

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 9 March, 1987.

Time — 8:00 p.m.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

MADAM SPEAKER, Hon. M. Phillips: The Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: I'd like to begin by offering my congratulations to our new Lieutenant-Governor, a man who has worked very hard for the province for many years, a good public servant. We wish him well.

I congratulate you, Madam Speaker, or maybe commiserate with you for having taken on that role of yours again, and I believe the Chamber has been a better place this year than last year, and last year was a better place than the year before. So we're improving, I think, all of us.

I'd like to carry on and also thank my constituents for sending me back here. This is, I believe, my eighth Session, and I've enjoyed all of them. But so far, this is the one I'm enjoying most, and I heard one member previously suggest that this 40 minutes was a time for venting their spleen. So far, the Opposition really has been so kind to me and members on this side that I just am not yet in the mood and hopefully won't be.

I join with the Minister of Highways in congratulating our House Leader and the Opposition House Leader for the fine job they've been doing so far of managing the work of the House.

I should say as well, that I'm very proud to be a member of a government which has worked extremely hard over the last six years, close to six years, some very difficult times. Our No. 1 priority has been, and continues to be, jobs for Manitobans.

I believe we've done a relatively good job, given the fact that we have one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country. At the same time, we're the only province in this country, during these difficult times, which has not in any significant way increased the number of people living in poverty. That's important to us. We have a greater increase in people working, a greater increase in employment in Manitoba than in any other province in Western Canada and we have the lowest Budget deficit at the same time in all of Western Canada. That's quite different from where we were when we took office from the Lyon Government, Madam Speaker. When we took over, we were the highest in terms of Budget deficit in Western Canada - the very highest, a quarter-of-a-billion dollars. We're up to just over half-a-billion and that's too high. We're doing our best to keep that down and we have been working extremely hard on that for the last five years.

But where were the other provinces at that time? Alberta had a huge surplus. Saskatchewan, under the NDP, hadn't had a deficit in years, and B.C. wasn't nearly in the kind of shape they're in now. Where's Saskatchewan now under the Conservatives? They are at \$1.2 billion deficit. They started off after we did. We started off in 1981; they started in 1982. They started off with a surplus given to them from the Blakeney Government, and are now at \$1.2 billion of deficit.

So what we have done, Madam Speaker, we have done within limited resources, and we have worked together as a province: the government, the business community, the labour community, various community groups and so on. We have worked together to maintain our services, at the same time as we have been improving employment.

And I would like to discuss this evening, in some detail, the work we have been doing to support the increase in jobs in Manitoba. I would like to talk a bit about our plans for the future. We all know we are living in times of rapid technological change. I would like to quote a bit from a speech made by Peter Drucker, the author of the Peter Principle, Clarke, professor of Social Science and Management. I am quoting directly: "The talk today is of the changing world economy. I wish to argue that the world economy is not changing, it has already changed, in its foundations and in its structure and in all probability the change is irreversible. Within the last decade or so, three fundamental changes have occurred in the very fabric of the world economy: (1) the primary products economy has come uncoupled from the industrial economy; (2) in the industrial economy itself, production has come uncoupled from employment; (3) capital movements, rather than trade in both goods and services have become the driving force of the world economy. The two have not quite come uncoupled but the link has become loose, and worse, unpredictable. These changes are permanent, rather than cyclical."

He goes on: "Practitioners, whether in government or in business, cannot afford to wait until there is a new theory. They have to act, and their actions will be more likely to succeed the more they are based on the new realities of a changed world economy. First, consider the primary products economy. The collapse of non-oil commodity prices began in 1977 and has continued, interrupted only once by a speculative burst that lasted less than six months. It was followed by the fastest drop in commodity prices ever registered. By early 1986, raw material prices were at their lowest levels in recorded history in relation to the prices of manufactured goods and services, in general, as low as the depths of the Great Depression and, in some cases, as an example lead and copper, lower than the 1932 levels. This collapse of prices and the slowdown of demand stand in startling contrast to what had been confidently predicted.

"Ten years ago, the Club of Rome declared that desperate shortages of all raw materials were an absolute certainty by the year 1985. In 1980, the Carter administration's Global 2000 Report to the President concluded that world demand for food would increase steadily for at least 20 years; that worldwide food production would fall, except in developed countries; that real food prices would double. This forecast helps to explain why American farmers bought up all available farm land, loading on themselves the debt burden that now so threatens them. Contrary to all these expectations, global agriculture output actually rose

almost one-third between 1972 and 1985 to reach an all-time high, and it rose the fastest in less-developed countries."

But to go on: "The second major change in the world economy is the uncoupling of manufacturing production from manufacturing employment. Increased manufacturing production in developed countries has actually come to mean decreasing blue-collar employment. As a consequence, labour costs are becoming less and less important as a comparative cost and as a factor in competition."

It goes on: "Thus, it is not the American economy that is being de-industrialized; it is the American labour force. Between 1973 and 1985, manufacturing production measured in constant dollars in the U.S. rose by almost 40 percent, yet manufacturing employment during that period went down steadily. There are now \$5 million fewer people employed in blue-collar work in the American manufacturing industry than there were in 1975."

