour of burning bridges, bridges burned between private enterprise and their movement. There are many in my constituency who recall the things that happened during that term of office that preceded our own. They will not soon forget it, Mr. Speaker.

Not only is my constituency the most attractive and diverse in this province, but we are without a doubt the best hosts. This summer, once again, we will be home to the Portage Strawberry Festival, which I believe many members of this House have had the privilege of attending. I am reminded that the former member did bring strawberries in an attempt to quash perhaps some of the vocal opposition of members opposite.

This summer, however, we have a very exciting event, and I want to inform the members opposite and my colleagues of this event. For this summer, we have already gotten together over 400 volunteers to organize the centennial of the Portage Collegiate Institute, my old school. I am very pleased to tell the members opposite and my colleagues that we expect over 5,000 people in Portage la Prairie. It is going to be crowded, but we are looking forward to it.

People are going to be coming from all across Canada and the United States. We will have guests from as far away as Singapore, New Zealand, Norway, Belgium, Mexico and even from the site of a former NDP faux pas, Saudi Arabia. We are going to have people from there, too.

My community is a great community, but we have our problems and we know that. This is a great province, but this province has problems, as well. We are reminded of that frequently in this House, and we are reminded of it as we meet with our constituents, but the way to deal with our problems is not to ignore them and focus on the fears that they produce in us. The way to deal with them is through intelligent action. That is the kind of action this throne speech alludes to.

I am pleased to see initiatives underway to deal with the problems of youth violence and youth crime. Too many Manitobans have been victimized by crime and particularly the crimes of youth. The youth violence summit was a valuable process for allowing a productive outlet for the concerns that Manitobans have and that we all share around this very, very vital and important issue.

It was a useful process, not just because of the input that it allowed, but because of the action plans that were developed as a consequence of that youth violence summit. So I think we are all pleased to see this nine-point plan of attack developed by the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), and she is to be complimented for her initiative, I think, in that area.

I am pleased to see commitments made to proceed with wilderness camps. I think that many of us recognize that over the last 15 to 20 years in our society there has been a direct inverse relationship between the degree to which we have been willing to use deterrents and discipline in our society and the incidence of youth crime and violence.

Restrictions on access to drivers' licences is a good common sense, positive step in my estimation, but I wonder about the degree of recognition that members opposite give to this

serious problem when I hear people say things like, when a young person commits a crime, they themselves are the victim. When I hear a statement like that made, I think it is quite possible that we are ignoring the real victim.

The real victim that concerns me and that should concern all of us is not the perpetrator of a violent act, it is the victim who is on the receiving end of that violent act. Law abiding society deserves protection, Mr. Speaker, our seniors especially, who helped build this country, who gave us many of the institutions and the benefits that we experience today.

When I travel around my constituency and meet with them, many of them actually live in fear within their own homes. That is a shame, and we must make every effort to make sure that when someone becomes the victim of a violent crime, of a crime on their property, that it does not happen again.

Some say we are ignoring prevention. Some say we are focusing on punishment, not treatment. Mr. Speaker, in my family where I grew up, the punishment was the prevention. It is indelibly linked in my backside that the punishment is the prevention. I do believe that anyone who suggests that suitable punishment is not a form of prevention is living in some kind of psychological fantasyland.

I have been pleased to see initiatives taken in my own Portage school division where we have one of the first school divisions to undertake the policy of zero tolerance for violence within our school system. I am encouraged by the reference in the throne speech for this serious problem. Students in school do not deserve to live in fear from the violent acts of other students. Teachers do not deserve to live in fear from the violent consequences of actions by their students, and certainly the parents of these children should not have to live in fear and worry every day when they see their child go off to school hoping their child will not be the victim of some violent act. We should not have to endure ongoing violence in our school system. Certainly the learning environment is precious. As a former teacher, I recognize it

must be protected for the good of all law-abiding students.

I have asked young people in my community and my constituency what their feelings are about this issue of youth violence and crime. I can tell you that in listening to their answers two very important statements that are consistent with many that I talked to emerged. Number 1, young people in Portage la Prairie tell me that they want to know the rules, and, secondly, they tell me, they want the rules enforced.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) listening to Manitobans. She has had community input. When she speaks, she speaks with the voice of concerned Manitobans, concerned Manitobans who are tired of lip service. Plato said some years ago that liberalism will flourish in society until chaos reigns supreme. I would suggest that chaos is very close to reigning supreme today in Manitoba and the initiatives that the Minister of Justice is undertaking, to her credit, are not initiatives that are bleeding-heart excuses. They are initiatives of action and that is what Manitobans want and deserve.

I would like to make reference, if I could, to some of the comments by the Leader of the Second Opposition (Mr. Edwards) in his response to the Speech from the Throne. In the serenity prayer which I alluded to earlier it talks about the courage to change. I think one of the things that we must do is change the image of politicians in the minds of Manitobans in terms of our willingness to play havoc with the full and complete truth in our statements.

(Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

When the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) says, for example, that his solution to the fiscal problems of this province would be that we achieve revenue growth of 4 percent, and suggests that this government has not responded well because we have not achieved a 4 percent level of growth, I must remind him that there is only one jurisdiction not only in Canada but in North America that has achieved 4 percent revenue

growth over the last six years, and that is B.C. They have done it by selling their province out to the Pacific Rim countries. Other provinces and the states of the United States have not achieved such a rate of growth and so it would be, I think, somewhat unfair to attack any government's performance on the basis it did not achieve an imaginary figure that no other jurisdiction has achieved either.

As well, when the Leader of the Liberal Party says that we are not listening, I would suggest to him that misrepresents the truth and the facts. The fact is that we have had in my constituency alone 17 different members of this government in attendance and all of them ready to listen and, according to many of my constituents, acting on many of those suggestions they have heard.

* (1640)

A recent example, the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mr. Gilleshammer) visited on Friday. The Finance minister came to Portage la Prairie for one of his budget workshops, and I think it was attended and well participated in by over a hundred local residents.

The Health minister, the Honourable Jim McCrae visited Portage la Prairie at my request to meet with many of the nurses in our community and listened to their suggestions as he has to the suggestions of many in the health care industry over the last few months. Many other examples, Mr. Acting Speaker, of the interest in my community certainly and the issues and the opinions of those in my region. I certainly feel that saying we are not listening to the people of Manitoba is not a factual statement, certainly not based on my personal experience. Saying we do not listen is akin to blowing smoke. It is not a full and complete disclosure of the facts.

Suggesting that we are not listening especially to people who are trying to pay their mortgage is just a terminological inexactitude, Mr. Acting Speaker. The fact is, I have listened to many people in recent days who have renewed their mortgages. Unfortunately for them, the rates have gone up considerably due to the inappropriate remarks

made by the federal Finance minister, and I suggest to the Leader of the Second Opposition that if he were listening to the people who were renewing their mortgages, such as I have been doing, he would find they are exceedingly displeased with some of those inappropriate comments.