We're living in that same environment. We're living in rapidly changing technological times and, again, we must work with our community to adapt: the business community, the labour community, our research community, our universities, our technical colleges and so on. We must work together and, Madam Speaker, we have been working together. Over the last number of years, we've introduced a number of programs on our technological and scientific side that I would like to briefly discuss this evening to indicate to members how it is that we have managed to retain a fairly significant level of good employment in this province, in fact, increase employment in this province when some other parts of Western Canada have in fact fewer people working today than they had five or six years ago.

There are six areas that I would like to briefly touch on: the Health Industry Development Initiative, which was started about three years ago by our government; the Information Technology Initiative, which is about two years old; the Jobs Fund Development Agreement Program, which is also several years old now; Trade Development Program, which has been ongoing for a number of years; and the Technology Commercialization Program, which is also a few years old; and finally, the Hong Kong Initiative, especially given some of the comments made earlier during this Throne Speech Debate by members opposite.

The Health Industry Development Initiative is one that I believe has been a tremendous success. There is a new industry sector, which is of substance and it is being formed before our very eyes in this province. There are now over 40 firms in that industry in Manitoba. There are now more than 800 employees in the private sector in that industry in Manitoba. There are \$80 million in sales of health products, 80 percent of which are shipped outside of Manitoba.

In 1986, 18 projects were initiated by our Health Industry Development Initiative group and they involve new products, new facilities for expansion. There will be 140 new jobs realized. They haven't been realized yet, but that's on top of the 800 I'm talking about, 140 new jobs as a result of that activity which occurred in 1986. There is substantial promise for the future - 50 additional project opportunities are now being worked on; 15 of them are in a current and active state of negotiation and the opportunities are not just for

complex products made by huge multinational firms, not at all. A great many of the projects are bringing new products to diversify existing small Manitoba firms, and the opportunities are not just here in Winnipeg. We're working with firms in Southern Manitoba and Southwestern Manitoba and Brandon and Morden and so on.

I'd like to give you a couple of examples. Industrial development efforts have brought new products, such as prosthetic devices for the North American market made by a German firm, Otto Boch, which is not just manufacturing, but undertaking research and development here, biotechnological products for international markets made by a home-grown Winnipeg firm, ABI, which is basically a spinoff from our own Rh Institute. It is there to commercialize biotechnological products which are developed in the Rh Institute, and it has been quite successful.

Heart valves for the world market made by a Minneapolis firm, St. Judes, which has established its international production centre for this product in Winnipeg; limb bands and other electronic products made by a Winnipeg firm, Life-Span; electric monitoring disposables made by 3M of St. Paul, Minnesota, who are expanding their Canadian plant which they just set up about six-eight months ago in Morden, and they're already in an expansion mode; and of course the blood derivatives made by Manitoba's own Rh Institute, which I previously referred to. There's product development work, which is where actually we've received assistance from the Health Services Commission in that area, assistance from hospitals, from the Manitoba Health Organization, and that has produced solid results as we have been working together.

Twenty product ideas have been identified. Four are now in production; four more are being developed by Manitoba firms. One could go on and on about the products that are being developed, built and sold out of Manitoba as a result of that initiative, which has been a cooperative initiative on the part of the private and public sectors.

Our information technology program was established back in 1984 to promote the expansion of information technology industry in Manitoba, and to facilitate the understanding of Manitobans of the opportunities created by the use of these technologies in education and in small business. The InfoTech Centre was opened in September of 1985, and has just concluded its first full year of operation, I might say, within budget and in time. This program is the result of a partnership between the private sector and government to work for common goals again.

Eight major companies, Apple, Commodore, IBM, Tandy, Unysis, which is Burroughs and Sperry, Epson and Cybershare committed over \$4 million to support the program activities for three years. Over 70 companies across Canada and the U.S. have also contributed products and services to support its operations in software, equipment and technical support valued in excess of 100,000 Canadian.

Of course, there's the partnership with Education Manitoba and the work being done with the teaching community here. It's been a tremendous success.

Madam Speaker, the Jobs Fund Development Agreement - I'd just like to briefly refer to several agreements which have been entered into, I believe all

of them since the last time we met. The Guertin Bros. Agreement, where we will get in return, not only a plant expansion, but scores of new positions to be created in sealant, coatings, resins and polymers, research and development.

Palliser Furniture - about 400 new jobs in a company that's rapidly making its mark in the lucrative and expansive furniture markets of the world.

Many of the new positions in both of those companies will be held by women, with special attention paid to Affirmative Action target groups. I've had some information back already from Guertin Bros. which demonstrates that the Affirmative Action and Pay Equity provisions are working. In fact, the company is very pleased with them, as is the work force.

The Jobs Fund, of course, also assists agriculture. The development agreement with Simon-Day, which allowed an American-based firm to consolidate operations in Manitoba and proceed with development and marketing of its high technology grain-cleaning and grain-drying activities, not only has preserved and created jobs in Manitoba and brought benefits to Manitoba producers, but it has allowed Simon-Day to continue its already successful efforts to sell its technology in China.

The agreement with Vicon, which is functioning well, now known as C.I., Cereal Implements, in Portage la Prairie, again maintains long-term jobs and allows an implements assembly plant to remain viable in the heart of Manitoba's grain-producing area and will help keep down equipment costs.

Then, of course, there is Carnation Foods, the Carnation Foods Agreement entered into last summer which has triggered a major expansion that has created more than 50 jobs, doubled Manitoba's potato acreage and has led directly to significant exports of processed Manitoba potatoes and helped bring a sizable area of agricultural land into more diverse usage, a critically important development to a sector so long dependent on a good price for grain. The Jobs Fund is pointing the way to the future.

I should say as well, Madam Speaker, sometimes we hear from people in the Opposition that we don't work with business, that we just work with the losers and so on, and of the 50 major - well, it tends to be Opposition people who say that - of the 50 fastest-growing firms in Manitoba as listed in the business magazine, in Manitoba Business in, I believe, January, of those 50 fastest growing Manitoba firms, fully 40 percent of them had asked for and received assistance from the Provincial Government in the last 24 months. We work with the winners and we do a good job of working with the winners.

And in fact, further along that line when one looks at who comes out of the technology commercialization program, the business incubator at the Industrial Technology Centre on Niakwa Road, of something like 45 firms who have come out of that process in the last year or so, four are no longer in business. Anyone who knows anything about business and business start-ups, business formation in this country, knows that it's very unusual to have a rate of success much greater than 50 percent after the first year. We have in fact done, I believe, a good job working with our local people to ensure that there will be more jobs and more business in this province and that in fact is demonstrated by the fact that, as I say, we are succeeding again.

The Hong Kong initiative, which incidentally, Madam Speaker, members opposite certainly don't seem to have any grasp of - they bring resolutions into the Chamber saying, let's forget about fairness to people from outside countries. Let's jack up the student rates and so on, and yet that particular student facility, which we provide to students from Hong Kong in Manitoba, has probably been the largest single generator of jobs from outside of Manitoba coming to Manitoba. In fact it is the largest single generator of outside jobs. There is absolutely no question about that.

Last fall, one Manitoba company, Feed-Rite, went to China, entered into an agreement with the People's Republic of China to do some fairly significant work there. Whom did they have with them? They had with them a fellow by the name of Stan Cheung, who is a graduate of the University of Manitoba, has been back in Hong Kong for 15 years or more, but has a deep loyalty to Manitoba and to the university and to the people who gave him his start. And he was the individual who went with them, assisted in the negotiation of that particular agreement. So it is not only that they come over here and create new businesses, as they are doing.

Prosperity Knitwear is one example where they have got 40 new jobs in the fashion sweater industry. There are hundreds of jobs. The Member for Emerson says, "What is the net figure?" There are hundreds of jobs as a result of us being fair to those people and as a result of the initiative which we have had under way for the last several years.

Our trade missions, every year we have somewhere in the range of 15 or more trade missions. And those are quite successful and as you look back a few years you realize how successful they are.

I'll give you a few examples, one very recent, in January of 1987, and I'll move back a couple of years to see how that trade builds up. But in January of '87 we took a group of approximately 15 Manitoba manufacturers of agricultural equipment and components to an International Farm Equipment Show in Toronto, Ontario.

Our products included aeration fans, front-end loaders, farm management software packages, grain-cleaning equipment, tractor cabs, fasteners, grain bins and grain-moisture testing equipment. In support of the group, Trade Branch maintained an information booth as part of the exhibit featuring a video presentation.- (Interjection)- Madam Speaker, I was going to offer that video presentation, but obviously members opposite don't care about it.

There was an assortment of product photos and an agricultural equipment and component directory for visitors to the display. As a result, a number of local companies, including Forever Industries, Homestead Computer Services, Jodville-Perry Corporation, D.R. Loeppky Incorporated, Tri-Met Instruments, Westland Steel Products, Phase-on Electronics and Terromar Marketing, obtained orders at that show - not huge large orders - but initial orders where they have a chance to penetrate into a market where they had never been before. They are projecting sales over 12 months in the area of \$950,000.00.

We can go a year back and look at an exhibition we went to in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Just one example out of that group was Kitchen Craft, a company from my end of the city which immediately sold somewhere

in the range of \$82,000 worth of product, and I'm told since then somewhere in the range of \$1.5 million, exceedingly successful and again, at the initiative of this NDP Government, asking business to work with it and go to places where we think they stand a reasonable chance of success.

In 1984, we started a similar initiative in Australia which has become exceedingly successful. There have been in the millions of dollars worth of sales by people such as Farm King, which should be familiar to a lot of people opposite, Bonar Plastics, Loewen Manufacturing, D.R. Loepky, VANA Industries. Many of these companies, you'll notice, have caught on and they are going with us to various parts of the world to improve their position.

So those are some of the areas where we're attempting to help our economy to adjust to those new realities. The fact is that basic primary resources have been devalued in the world economy. We have to recognize that as a fact of life in determining where we are heading with our economy and what we're going to be doing for our young people in terms of jobs for tomorrow.

The fact is that we are having, as Drucker says, an uncoupling of jobs from manufacturing. In fact, you're going to have more manufacturing, you're going to have to trim jobs initially and be more efficient in order to remain in the market. Given that reality, we have to be looking at the information industry, as we are, as I have indicated. We have to be looking at and working with the health services area, which is a growing area in terms of commerce in the world, and we are doing that as evidenced by what I have been telling you.