I suggest that it is important to try to be completely truthful at all times, and when I listen to some of the statements, specific statements that the Leader of the Second Opposition makes in regard to cuts he would not have made, I would question whether the comments are genuine or not. I must question that because frankly, when you add up all the things that the Liberal Leader would not have done that this government has done, such as Civil Service days off, staff reductions in the Civil Service, health care spending reductions, various grants to various special interest groups, would not have cut education funding. We have to remember that with all of these promises there is no election yet. I can hardly wait to see how much it is going to cost us when an election is called, when the Leader of the Liberal Party begins to make even further promises in an effort to buy support.

The education portion of property tax, he says the other day, he will not collect that from the farm people. VLTs to local communities, VLT monies will go totally to local communities. That is not to mention the programs that the Liberal Leader would introduce. To his credit, he has put some of those on record, and I applaud that, but he should also when he puts that on record talk about what they will cost and who will pay for them.

Now, training initiatives—we are talking tax breaks here; upping funding to community colleges; guaranteed annual income: you know, these are really nice sounding things, and I am sure that many people who do not understand the financial nature of what a government is trying to do and do not understand the nature of scarcity of resources in our province will be very excited by a lot of these comments, but when you add these up, in my estimation, you are talking about so far over \$600 million.

I learned a new phrase when I came here, Mr. Acting Speaker. It is a phrase that apparently is used by all political people. It says something like this: when you rob Peter to pay Paul, you can count on the support of Paul. Well, I would suggest there is going to be a lot of robbing Peter to pay Paul under this jurisdiction. This is not fully and completely honest or fair in my estimation. When one talks about spending \$600 million, one should explain where that is going to come from. I suggest most Manitobans understand where it will come from. It will come from tax increases; that is where it will come from. I think it is contingent upon the Liberal Leader to explain that aspect of things in a responsible way when he offers to benefit various special interest groups in our province.

Another challenge we all face is to be consistent in our policy positions. I think it is important to recognize that the Liberal Leader has not done that in his comments. In Hansard, on page 137, he makes it very clear that he is against market-driven education.

He says, and I quote: all forms of post-secondary education should not be market driven. That seems to be the attitude of this government, and that is wrong.

Great. Now we understand where the Liberal Leader stands on that important issue—firmly with the New Democratic Party. However, that is just for a while, because if you read on to page 145, you find the Leader of the Second Opposition (Mr. Edwards) making this statement, and I quote: Training must be relevant and market driven.

Okay, now we have got it: The single biggest challenge that we face is not just—and I quote—the training itself but channelling the training so that it is relevant to the needs of the marketplace.

Well, this is wonderful. Now we are on both sides of that issue. Yes, you see Manitobans want more than Liberal flip-flops all the time. They want more than a weather-vane leader that just goes every which way the wind blows. When I hear the Liberal Leader talk, I get this vision in my mind of a little fellow running after a crowd of

people saying: Wait for me, I am your Leader, wait for me.

You know, if the Liberal policies were written down, I would suggest they would be written in pencil, and they would come with an eraser or copious amounts of wite-out, because there is very little consistency in what the Liberal Party presents to the people of Manitoba on any issue.

All too often in recent days in this House, the Liberal Leader reminds me and many other people in this Chamber of a marionette, and Ottawa is pulling all the strings. It is not something that Manitobans want or deserve in the leadership; that is followership.

I am reminded of a TV program when I was a boy. It was a very popular show, and many of you may have watched it. It involved a little fellow named Archie Wood. Archie Wood sat on Uncle Bob's knee. I think Uncle Bob could be played very well by Lloyd Axworthy in recent days. Even though Uncle Bob's lips did not move that much, you knew that when Archie talked, it was Uncle Bob doing the talking. Now, there is a difference. The difference is, even Archie once in a while talked back to Uncle Bob.

If one wanted to sum up the Liberal's position thus far expressed, they would use one word, and it would be "spending." That is what this party stands for, and they have made it eminently clear. This is the party who will buy votes at any cost, with fuzzy rhetoric. They will buy votes with catering to special interest groups. They will try to use an old tactic that is now very outdated. They will try to buy popularity, and they will do it with borrowed money. Manitobans are not on with that old tactic. They are not in the mood. The Liberal Party may try very hard to buy popularity, they may try very hard to buy votes, but Manitobans are not selling.

The other night my two-year-old daughter woke up in the night. She was having a bad dream, and the world is full of fearful things for a little two-year-old—boogeymen and so on, a lot of unknowns. I went into the bedroom and I comforted her and I held her and told her, honey,

there is nothing to be afraid of, and she gradually went back to sleep. But as she did that, I realized that I had not told her the complete truth, because as surely as there is nothing to fear in her little bed, there is a lot to fear out in the real world, a lot to be concerned with, and we know that. We are trying very hard to recognize that. I think the members opposite recognize it, too.

I realized my responsibility as a parent, one of the greatest responsibilities I might ever have in my life, was to teach her how to stand up and face her fears head on and not turn and walk away from them but face them and challenge them and gather together her resources and do the best she could for personal betterment, to teach her not to make excuses, not to back down, not to blame somebody else, but to accept the responsibility that she has as a young person in her life and as an adult to strive for betterment with every ounce of her strength.

Any of you here in this House with me who have children, I am sure, would want exactly the same thing for your child. You would want them to have courage. This Speech from the Throne is about courage. It is about recognizing the real fears that Manitobans have, the real fears that they have about their future security, about their health care system, their education system, the relevance of their education system, about employment prospects, the real concerns that Manitobans have about the futures of their families and of their businesses and of their farms.

* (1650)

Each of us has fears, but each of us must make a personal decision as to how we respond, how we act on those fears. Being afraid is an irrational emotion. Catering to fear is catering to an irrational and unproductive emotion in human beings. I remember as a boy I woke up in the middle of the night one night and I was frightened, I was paralyzed with fear. I was sure that there was something under my bed, and I lay there quivering in the darkness, perspiring, listening to every sound, not knowing what to do. I lay there for what seemed like an hour—it was probably just a minute—and finally it hit me. I have to do something if I am going to get out of this

predicament. I have to take some action. I have to take some steps here. So slowly and carefully I took the sheets off, and gingerly I stepped down off the bed and I looked under the bed, and what was there? A big slimy monster? The member for Transcona? There was nothing there.

Now I am not suggesting Manitobans have no basis for their fears, but I am suggesting the only way we can overcome those fears is through intelligent action. So catering to inaction, catering to indecision and to blind irrational fear would be the least productive thing that we could do as a government or that the members opposite could do in opposition. Yet every day in this House we hear a constant catering to blind irrational fears.

The people of my community were afraid. When we lost over 400 jobs within a six-month period, we were desperately afraid, but we did not stop there. We acted. We acted with courage. We were not too afraid to act, and because of that we have rebuilt a community that was on the verge of destruction.

You know, I am afraid that members opposite all too often are willing to cater to the lowest in people and that is disappointing, because there are positive things. It is tougher to build. We know that. It is tougher to build. It is easy to knock, and it is easy to criticize.