That doesn't mean we abandon agriculture. A number of the initiatives we have taken clearly are in the agricultural sector. But when we talk about diversification in this province, we cannot mean moving out of farming and simply into manufacturing farm implements. There's nothing wrong with manufacturing farm implements, but it's the same cycle, the identical cycle to the cycle of farming. When farming is good, you have farm implement manufacturing being good. When farming is down, so is this down. We have to find alternatives other than farm implement manufacturing. I'm not knocking farm implement manufacturing.

But when we're looking at areas where we are attempting to find our niche, we have to find areas that have far greater stability, preferably something that would be counter-cyclical to agriculture. I don't know what that might be. So, therefore, we should be looking at areas that are at least growing areas and appear to be growing areas for a number of years. That's what we're involved with, Madam Speaker, and that's precisely where we're going with the initiatives in general that I've outlined.

And let me hasten to add that food processing is quite a different proposition than agricultural implement manufacturing. Food processing - processed food, value-added food - will continue to be something that will be in increasing demand in the world, and I think we have to be continually upgrading and improving our plant in that area to ensure that the supply which we have kept far more stable of agricultural products, hogs, beef and so on, than other western provinces, that supply has all the value added to it possible in Manitoba before it's shipped out to other parts of the world.

In my department, there are some other issues that I won't have all that much time to deal with tonight, free trade, the Canada-U.S. trade initiative, which I'm sure during this Session we'll have some opportunity to discuss. We are working on that and, certainly, we must say that we have some deep concerns about some of the reports coming out of the Federal Government recently with respect to agriculture and the effect that some of the comments of Reisman, if true, would have on Canadian agriculture, on supply-managed products and on the products coming out of them, the food processing. That will be an area where we are going to have to walk with very, very careful steps. Agriculture is one area.

Transportation is an area where our local business and our local labour groups are telling us it is wrong, wrong, wrong to be proceeding down the steps the Federal Government is proceeding down. In fact, what they're doing there is basically not even putting it on the table. They're giving up regulation as they're doing with pharmaceuticals, not even putting that on the table as a bargaining chip, giving it away. We're not happy about that, not one little bit happy about that. That's one area where we have some concerns.

And I should say to the Member for Emerson, who seems to be enjoying himself this evening, that I'd like very much to thank him and his caucus for the fact that they have given me a pair for me to go to Vancouver this week to the Science and Technology Minister's Meeting where we will be signing a science and technology agreement, which we believe here in Manitoba is a very important thing. We're in a position, Madam Speaker, where we would like to work with the Federal Government on science and technology development.

I happen to agree with the Canadian Association of University Teachers who are somewhat skeptical in terms of an agreement that doesn't require the Federal Government to put a certain amount of dollars into it, an agreement which, hopefully, will be observed in spirit and in law in a way different from the regional development agreement which we entered into in 1985, nine excellent principles, pursuant to which the Federal Government and the provinces agreed that there would be development of all of the regions of Canada. The strengths of all of the regions, all of the cities of this country, would be considered important in this country of ours. We would all have the opportunity to develop and contribute to the economic development of this country.

That is something that has not been lived up to by the Federal Government since it was signed in 1985, whether it's with the CF-18 which didn't go to the best bid, didn't go to the lowest bid in Winnipeg - it went instead to another city - whether it's with respect to IRDP, the Regional Development Expenditures of the Federal Government which has provided payments to Ontario in the range of 1,300 percent of where they were four years ago, and to Manitoba 7 percent in addition. Putting those numbers in a way that Opposition members and the public might understand, last year, Madam Speaker, the Province of Ontario received 13 times more dollars in regional development from the Mulroney Government than the Province of Manitoba did.

What they did, Madam Speaker, was specifically the inverse of regional development. What they did was

take away from the poorer regions of this country and give to the rich, to give to the already overdeveloped areas, and then they're surprised when we say we don't think your regional development policies are fair. Was that what they intended when they meant fair and balanced regional development? You take from the poor and give to the rich, and then have your lackeys back home in your provincial kissing-cousin party telling the public when a government complains about it that you're just whining and so on, when we complain about those kinds of things?

So we're saying that we hope that this time, when we sign an agreement, it will be based on regional fairness, so that - you see, Madam Speaker, we don't complain when regions which have a lower gross domestic product get more from the Federal Government than we do. We think that's absolutely correct. You've never heard us complain about the tax credits in Cape Breton Island, or the fact that they're wiping out tax credits for Manitoba business but keeping them up in the Maritimes for up to about 20 percent. We think that is not unfair because we are better off than they are in the Maritimes, but we also think, given that we have a gross domestic product which, on a per capita basis is roughly 90 percent of the Canadian average, we should be in a position which is better in terms of what the Federal Government will do for us than what it will do for Ontario or Alberta, which are above the national average in gross domestic product. We think that's fair and we know that provincial Tories here, we know they don't accept those things.

Madam Speaker, I've heard a lot of cackling over on the other side from the bunch that's telling us - just today they've told us we should have lower farm taxes; we should have subsidized gasoline; we should have more money for beef, more money for grain farmers, more money for sugar beets - somebody mentioned sugar beets tonight - more money for hospitals, more money for schools, more money for policing, more money for drainage, more money for highways, more money for AIDS. For Pete's sake today, instead of talking about farm aid, they're worried about how much money the Province of Manitoba is spending on AIDS. They're worried about more money for Highway No. 44 or someplace.

They want to eliminate the health and education levy. We heard that from one of them today, and on the same day they're complaining about the deficit. What a bunch of hypocrites we have here. What a bunch of hypocrites. The "party" party. Everything is a big chuckle, a big laugh. Life is just a bowl of jollies. If you elect us, we'll give you all these social programs and we'll eliminate taxes and, on top of that, you won't have a deficit.

You know the people of Manitoba have figured them out. Four times out of five since 1969, they've said thanks but no thanks to that sort of nonsense, and they will do so again. There's a good, good reason why they are where they are. It's not their federal buddies; it's them. Look in the mirror, look in the mirror. They come along with a research department made up - last year it was day-old newspapers and anonymous phone calls.

This year - and the Member for Springfield, we heard his speech and we heard the speech from the Member for Roblin-Russell. Somebody mentioned to me that

they'd both been New Democrats at some stage. I say that the individual who bargained them away for future considerations made the best deal for the New Democrats that we ever had in our lives because their economics, their notion of what's fair in this province, their notion of . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell on a point of order.

MR. L. DERKACH: That member who is speaking right now called me a "New Democrat." I've never been a New Democrat in my life. I'd like him to withdraw that.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, the honourable member does not have a . . .

HON. V. SCHROEDER: I am absolutely delighted that that member never was a member of the New . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: The honourable member does not have a point of order. A dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

The Honourable Minister.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Is it time? I could have Larry's time.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister has half-a-minute.- (Interjection)- Order please.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Pardon me? I can't hear.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order.

The Honourable Minister has half-a-minute remaining.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: With half a minute, I won't get into my next item, but I just do want to say, Madam Speaker, that we have worked very hard. I'm very proud of the work we've done to increase jobs and employment in this province, and we will, I assure you, continue to work hard to further jobs in the future.

Thanks.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm pleased to rise today on this second occasion to speak in reply to the Speech from the Throne, the second occasion since being elected - a correction of the opposite side.

I'm very pleased to offer my congratulations to the Lieutenant-Governor, a man of integrity and dedication who will, I'm sure, bring those attributes to his new position and I wish him well.

I also wish congratulations to the newly-appointed judge, Sterling Lyon. He will continue to serve Manitoba well, as he has done in his previous public life.

In looking at the Throne Speech I must admit, Madam Speaker, and in listening to the Throne Speech, I looked around at not only the guests who were on the floor with us but in the gallery, and there was more than

one person dozing off. I think that about explains our whole attitude and the results of our feelings towards this Throne Speech, Madam Speaker. It was pretty dry fare.

Madam Speaker, I was appalled as I sat and listened to what was in this speech, supposedly showing the leadership that this government was going to give us for the coming year. I was appalled. It was a totally lacklustre commentary, Madam Speaker, coming from a government that I am afraid seemed to be rudderless. It seemed to lack direction and meaning in the way in which it intends to take this province. In fact, I'm not sure that it can be determined from that speech where it is taking the province.

But I have some concerns and I want to address them this evening. Madam Speaker, I think the Throne Speech reflected upon this government not understanding the aspirations of rural Manitoba and that is something that is very near and dear to my heart, to my feelings, because the constituency of Ste. Rose is as rural as you'll get in terms of the constituencies that are represented in this House.

I was alternately appalled and enraged when I looked at what I saw as seeming abandonment by this government of the area which I represent, along with all the rest of rural Manitoba. Madam Speaker, when I was first elected to this House, I undertook to serve my constituents to the best of my ability, and I want to again say tonight that I want to renew that pledge and continue to strive to represent the constituency of Ste. Rose in every possible way and to the best of my ability.

When we were elected, Madam Speaker, we were given an honour, a privilege and a responsibility, and I hope that those of us in this Legislature have the wisdom to know the difference. When I mentioned that I don't believe this government understands the aspirations of rural Manitoba, I want to know if they know about regional disparity in this province. We hear all kinds of disparity remarks regarding the difference between Eastern Canada and the west. I want to know if this government understands the difference between the City of Winnipeg and rural Manitoba.

What about agriculture? Due to nothing that is within the bounds of this province, nothing that's within the bounds of this country, but it's being drastically effected by economic pressures on the international scene. There's a responsibility by the Federal Government, as is pointed out daily by the members opposite. But have they provided an option that Manitoba is prepared to deal with? Are they prepared to exercise the authority of the Provincial Government to do something about the situation that we're in?

Livestock production will pick up some of the slack in rural Manitoba, but very soon, if all of the farmers who are looking at the dark red ink on their balance sheets, if they all turn to livestock production, that ladder will not be there for long. Where is the action or the proposed action in this Throne Speech, Madam Speaker? Where we will deal with the infrastructure that is required in this province, and particularly the infrastructure of rural Manitoba?

There is no initiative that I can read in this Throne Speech that will deal with that. I suppose it's being studied as many other . . .

A MEMBER: It's being reviewed.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Or reviewed probably - well, no, they review the studies; so, first of all, we have to have the study.

Where are we going in rural Manitoba in the eyes of this government? Madam Speaker, I blush to say that a year ago when I referred to how we instructed this government, it was a bit like training a mule. You had to take a two-by-four and hit them between the ears to get their attention. Unfortunately, if this Throne Speech is an example of the results of that type of instruction, we've done it once too often.

Madam Speaker, we need greater emphasis on the rural infrastructure of this province. The municipalities and the LGD's, Local Government Districts of this province are facing an increasingly difficult time in maintaining the infrastructure of their local responsibilities.