I share this poem with the members opposite, and I do it in the spirit of friendship: Am I a builder? I watched them tearing a building down, a gang of men in a busy town. With a ho heave ho and a lusty yell they swung a beam and the side wall fell. I asked the foreman, are these men skilled and the men you'd hire if you had to build? He gave a laugh, he said no indeed, just common labour is all I need. I can easily wreck in a day or two what builders have taken a year to do. And I thought to myself as I went away, which of these roles have I tried to play? Am I a builder who works with care, measuring life by the rule and square? Am I shaping my deeds to a well-made plan, patiently doing the best I can? Or am I a wrecker who walks the town content with the labour of tearing down?

The New Democrats are content, I believe they are all too often content, to try to wrestle the fears from each and every Manitoban, and it takes no skill. I believe all too often the members of the Liberal caucus do the same thing, and I look forward to the comments of the two new members in that caucus. I hope they can bring a refreshing change to the Liberal caucus.

I can tell you this, that people in Manitoba have fears, and you may well try to cater to the scared vote. You may well try, as has been evident for some months, to go after the frightened vote, but the fact is not all frightened Manitobans will vote for members opposite. They will not do that because their greatest fear is a government paralyzed with inaction, a government paralyzed with its own fear. That is what Manitobans do not want. That is the scariest thing of all. What most Manitobans want, expect and deserve is more than that.

The trouble with we socialists, said Tommy Douglas, is we think with our hearts not our heads. Mr. Acting Speaker, with all due respect to Mr. Douglas who accomplished great things as an individual in this country and in its history, he is not on on that statement, because you see, when someone does not think with their head they are thoughtless, and when someone is thoughtless they are heartless. It is not on to say that someone who does not think with their head is compassionate. The members opposite would like to claim that they are the soul of compassion.

Let me tell you that when someone mismanages their resources in their own home, trying to spend to such a degree that they give their children every single thing and cannot look after their own children the next year, that is mismanagement and that is not compassionate. When someone in business overspends excessively, then goes out of business, that is no happy day for the employees of that company or for the customers of that company.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

The member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) claims to be able to manage businesses. She implies she

could manage a business better than, say, Great-West Life which has been in this province for over a century, which has employed hundreds of thousands of people and put millions of dollars into the Manitoba economy. There is a lack of business acumen opposite, and it is clearly evident in her comments.

Mismanagement is not compassionate. Mismanagement is thoughtless and nothing else, and when a party that tripled the provincial debt in just six years of incredible mismanagement claims to be compassionate, I would have to dispute that as a basic mutancy of the facts.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker—

Point of Order

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, Tommy Douglas, who the Member for Portage has referred in his speeches, when he was Premier of the Province of Saskatchewan, brought in balanced budgets every single year.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable member that she does not have a point of order. That is clearly a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Pallister: . . . deeply and totally ashamed therefore for the mismanagement of the NDP government of which many members opposite were a part. The throne speech and the responses of the opposition leaders to it offer us insight into the differing directions we may choose as Manitobans.

We may choose to go different ways. The NDP way would be the way of big government, turning your back on the future and going back to the ways of big government. The NDP way would be to return to the days of high taxes and an antibusiness mentality, of incompetence and mismanagement.

What would the Liberal way be? Well, the Liberal way would be to go around buying popularity with borrowed money, a chicken in every pot, or pothole for that matter, contradictory positions, spending their way to electoral success, trying to be all things to all people, being nothing to anyone. Both parties catering to their fears and

the fears of Manitobans, ignorant of the serenity prayer, which says to have the wisdom to know the difference, lacking the wisdom to know their role.

Our way, this government's way, would be to understand the concerns, to understand the goals and the strengths of Manitobans, willing to listen and willing to lead, not practising the politics of pessimism or of fear. That is not the Manitoba way. Manitoba was built by those who understood the value of facing their fears head on. That is the Manitoba way. The Manitoba way is hard work. The Manitoba way is optimism, not pessimism. The Manitoba way is co-operation and genuine compassion, not phony compassion. That is the Manitoba way.

This throne speech and this government recognize and reflect what is best in the Manitoba of today and of yesterday and of tomorrow.

Thank you.

* (1700)

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honour and a privilege to rise to speak in this Chamber today.

This is my first speech, as I was elected in the by-election of September 21, 1993. I note that you have kept your commitment to us as newly elected members to be present when we first address the House, and I am honoured that I am addressing my first remarks to you.

I thank you and the other members of the House for your words of welcome and, in turn, my welcome and congratulations to the members for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson), Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg) and St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh), who were elected at the same time that I was.

As is customary, I would like to begin by expressing my thanks to the voters of Osborne constituency who have placed their confidence in me. I have given them my commitment that I will work hard to ensure that they are well represented.

I am deeply indebted to the members of my family, my friends and the members of my constituency association, who worked so hard to

get me elected. Among these friends I count many former members of this House—the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, Reg Alcock, who held this seat prior to his move to Parliament, Dr. Laurie Evans, Dr. Allan Patterson, and two members of my constituency association executive, Mark Minenko and June Westbury.

It is of particular significance to me that the place that I have been assigned here in this Chamber was once occupied by June Westbury, my supporter, mentor and friend, who is here in the Chamber today.

Last September was an interesting time in the political history, with the direction of health care reform resulting in cutbacks to home care services and fee increases for nursing home residents. It became apparent as we campaigned door to door in the constituency that these decisions were having a profound impact on many members in our constituency. Many people I spoke to were either directly affected because they had been deprived of much needed service or were the husbands and wives, sons and daughters and relatives of seniors who are being affected and who are now anticipating that they would have to fill the gaps in service. The shuffling of the provincial cabinet and the calling of the federal election only added to the excitement and anticipation.

Since becoming a member of the Legislature, I have benefited from the kindness and generosity of many who are here today, especially the members of my own caucus and the women on both sides of the House, both government and opposition, who have listened and sympathized with me as I expressed my frustration in the conduct of members of this House.

No sooner had the final note of God Save the Queen faded away than it became apparent that the knives were out and the insults and accusations began. The excitement and awe with which I watched the opening on April 7 was quickly replaced by a range of other less welcome emotion. These included anger and disgust and then, worst of all, embarrassment.

Each day, Mr. Speaker, you introduced between 75 and 100 students in the gallery. For many this is their first introduction to politics and to the Legislature. Undoubtedly, prior to their arrival in the gallery, they have been told of the significance of the events which occur in this Chamber, how important is our work, and cautioned by their teachers to maintain a standard of ordered behaviour while they watch us go about the business of Question Period. We all know that first impressions are lasting. At a time when politicians are held in almost universal low esteem by a majority of the public, we can ill afford to reinforce this negative stereotype in these students who will be voters in about five years.

For three days of the last week it was Grade 9 students from Churchill who took in these performances. I went to greet and speak to them after Question Period and answered questions as to why adults would behave like this. Mr. Speaker, I am ill prepared to defend the indefensible. What is added to my despair is that many members I have spoken to have said the same thing: I felt the same way you do when I was first elected. What is the message here, that given a bit more exposure to this conduct I too will find it tolerable, even to the point of eager participation? If so, this will be the first situation of my personal, academic or professional life in which I am expected to behave in a rude and unco-operative way.