There have been proposals and suggestions that have gone forward from some of the rural municipalities of which I've been aware where there are some very good ideas, and I really wonder why there is no indication in this Throne Speech that there might be some recognition on the part of this government that that is a required direction for rural Manitoba to receive leadership from this government.

Bridges are becoming increasingly difficult to maintain and repair -(Interjection)- Well, new bridges, that's a different matter. I want to talk about bridges that can be easily replaced by culverts. Is there any incentive in Municipal Affairs to deal with this kind of a question? I haven't seen it. The rural municipalities and LGD's will be faced with a tax problem because the grains industry's entire base is based on land, and that's where the problem will show up when some of the landowners are going to have great difficulty in meeting their taxes this year, and if not this year, in a year or two down the road.

What is the reaction of this government, Madam Speaker? The Minister responsible for Highways looked to the LGD's to try and save maybe a million bucks - Local Government Districts, for those who are not rural members of this Legislature. Local Government Districts were designated such, because they couldn't raise the taxes within their own boundaries to support themselves.

The LGD in my constituency makes up almost half of the land area, and most of that LGD is there because the unproductive and the land that could not raise or carry the tax burden to support the municipality had to be taken off and be made part of the LGD so that both the municipalities and the LGD could function. That's why they've always been eligible for special assistance and special recognition.

As a result of some negotiations which amounted, I understand, to only one meeting, the government has now told them that they can face a 30 percent to 40 percent reduction in the amount of jointly funded programs that they will see in the LGD's. I'm sure they don't really care, there are not many votes in the LGD's, but there are a lot of hard-working people out there who are going to be faced with a severe reduction in services, because I don't expect these LGD's will be able to raise the taxes, the 10 or 12 mills that will be required.

Madam Speaker, I don't have any particular personal animosity to any of the members opposite. There are

times I think they're misguided, but I couldn't believe my ears when the Member for Lac du Bonnet stood up and defended this Speech from the Throne and virtually made our case as to why rural Manitoba is neglected and has been abandoned by this government, and then he said, "thank you."

Regional development is tremendously important to rural Manitoba. We don't want centralization, we don't need centralization, and centralization will be the death of many of the communities in rural Manitoba. We want regionalization so that we can expect to provide the services in our communities at home so that our sons and daughters don't have to move to the city to find gainful employment. Madam Speaker, there seems to be a philosophical bent in the government benches to be opposed to regionalization.

There are many examples, some of which have happened, some of which we were afraid would happen and have been fended off, but I don't know how much longer. There has been some discussion in my own constituency of Ste. Rose of the Willard Monson House, a treatment centre for alcoholics. It employs 12-15 people, even at the reduced rate that it's been allowed to operate at recently. That was put up on the chopping block for a possible reduction in the Health Department. Take 12 jobs out of a town of 1,200 and compare that to what the numbers would be in the City of Winnipeg, and you'll soon realize that there's no understanding of the requirements of rural Manitoba.

Not only that, Madam Speaker, it can be easily proven that the regional development of health services would in fact save money for this government that is having trouble funding the health care system.

Let's take a look at the Parkland Region for a moment, an area in which the Minister of Highways represents the heart of the Parkland as a matter of fact. They have seen a drop in their population, albeit a small one, but a drop in their population. If we had a regional emphasis on the delivery of health care that would promote the use of the facilities that we have, rather than referring so much to the city to use the facilities that we are taxing here, the savings to the overall health system would be enormous, Madam Speaker, and it is an area that needs to be explored. But I don't believe, given the philosophical attitude of the members opposite, that this is something we are likely to see. But you can rest assured that myself and my fellow members on this side will be fighting to make sure that we keep these kinds of jobs in rural Manitoba.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, C. Santos, in the Chair.)

Why would I become so exercised about jobs in rural Manitoba? Neepawa, which is in the south end of the constituency of Ste. Rose, is just in the middle of a building boom. We see the hog plant construction; we've seen a lot of jobs made available in the community. I couldn't believe my ears, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I heard the Minister of Agriculture stand up in this House and talk about what a terrible thing it was and what terrible actions were being perpetrated on the workers of Winnipeg because a modern hog plant was being developed in Neepawa.

The Minister of Agriculture, if there is one member in the benches opposite who I thought would have understood and would have wanted to stand up and

defend rural development, it would be the Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me quote from Hansard where the Minister of Agriculture said: "Within months we had an announcement by the Federal Government that \$1 million or thereabouts of assistance to a hog processing plant in Neepawa, we raised a concern to the hog promoters of the Federal Government, but it went through." He was concerned. He was concerned that we would get a modern processing hog plant somewhere outside of the concrete curtain.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, again, I would like to quote from Hansard. Referring to this side of the House, the Minister of Agriculture said: "They support those actions. As a result it now doesn't matter; we have lost a significant player in the processing industry in this province, in Western Canada. No thanks to the members opposite. It was not the numbers of cattles or hogs, Madam Speaker. The president of Canada Packers, when he was interviewed on the radio and other newscasts, said it was a volume of product that would have to come out of the plant to deal with the entire market, not the volume of raw product. But it was the decision of the Federal Government to provide assistance to a plant that virtually undercut the entire processing industry in this province clearly on their hands." That comes from a Minister of Agriculture in this province. I am disgusted.

Why is the Minister of Agriculture in this province now worried about condemning a plant that makes the hog producers of this province have the ability to compete worldwide to put pork on the shelves in Japan with a two week longer shelf life in a more acceptable and palatable condition to compete in one of the largest markets in the world? It opens up the doors of the world pork market to us and the Minister of Agriculture condemns it. Why?

Perhaps this is what happens when we have a government that has forgotten about the values and the concerns and the aspirations of rural Manitobans. Or is it a problem that this government doesn't really want anybody to know, except those in the immediate Neepawa area, that they put twice as much money into this plant as the Federal Government did?

I am grateful, as are the constituents of Ste. Rose in that particular area, very grateful. We are now able to have jobs in a rural Manitoba town that are permanent jobs. We are producing a product out of that plant that is value-added that will go out of this province. It doesn't have to be consumed in this province. It creates a gross national product for this province that will give us a balance of sales to which we could have tax money and income from to do something in rural Manitoba.

A MEMBER: They don't like that.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: No, Billy doesn't like that. Canada Packers plant was obsolete, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 15 years ago. Canada Packers, there's very little doubt, made a decision in the last few years, that there was not enough room in the meat industry in this province to build a new plant.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have been in the cattle business all my life and I know that we need the volume of

finished cattle to provide the markets, to provide the income.- (Interjection)-

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Agriculture has a point of order.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish that the honourable member would in fact give the facts straight on Canada Packers application to the Federal Government for DRIE application to rebuild their plant in Manitoba.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Differences and argument as to facts is not a point of order.

The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't doubt it's a little embarrassing for the Minister to hear that he hasn't got what is needed in this Cabinet in order to represent the needs of rural Manitoba.

These members over here like to laugh and say that we are asking for more money when we are talking about a feedlot plant in rural Manitoba. That's no laughing matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because if we had a feedlot program that would promote the production and the finishing of quality beef in this country, in this province, we wouldn't need to be subsidized in the production of calves. The sale price would automatically encourage that production.

But we're losing both ways, given the operations of this government. We're losing both ways. The calves are being funded, and they are leaving the province. They are fed in Ontario - that hated province of Ontario - and worse yet they are being fed in Alberta. That's why we have no packing industry. They're building packing plants in the West. Saskatchewan is seeing an increase in their production of dressed product as we talk here today, to slaughter our cattle.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the cynical conclusion and the one which I am afraid I have to agree with is that we in rural Manitoba are slowly being sold out to the union base that supports this party that presently sits in government. We are being sold out as is evident by the criticism of one of the most modern production facilities in North America.

Technology is bad. When one country boy can replace two jobs in the City of Winnipeg, I'm damn proud.

This was a direct benefit to our community; it was a boon. When we have this kind of a lack of understanding in the government, I really wonder where the future of rural Manitoba lies under this kind of administration. We can build new arenas; we can build new halls; we can build community centres; but we won't have anybody to put in them if we don't have jobs. My question becomes then, where are the priorities? We've got to have the population. We've got to have jobs to keep that population, and that is my concern for the future of rural Manitoba.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair.)

Frankly, Madam Speaker, it leads us on this side to one conclusion, that we cannot rest. We cannot rest on the statement that Throne Speeches are traditionally vague and that there will be something for rural Manitoba. There will be something for the farmers when

we get to the Budget. I hope so. I hope so, Madam Speaker because, if we don't, I believe the Premier has no choice but to ask for the resignation of those Ministers who purport to represent rural Manitoba in his Cabinet.

When I talk about rural Manitoba and some of the concerns we have, Madam Speaker, I become concerned when I look to the new Minister responsible for Telephones and he is going to be having a review, I believe it's called, of the Telephone System in this province and the fees therein. I asked myself, can the Minister responsible for Telephones accurately and adequately understand and have sufficient concern for rural Manitoba when we talk about rights. Are the rural subscribers of MTS going to pay more than their share for MTX? The rates are already higher in rural Manitoba and, if they receive a proportionately higher increase and the same ratio as those subscribers in the city, rural Manitoba will be asked that unfair question. Will they be asked, those who already pay the higher phone bills in return for lesser telephone service, be continued to be asked to pay for an increased share of the MTS deficit? I leave that to the judgment of the members opposite, but I can tell you that the judges, the real judges are out there in rural Manitoba, and they are beginning to look very skeptically at what might happen in this area.

Many rural constituents right now pay from \$60 to \$160 to bring their telephone in, a small item but I'm concerned that, when the restructure of these rates is handled, we will not receive the kind of consideration that we should be able to expect. Can we offer alternatives to this government? Yes, Madam Speaker, I think there are alternatives.

We can talk about repriorization, and that is the key. I will not accept from the members opposite that we're talking about spending, spending more. I'm concerned about a real scary situation that is out there in agriculture right now, and we must move on some plans immediately. If there are real plans there, I find it very disappointing that we have not seen more indication in the Throne Speech that some of these plans are, in fact, there. If we see something come up in the Budget, then we can only assume that we've hit a sore spot, and in fact some money will be put into the areas which we're demanding.