Mr. Speaker, I have thought long and hard about what I was going to say here today, and this is why this matter bothers me to the point that I am compelled to take up some of my valuable 40 minutes of the time I have to speak. Then I came upon something written by Liberal M.P. Paul Martin which I want to read into the record as I observe that the women in this Chamber have a higher standard of conduct than do the men:

Once you join the Commons fraternity, you begin to understand why there are so few women here. It is not just the lack of money to finance their campaigns, it becomes apparent that women find less reward from trying to win elected office than from working in the advocacy groups that attempt to influence Parliament, groups that are often not

only mostly staffed by women, but headed by women. They watch the antics in Question Period and conclude that party politics is a joke. The way to get more women into politics is to make it more relevant. We can only do this by getting rid of the unproductive partnerships and the image of parliamentarians as useless ciphers. Watching the male-dominated activities of Parliament in contrast to the female-dominated groups working on poverty, child care and environmental issues convinces you of something, that men parade and women accomplish.

Mr. Speaker, I have made myself two promises as I go on the record today to express my disillusionment with the conduct in our Chamber. The first is that I will not participate in it and that I will actively discourage it among other members of my caucus. I am calling on the women on both the government and opposition sides of the House to do likewise.

My second commitment is that I will never criticize the House without offering what I believe to be positive suggestions or alternatives. In keeping with this spirit, I have four suggestions, Mr. Speaker, one or more of which could be implemented to improve the decorum in the House and which are likely to make your job easier.

The first comes from my experience of more than 20 years in children's services. If I learned nothing more from these years, I learned this, that little people who do not have enough activity to keep themselves busy find ways of getting into trouble. I therefore have brought packages of crayons to keep the honourable members purposefully busy while others are trying to speak.

The second suggestion is that we introduce a tradition that comes from native culture. This came from the suggestion of the daughter of the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski). The tradition coming from native culture is that of grandfather. Grandfather represents wisdom and is symbolized by the rock, held in the hand of the speaker, indicating that the speaker is offering wise counsel. The rock is passed from person to person. Only the person holding the rock is entitled to speak. Of course, it would be up to you, Mr.

Speaker, to determine which of the honourable members in this House can be trusted with a rock.

The third suggestion comes from my own experience of last Monday. My mother was in the gallery the day I asked my first question in the House. I knew this was a proud day for both of us, and I wanted her to approve of my presentation. Mr. Speaker, could we consider renaming the Speaker's Gallery to the mothers' gallery? Certainly the watchful presence of mothers in the gallery could improve the conduct in this House.

My last alternative would be powerful but would have the net effect of slowing down the proceedings in the House—a simple change to calculate the speaking time of the members not as running time, but as speaking time, with members compensated with extra minutes for the time robbed by others by interruption, heckling, catcalls, accusations and insults. Members might think twice about interrupting if the net effect was only to prolong the speaking time of the member who has the floor.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to briefly talk to you about my reactions to those areas in the throne speech which are of particular interest to me in the context of my personal and professional experience, and these are the areas for which I have assumed critic responsibilities for our Liberal caucus.

A central theme in the throne speech is our important responsibility to our children, to provide security in their lives and to build confidence in the future. The claim is made that the government has made this responsibility a fundamental guiding principle and has worked hard to renew the social programs which we value so highly. There are certain inconsistencies between words and action. The throne speech references the intention to renew its commitment in this Year of the Family to support families and the importance of family responsibility, but let us examine the record.

* (1710)

This is the government responsible for daycare cutbacks, who reduced the access of low-income parents to daycare services by capping the number

of subsidy-eligible child care spaces at 9,600 when the economic conditions are putting many families in greater need for subsidized care.

Home care cutbacks have eliminated house-cleaning, laundry and meal preparation support to many seniors and have pushed this burden back onto the adult children of seniors, often at the expense of time spent with their own children.

The Child and Family Services agencies are being squeezed and the consequence is low priority being given to 16- and 17-year-olds who require intervention and support. As these children and their parents have little access to other service options, the consequence is a serious service gap, and many children are showing up in the youth justice system.

This is the government which disbanded the SKY program, which provided a valuable service and support to displaced adolescents. This is the government that tried to silence the voices of those who advocate on behalf of children, young people and their families and for those who served them: the foster parents association, the Family Day Care Association, the Manitoba Child Care Association, the Manitoba Anti-Poverty association.

All those who spoke for the vulnerable, the poor and the disadvantaged and who have challenged this government to act with wisdom and humanity have been denied funding support. The educational, health, employment and social ramifications of these actions are complex and important enough to justify serious attention.

But what is the cost of speaking out? What price has been paid by these organizations for biting the hand that feeds you?

The International Year of the Family has resulted in many promotional initiatives coming to the attention of our caucus. We have taken exception to this public relations exercise, and in doing so we have requested input from other members of our community.

In preparation for my inaugural speech and consistent with my stated commitment to myself and others never to criticize without offering a better alternative, I contacted many agencies and

organizations who serve children and families in order to seek their input in the preparation of a top 10 list: Ways in which the Year of Family budget could be better spent. I have some ideas of my own, but I found many useful ideas that had come in from other organizations.

Here are their suggestions: \$240,000 could provide training and work experience for 32 single parents and provide them with enough money to leave welfare for six months, actually a lot more if the reduction in welfare is factored in; the monies could provide an excellent television campaign with the goal of ensuring that all children are born planned and wanted; \$240,000 could provide 20 young people with \$12,000 to attend university or college for a year; the monies could pay tuition for 100 single parents who could be supported by welfare to attend university; \$240,000 could provide daycare at \$2.40 a day and monthly bus passes for 400 single parents for six months to seek employment or attend school; the money could be better spent on accessible remedial education programs for young mothers, possibly an in-home kind of program; the money could be spent on parenting programs for young mothers in high-risk areas or categories; the money could be spent to provide family support programs for families with child welfare concerns; \$240,000 could provide seed funding for a family self-help initiative in high-risk areas such as some of the subsidized housing projects that make up a high percentage of single parent, female-headed families; the money could be spent on modifying school curriculum dealing with the family, sexuality and changing roles; the money could be used to develop awareness or education about new families such as single parents, gay parents and interracial families; \$240,000 could be better spent on supporting family resource centres that offer a tangible service to families or promoting or supporting creative initiatives that would strengthen the family unit.

There are many, many more suggestions, Mr. Speaker. These suggestions came forward from a variety of organizations.

I want to now turn to the subject of education. I have four children, all of whom have benefited

from the public education system here in Manitoba, but I know that our education system is not keeping pace with change. The throne speech acknowledges this by noting that Manitobans want their children's education to be more closely related to the rapidly changing demands of the job market and that consideration should be given to the establishment of province-wide standards of achievement. It promises that effective learning environments will be created by addressing school violence. Again, the words are laudable, but they come from a government whose failure to resource schools and classrooms has meant that students are no longer prepared for current and future job markets.

Any educational reform must address the ways in which our educational system is held accountable for educational attainment and that education maximizes a student's potential for employment. But we must be very careful to recognize that our educational system cannot be held solely responsible for broader social policy failures. Research shows us that children from poor families are twice as likely to drop out of school before the age of 18, perpetuating the cycle of disadvantage passed down by their parents and which will likely be passed on to their children.

Neighbourhoods and communities of residents tend to affect the structure of opportunities and incentives available to families to raise their incomes. A study of Winnipeg families living in low rental housing within the inner city found that poor housing conditions led to high rates of family mobility. A consequence is that this mobility has an adverse effect on children, many of whom were found to fall behind in school.

Poor children have a higher incidence of illiteracy, grade failures, inadequate recreation skills and development than children coming from families that are not poor. The risk is especially true for native children. As school divisions contemplate doing more with less it is expected that education administrators will make educational activities a priority for expenditure. This means that we can expect school-base nutrition and recreation programs to be sacrificed.

But as this occurs we will be forced to consider the possible consequence of the cuts and the effects on the children who will lose out.

Hungry children cannot learn, and children with poor relationship and life skills with no opportunity for the development of recreational interests and abilities will find other, less socially acceptable ways to occupy their time. No one should be surprised when this results in increased vandalism, substance abuse, violence and crime. We will perpetuate the crime and poverty industry which consumes so much of our society's resources: more judges and probation officers, more jail cells, more boot camps, more family breakdowns, more unemployed persons and more people on social assistance. We must be vigilant in protecting our post-secondary education as well. Increasing costs and cutbacks in student support deny many talented young people access to university and other post-secondary education because of cost and not because of ability, yet a strong and growing economy depends on maintaining a skilled workforce.

This government has exploited public fear with respect to issues of personal and community safety by attempting to deflect attention away from its own social policy failures and onto young people who are the primary victims of their failure. In addition to the link between poverty and health, education and job opportunities, there is mounting evidence documenting the connection between poverty and criminal offences. The consequence of poverty is that people are unable to meet their social, educational and employment potential.

When poor people are denied the enjoyment of healthy and productive lives, they are unable to make a full contribution to society. Incarceration of a growing population of young people is doubly costly through the inherent costs and through lost tax revenues, forgone opportunities for employment and a mounting burden on social assistance rolls. The proposed get-tough solutions are not solutions at all, but only compound the failure. The common vernacular is "blame the victim."

The throne speech speaks of Manitoba's health care system as our largest and most important

social program, one which ought to unite Manitobans in a commitment to health and well-being, but, again, the failure of this government to show leadership has caused the debate to pit health care providers against their employers and unions, and patients against the government and professionals responsible for providing care.

* (1720)

There is no question that reform, including expenditure control, is necessary. It became apparent in the early 1980s that if the exponential growth of health care spending was allowed to continue, then the one in four tax dollars spent on our illness care system would grow to one in two tax dollars by the end of the century. This means fewer dollars to be spent on roads, schools, daycare, servicing the public debt and everything else the public money is collected to do. The problem was apparent then, but no action was taken. Only when we hit the crisis of 1990 with falling revenues and increasing expenditures did the action begin. Depending on which side of the House you listen to, it is either too little, too late or too much, too soon.

Our caucus has identified options which are not being effectively pursued to reduce demands on our health care system and to save money. Manitoba's Home Care Program is renowned throughout North America for providing a range of cost-effective services necessary to keep seniors in their homes and out of more costly hospital and nursing homes, yet without any assessment of continuing needs services were unilaterally cut. The consequence of this service will be a later, more costly acute care intervention.

The consequence of this planning failure in the area of health care reform will have the biggest impact on the poor and the vulnerable: poor people, elderly people and children. We must recognize that health reform to be successful must move us away from making a priority for health care expenditures which are reactive and toward expenditures on health promotion and prevention. In the short term, hungry or impoverished children become interactive, hyperactive or restless. There is abundant evidence to establish an enduring link

between economic disadvantage in children and the prevalence of physical and mental illness, developmental disorders, accidental and premature death.

Inadequate nutrition compromises a child's cognitive development and their ability to learn. Malnutrition also affects the child's ability to modulate activity level in different situations, appropriately express affection, be socially involved with other children, respond effectively to stressful problems and to explore new situations and persist in group activities. There is increasing evidence that children born in poor families are disadvantaged. In a country where public health standards rank among the best in the world, our poor children have a higher incidence of birth weight, a factor which places them at higher risk for perinatal mortality and mental handicap.

One of the most creative and worthwhile ideas for addressing this problem was the Healthy Parent, Healthy Child project, which began and ended in the 1980s and allowed to die for want of ongoing support. It was when this tragedy first occurred that I first recognized what I now call the poverty industry. How much money do we spend keeping people poor and dependent, and how many people are employed to achieve this end? We know so much, but we do so little with what we know. The legacy of social policy failures of this government and the NDP government before it are abundantly evident. Family and child poverty leads to multiple, unnecessary and expensive limitations on human potential and productivity.

The throne speech speaks of the importance of access to secure and satisfying jobs. This government has acknowledged that unemployment in Manitoba is at unacceptable levels, but the promises of strategies for long-term job and wealth creation have not materialized. We are educating a generation of young people for export. Many young people are underemployed, unemployed or tragically leaving the province in search of jobs. Our infrastructure is eroded as only one in three Manitobans is now a taxpayer. We can and must find ways to engage our young people in meaningful work.

Members of the government would have us believe that the real problem is the state of the economy. When the economy is in a recession or depression, unemployment increases, and this necessarily leads to poverty. The poverty experienced by Manitoba's family is not the fault of any specific social policy failure for which they are prepared to be held accountable, but simply the result of overall state of the economy. Just as the economy status is temporary or cyclical, so too they believe will be the family state of poverty. The good times will return. There will be a loaf on every table and a chicken in every pot.

This approach fails to recognize that the most recent economic downturn represents a more permanent restructuring of the economy, that this government and its federal counterpart under the Mulroney regime did not anticipate as they might have done, did not plan for nor respond to in an appropriate way. As a result, many workers were displaced and found themselves with little support to adjust to the changes.

Job creation in Manitoba has not kept pace with a growing labour force. Many of the jobs created are not good jobs. As the economy continues to be service based, and as part-time employment increases in traditional services, economic insecurity remains a factor of life for many workers. This kind of employment pays low wages and few benefits.

Between 1982 and 1989, 44 percent of all jobs created in Canada were nonstandard, low paid, short term and part time. These jobs made up 20 percent of total employment in 1989. With the expansion of nonstandard and low-paying jobs, the proportion of the labour force's earning incomes that are below or around the poverty line is growing. It is for this reason it is critically important that if these jobs are to be the jobs that people must rely on to support themselves and their families, then wage rates must increase.

Minimum wage earners are our province's best consumers. Every cent they earn is pumped back into Manitoba's economy as they pay their rent, buy their food and clothing and what meager recreation they can afford. It is for this reason that

I will be arguing, as my party's Labour critic, for an increase to the minimum wage, which has not increased since 1990 and is now the second lowest in Canada.

These are significant factors that limit individual and family income. I will be bringing to this House clear evidence that discrimination against women and the work that they do is reflected in the unequal distribution of earned income between men and women. Similarly, we have clear evidence that discrimination against aboriginal people manifests in their underrepresentation in the labour force.

How can we accept that the work of young people, women and our aboriginal citizens is worth so little? Until we recognize that if minimum-wage jobs are all that people can expect by way of employment and society expects that they will support themselves and support or contribute to their family's economic survival through minimum-wage employment, then a fair living wage for these jobs is a reasonable expectation.

We also have an obligation to look at what happens when employment income cannot support the individual and family. We have a growing number of people who are characterized as the working poor, earning wages that are inadequate for survival. This trend became apparent with the growth of food banks, once viewed as a temporary measure that was expected to disappear after the country recovered from the 1981-82 recession. Yet Winnipeg Harvest estimates that approximately 33,000 people now rely on emergency food banks each month and over 40 percent are children.

As an advocate for child care and child welfare, I have worked to bring attention to the lifelong consequences of child poverty, abuse and neglect. Mr. Speaker, I know the importance of supporting families to nurture and protect children. In 1991, about 72,000 Manitoba children were living in poverty—more than one in five. For Winnipeg children the rate is more than one in four. Child poverty rates are even higher on reserves. Research specific to aboriginal child poverty estimates that in 1985 the poverty rate for

aboriginal children was three times more than those of nonaboriginal families.

Manitoba has the highest child poverty rate of all Canadian provinces as well as the highest teenage pregnancy rate, the highest single parent family rate and the highest rate of child welfare apprehensions. These are damning statistical realities. There has to be a better way. Children are poor because their parents are poor, so to eliminate child poverty we have to get to the root cause of family poverty.

* (1730)

I have received many worthwhile ideas put forward to address the poverty and despair which characterizes the life of many families and children. More important than the general trends are the figures which reveal the type of families who are at greatest risk of living in poverty. There was a time when the experience of poverty was expected to be temporary or cyclical with families' incomes changing and with the changing economy. Now, however, a significant minority of families face continuing circumstances which will make it inadequate for them to earn an income over the long term.

In Manitoba the risk of being poor is greatest for children who are six years old or younger who are supported by single parents, single mothers who have less than a high school education working part time or not working at all. The risk of poverty is elevated when the head of a household is an aboriginal person caring for two or more children. Also at risk are families where death of a partner or marriage breakdown through separation and divorce and families in which the parents have a physical, mental or emotional problem which affects their ability to support their family.

I want to talk specifically about Maintenance Enforcement. The throne speech gave passing mention to initiatives to improve the Maintenance Enforcement system. This is timely and critically important as the number of active cases in Manitoba is now over 11,000, almost 5,000 more than last year at this time. The total outstanding arrears is over \$27 million. In other words, as of

February 28, 1994, \$27,286,000 was owed to the children of Manitoba. There are currently 24 staff in Maintenance Enforcement. The average ratio of cases to case workers is about 900. In 1993, there were 1,100 to 1,200 cases per case worker.

We are led to believe that the Maintenance Enforcement office is currently redesigning workflow, developing a computer program and doing other things to improve efficiency and to reduce paper work. They also hope to hire more case workers. This is one area of government in which the application of the Filmon Friday concept has slowed down the processing of maintenance cheques with immediate and serious consequence to families who rely on that money to support their day-to-day needs.

The breakdown of families with children is a strong predictor for families dropping below the poverty line. About 40 percent of marriages end in divorce. After divorce, children are far more likely to remain with their mothers than with their fathers. Family breakup therefore means that the family usually learns that the person loses the earning of the person who has the largest salary but the family loses none of the dependents. I know from personal experience that a divorced woman with minor children in their household experiences a substantial decline in their standard of living while their former husbands experience a substantial rise in theirs.

I am the parent of four children and became a single parent when my youngest son was four. Through this experience, I learned about maintenance enforcement. Average amounts awarded in Canadian courts constitute about 20 percent of the net income of fathers.

The inadequacy and noncompliance of court orders for child support by noncustodial parents play a significant role in the poverty of mothers and children. Three out of four court-ordered maintenance orders are not paid in full, not paid on time or not paid at all.

As families break up, a mother's earning capacity is the single most important factor in determining her and her children's economic

status. Unfortunately, women's pay is still only about two-thirds of that of men.

The low earning capacity of mothers on their own and women's poverty in general is a reflection of the limited availability of well-paying jobs for women. Women continue to be concentrated in the type of jobs that are particularly vulnerable to boom-and-bust cycles and are overrepresented in part-time and low-skilled occupations.

Women's economic vulnerability is only exacerbated by motherhood. The trend toward dual-income earning in two-parent families only magnifies the financial hardship of female lone-parent families.

The prevalence of family and child poverty is a gender issue, the structural causes of which are to be found in assigning women the primary responsibility for the care of children without giving them the economic support to do so.

Following graduation from university in 1967, I found my niche working in the human services field. Within a couple of years, I began to work in day care in an era when people did not even know what the term meant. It was at a time when day care was a welfare alternative, part of the war on poverty, where it was believed that day care was all that was necessary to get a woman with kids off welfare and into employment.

The problem with this thinking was that while many women got off welfare, few escaped poverty. In fact, a minimum-wage job, which is all most women could claim, did little to improve her economic circumstance. Day care was a luxury of the working poor.

I worked in that system for 14 years from 1969 to 1982, during which time we fought hard to achieve a service which would provide for the meeting of developmental needs of children and one which did not ghettoize the children of the poor and one which did not exploit the women who provided the care.

When I left that system in 1982, there were still many child care workers who could not afford to have their own kids in the program they worked in.

Children are our future citizens and the next generation of taxpayers, productive workers and parents. Raising children is a vital contribution which makes parents important to the general community. The care and nurturing of Manitoba's children must be a responsibility more fairly shared among parents, the community and government. More, not less, must be invested in maximizing the life chances of our children.

Before closing, Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude by talking about environmental security. We must be very concerned about the ways in which this government is abandoning its declared principles of sustainable development by fuelling the jobs-versus-the-economy debate.

It is irresponsible for a government to pit its own citizens against one another by taking positions that indicate a commitment to development at all costs, particularly in the rural areas. This government has attempted to discredit as anti-developmental anyone who promotes or insists on the environmental review process. It is neither healthy nor right for environmentalists and concerned citizens to be lined up against their own government on the issues of siting pig farms in sensitive areas where the combination of geophysical conditions and the questionable technology of sewage lagoons indicate that there is a clear risk for environmental damage.

The proposals by Louisiana-Pacific, which has a poor track record in the United States, provide us with another example of divide-and-conquer thinking. The government is supporting a two-part review process, one for the construction and operating licence for the plant and a second later review to consider the granting of cutting rights to 6,000 square kilometres of Manitoba forests after the plant is built.

What company would even contemplate the construction of a physical plant without secure access to timber supply? Does this mean that the government has given the company assurance that they will be granted cutting rights prior to an environmental review, or does it mean that they intend to transfer rights already granted to Repap over to Louisiana-Pacific?

These illustrations are particularly ironic, as this is the government which struts on the international stage pretending to be a leader in sustainable development. Unfortunately, time does not permit me to list the other forestry management and natural resources concerns I have, but this will not be the only opportunity to speak in this House.

There are solutions, and they are many and varied. We need to break out of our old way of addressing problems which operate on the belief that the poor are always with us. It will cost money to do things, but it will cost more money not to. We can no longer pretend that the improvement will have to wait until we find our way out of a time of financial restraint.

Mr. Speaker, thank you.

* (1740)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, might I offer to you my congratulations in your continuing service as the officiating officer of this fine Chamber. I want to offer my congratulations to the mover and seconder of the throne speech. They both did marvelous jobs. Certainly I would be remiss, Sir, if I did not welcome the five new members to the House who have already participated in throne speech question period. I welcome them to the House and may they enjoy whatever time they spend as elected representatives in this House.

I just listened with some interest to the preceding speaker. I know that some of us, myself particularly, would be especially proud to have my mother here to watch some of the proceedings, but unfortunately, my mother is unable to sit in the Speaker's Gallery. She has been watching my career as an elected politician from God's gallery for a number of years. That is regrettable that not every one of us can have the privilege of having one's mother in attendance for one's initiation to this House.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be here today, responsible for the Department of Energy and Mines and the Crown corporation, Manitoba Hydro. I want to thank my honourable friends in the opposition parties for their many well wishes in

the last few days as to the time I spent as Minister of Health for the province of Manitoba and for this government. Their kind words and best wishes and pieces of advice were well received in the last several days. My simple question to them has to be, where were they when I needed them?

I suppose if I were to take one of their pieces of advice, I suppose I would have worn a sweater more often. But I want to seriously indicate to members of the House that as a Minister of Health for five and a half or so years, I want to tell you that I enjoyed the advice, the input from many, many very professional Manitobans, both as caregivers, be they nurses, doctors, therapists and other professionals who were involved in the health care system, and administrators, boards of trustees responsible for the maintenance and preservation of our health care system.

There are a number of milestones that I will generously recall in my tenure as Minister of Health. Along those milestones you cannot help but reflect back on the integrity of some of the people who participated in much-needed changes that we are embarking upon in the province of Manitoba, individuals that now lead our thinking and our research into the effectiveness of health care, for instance, as those who are part of the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation.

On the national scene, Mr. Speaker, I recommend to all members, should they have the opportunity, to avail themselves of some of the thinking of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research. Dr. Fraser Mustard is something of a growing household personage right now. He has received a lot of recognition for some of his thinking, and I want to simply say that I enjoyed the input and the wise and sagacious approach of Dr. Mustard for the better part of four years when most Canadians were unaware of his organization and its import to public policy formation in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the whole health care debate is one in which there are no easy solutions, and when challenged, opposition parties—and I will openly admit that this is part of the political forum that my honourable friend finds so objectionable, the

previous speaker, when in opposition, members of the House will decry policies of government and then, should they ever grace the offices of government, will carry them on or advance them.

I mean, that is the record, Sir, in every single province across Canada where New Democrats who become government close hospitals, close hospital beds, curtail services because of the budgetary constraints that they face. Liberals, when they achieve office in government, close hospital beds, close hospitals, reorganize the system.

It is only from the luxury, Sir, of opposition benches that one has the comfort of criticism without providing any of the alternatives or taking any of the responsibility for weighty decisions.

(Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

I have to say, I listened intently to the last speaker in her maiden address to this Chamber indicating that never would she mention a problem without proffering a solution. The speech, Sir, a fine one it was, was rich on problems and very, very narrow on solutions.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that will be a traditional problem that members in the Liberal Party have and that members in the New Democratic Party will have, and it is traditional in this House. I do not decry that because that is the way it is, but you cannot on the one hand decry what happens in this House and then in the very first presentation to the House be fully part of it, as the previous speaker just did.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to indicate that I find with some amusement some of the reflections that currently are going on. You might have recalled some of the clamour there was, particularly in one editorial page in this great province of ours, this clamour to have the House reconvened because there was an eight-month hiatus where government was not held accountable and this was almost a tragedy in the democratic system. Now, mind you, maybe the individual who was writing those editorials was trying to do

something that he failed to achieve as a member of this august assembly.

Be that as it may, I can close my eyes today, and I can believe I was in this Chamber eight months ago. There have been no new issues. There have been no new great issues brought forward to hold this government accountable. There have been no new revelations, just a tired rehash of all of the issues that were brought forward eight months ago.

So I simply say to my honourable friends in the opposition and to the editorialists who were clamouring for a resumption of this House, have you analyzed what has gone on in the first—what?—10 days or so of this and asked yourself, is this worth the dollars the taxpayers are spending to be here? I think if there was some honest analysis by those editorial writers, they might say that we could have stayed out for another couple of months yet and not impinged upon the democracy of this great province.

Now, mind you, sometimes that editorial board has a goal other than informing Manitobans. Sometimes, and I say this with regret, they might wish to advance the political fortunes of a certain political party. [interjection] The question from my honourable friend the opposition House leader is: Which party? Well, I cannot speak for which party. Only Manitobans can make that judgment in the longer haul.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to offer some cautions to my honourable friends the new members, because this is indeed a very important session. This may well be the last throne speech that Manitobans debate with this government before the next provincial election. It may well be the last budget. So this is the time in which all members of the House can proffer those alternatives to the current government's policies and processes.

It is no longer sufficient for honourable members in opposition to decry the policies of this government and say, well, you know, in general, for instance, we agree that we need to reform the health care system, that we cannot spend our way to prosperity, and we agree that we have to make

changes, but it is the method with which the government is approaching—well, that will not work.

* (1750)

With all due respect, Sir, when you go to the people of Manitoba saying, well, we agree that we need to change health care, we agree that there is a global economy, we agree that we have to restructure, we agree that we have to retrain, we agree with everything the government is doing, but it is the way they are doing it that we do not agree with, you cannot sell that, Mr. Acting Speaker, to the citizens of Manitoba because, if you agree with everything that is going on, why would Manitobans want to change the government then?

So that puts a very interesting proposition to my honourable friends in the opposition to create and articulate the alternatives, and the alternatives are going to guide Manitobans as to where the spending priorities would be of New Democrats and Liberals should they be government, where their taxation policy will be should they be government, and where, Sir, their deficit and debt policy will be should they be government.

Because, fundamental in each of those three categories is the whole key to the job creation issue that everyone, everyone, regardless of political affiliation or location in Canada, is deeply concerned that we create jobs for the future of this country and for the future of our citizens.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to caution my honourable friends in opposition. Do not raise the expectations of Manitobans that you can do something different, something better, something that will magically create solutions, because, let me assure you, those magic solutions do not exist. Those 30-second quick solutions do not exist. One-line solutions are out. Long-term steady policy is in.

Now, let us talk about some of the quandaries that opposition parties find themselves in. Let us consider the recent federal election. If I recall correctly, the Liberal red book from opposition said they were against NAFTA without significant change, which they signed without changing a jot,

a title or comma, and that jot, tittle and comma is not my original phraseology, that is the honourable John Crosbie from Newfoundland. It is a little bit of Newfoundland focus on the issue.

Mr. Acting Speaker, my honourable friends, the Liberals in opposition, said they would not test cruise missiles, which they are doing. Overhead fly cruise missiles. My honourable friends in the Liberal red book promised jobs, and one of the first major decisions they did was to torpedo something like 3,000 high-technology jobs in an export industry of helicopter fabrication.

Mr. Acting Speaker, my honourable friends in the red book, the Liberals, said they believed in the environment, and they believed so much in the environment that they moved the Environment office for NAFTA, which they did not believe we were going to pass, to Montreal, one of the most offending cities in all of North America as far as the environment goes. Of course, that Liberal Party, federally and nationally, also said, this day and age of pure politics, crass patronage and all those things are over.

It has nothing to do with an election in Montreal and Quebec City in the province of Quebec coming up that we have to move the Environment office to Montreal. It is not politics, Mr. Canadian Madam and Mr. Canadian Consumer—it was not politics. It was not crass politics that caused us to lower the cigarette tax and hook more kids on smoking, that the federal government under Jean Chretien supported by, of all people, Dr. Jon Gerrard, a researcher in children's health, could stand there and allow his Prime Minister to cut the taxes on cigarettes when he has researched. He spent his professional, medical, research career in combatting cancer in children. How could the person do that with any conscience?

I only mention those small things to caution my honourable friends in the Liberal Party first not to get too caught up in being pious and self-righteous in their statements because what happened today is an example of when you so piously decry gambling and casinos and lotteries and VLTs, leaving the impression that you were against them, ergo you would eliminate them, but at the same

time run unregistered lotteries out of your caucus rooms.

That, Mr. Acting Speaker, will not work.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): You are being dishonest about it.

Point of Order

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): On a point of order, Mr. Acting Speaker, I believe I heard the word "dishonest" raised in the Chamber, and I believe that is unparliamentary. In fact, I was actually told that here as early as this afternoon myself.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Sveinson): Order, please. The honourable Leader of the Opposition has brought up a point of order, saying that the word "dishonest" was used. I cannot say that I did hear the word "dishonest." However, I will take it under advisement and peruse Hansard and bring back a ruling.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Speaker, on the same point of order, not wanting to waste your time in perusing Hansard, I did use the word "dishonest," and if there is offence taken to it, I withdraw that comment.

* * *

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable member for Inkster for that withdrawal.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, and not wanting to say that saying one thing in opposition and doing the exact opposite in government is a tradition of the Liberal Party alone, even though in Nova Scotia the new government promised no tax increases and no layoffs and in their first budget undertook significant of both.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that my honourable friends the New Democrats have their own crosses to bear as well, if one could indicate that. Back in the good old days of approximately circa 1990, my honourable friends' colleagues the Bob Rae New Democrats in Ontario did believe that they could spend their way to prosperity and, approaching

\$17-billion deficits later, they decided they could not.

My honourable friends the New Democrats in opposition from the comfort of opposition also said they were going to cancel the Darlington nuclear power station construction by Ontario Hydro, but once in the reality of government, they allowed them to complete that construction, which is not unusual. My honourable friends the New Democrats in Ontario decried layoffs and downsizing of government, which they are on the way to now.

Mr. Speaker, the reason I say that is the reality of government today requires that you make decisions based on the financial situation and the tolerance of the economy to take any more government. Whether you are a New Democrat in Ontario, a Liberal in New Brunswick or a Conservative in Manitoba, you have to make decisions based on reality, not the fiction of opposition. You know, Manitobans and the electorate are not going to respond to the quick-fix promises of opposition parties when it comes to marking their ballots next election. They are going to want to hear what the alternatives are and what the solutions are.

Mr. Speaker, I want to offer my honourable friends some interesting examples from the past—would that be the right way to say it?—

because my honourable friends are talking jobs. I do not know how many times we have heard jobs. My honourable friends the New Democrats—and some of us will remember this very well, because in 1981 we had a government that came in that promised jobs, jobs, jobs. [interjection] Yes, I will openly admit they defeated Premier Lyon and many of us on this side of the House in 1981.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind my honourable friend the New Democrat that when we were defeated, the annual interest bill of 111 years of government as of 1981 was less than \$90 million per year, on the entire debt of the Province of Manitoba through two world wars, the Great Depression, the Korean War, through 111 years of government of every political stripe, less than \$90 million. Six and a half years under Howard Pawley and the NDP, that annualized interest bill had grown to \$560 million.

That is a small \$470 million per year increase in interest costs which deny services in hospitals, which deny services to children in schools, which deny us roads, which deny us all of the amenities of government.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., in accordance with the rules, I am leaving the Chair and will return at 8 p.m., at which time the honourable minister will have 22 minutes remaining.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, April 18, 1994

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Presenting Petitions		Education System	
APM Incorporated Remuneration and Pharmacare & Home Care Reinstatement		Cerilli; Manness	314
Maloway	306	Transcona-Springfield School Division	
Santos	306	Cerilli; Manness	314
Reading and Receiving Petitions		Legislative Offices	
Curran Contract Cancellation and Pharmacare & Home Care Reinstatement		Ashton; Ernst	314
C. Evans	306	Liberal Fundraiser	
Hickes	307	Ashton; Ernst	315
APM Incorporated Remuneration and Pharmacare & Home Care Reinstatement		Year of the Family Initiative	
Dewar	306	McCormick; Mitchelson; Filmon	316
Tabling of Reports		Workforce 2000	
Annual Reports: Government Services; Fleet Vehicles Special Operating Agency; Seniors Directorate		Friesen; Manness	317
Ducharme	307	Provincial Sales Tax	
Annual Reports: Northern Affairs; Communities Economic Development Fund		Maloway; Stefanson	318
Praznik	307	Nonpolitical Statements	
Oral Questions		Volunteer Week	
Lerner Report		Reimer	318
Doer; Filmon; McCrae; Chomiak	308	Cerilli	319
Health Care System		Gray	319
Chomiak; McCrae	311	Mitchelson	319
Personal Care Homes		World Curling Championships	
Edwards; McCrae	311	Pallister	320
Domestic Violence Court		C. Evans	320
Mackintosh; Vodrey	313	ORDERS OF THE DAY	
Provincial Court		Throne Speech Debate	
Mackintosh; Vodrey	313	(Seventh Day of Debate)	
		Reid	321
		Vodrey	328
		Robinson	336
		Speaker's Ruling	341
		Pallister	341
		McCormick	350
		Orchard	358