Why can't we talk about land taxes in this Chamber? Why can't we talk about fuel rebates, which make us competitive with the neighbouring provinces in our cost of production? Why is that such a bad topic to bring up according to the members of the government? Why can't we talk about loans, low interest loans? You could equal the program that's in Saskatchewan at a cost of \$18 million on the subsidization that would be on the loan rate on a per acre basis in this province. There's a genuine figure that you can deal with, \$18 million would be the cost of the subsidized loan rate. These can be handled by shifting priorities, Madam Speaker.

There are other areas of rural Manitoba, of which I am equally concerned, other areas of our economy which will be severely impacted, given the problems that agriculture is facing. Because let's face it, Madam Speaker, agriculture is not the only industry out there that is going to suffer. It's the tip of the iceberg, and we are going to see the results if we don't do something about the agricultural sector. I defy the members

opposite to say that the province does not have some responsibility, a responsibility that they need to exercise because they are the government.

Let's provide some incentives to get active businesses operating in rural Manitoba. We need light manufacturing in parts of rural Manitoba. So far, we have not seen any indication that they are really prepared to go that route, and considering the actions and the comments that we've heard regarding the results of the growth of the Springhill Farms Plant, I don't hold out a lot of hope.

There's a manufacturing plant of another type in my constituency of Ste. Rose, and when they look at their costs and look at the fact that their steel is laid down f.o.b. their plant, and that almost all of their product is shipped f.o.b. the plant, they are facing far higher transportation costs. They are facing marketing problems that they wouldn't have if they were in the city. But they are a major taxpayer and player in the local municipality where they are situated. Where is the marketing thrust on behalf of this province?

The Minister who spoke prior to me touched on the fact that they had gone to an industrial show and put forward some of the products that come from Manitoba. But we need promotion. We need marketing incentive to make sure that Manitoba's products are before the markets of the world. Madam Speaker, we have two people working in marketing in the Agriculture Branch, two people without a budget.

We had a market in Mexico for bulls, breeding stock that was going out of this province by the semi-trailer load. The cattlemen developed that market at their own expense by going to Mexico, by going to the Mexican shows, and by taking their livestock down there on the speculation that they were good enough, and they were. They were world class. But what happened? The one time when they couldn't go, and they asked the marketing people if they could go. They said, "We'll go if we can go on our holidays but we can't get any expenses." So there was a possibility that the cattle people might cover some of their expenses, but we didn't have a representation there to take the place of those individuals, and we have lost that market to Alberta - it's gone. A small, small problem in the overall scheme of this province, but it's an example of the problems that can start small and grow. We don't have the marketing thrust, either in agricultural products or manufactured products that will help us compete on a nation-wide and international basis. That is the area that we can do a lot to help the businesses in rural Manitoba.

There are other concepts, which we talked about during the election, none of which want to be talked about by this government. We talked about the fact that Hydro could become an incentive for those who wish to become involved in industry or business, particularly business, which involves manufacturing within the boundaries of this province. An idea that has received very little acceptance from the government.

All the rural problems of Manitoba have been blamed on Ottawa. But through the departments of this government, Madam Speaker, initiatives could be taken. I had hoped that there would be some incentive shown in the Speech from the Throne, from Agriculture, from Business Development and Tourism, from Highways, from Health and from Natural Resources.

The Freshwater Fish Marketing Board cannot take or does not want to take rough fish; they don't want to handle the volume of rough fish that could be brought in. There's a market out there. There's an independent market that could be developed. I would like to see the Department of Natural Resources take a look at that. It's a very small item, but it would help. It would help those fishermen, who are part-time farmers and part-time fishermen, to supplement their incomes with fish that they presently don't have a good market for. The reason we don't have a firm in here that is willing to handle that rough fish is because they could not be given the right to buy that fish from the fishermen.

Madam Speaker, we're looking at problems that need to be answered. We're looking at ways of providing leadership. If we don't get leadership from the government, we're going to have to have it from this side.

The Minister of Highways gave me a little pep talk earlier today. The paternal father of MTX has no right to lecture me or anyone else on this side of the House. He likes to talk about the Port of Churchill. Now there's an interesting concept coming out of Highways and Transportation. The Port of Churchill is constantly being put forward by the government on the basis of grain sales. We've got to get more grain sales through Churchill. That's a fine idea but, if we have to support the Port of Churchill on the backs of the grain sales, it'll never become a world-class situation up there. It will always be a drag on itself and on the grain industry of this country. We have got to develop the Port of Churchill in more ways than just on the grain industry.

One way that is a possibility, Madam Speaker, is that Churchill can be considered a Northern port of strategic importance, connected to NATO. Those Ministers and their brothers in Ottawa would drop NATO if they ever had the opportunity to form a government in federal Canada. That's why we won't get that kind of cooperation at Churchill.

The Port of Churchill could be valuable for Northern sovereignty. Those are the kinds of ideas and initiatives that this government could be putting forward instead of simply fodbashing on the idea of putting more grain through Churchill. Churchill will be an important part of this province if we come up with more ideas on how it can be properly used to the benefit of the people living there and allow them to become part of mainstream Manitoba and see some of their goals and objectives come to fruition.

Madam Speaker, rural Manitoba has always looked at highways as being important, but I find out today that there seems to be a lot of work going on on the No. 1 and No. 16 junction. Last summer, we very clearly pointed out to the Minister that, if he was going to dump on the federal initiative to put money into the Yellowhead Highway, he'd better make sure that he didn't put that money into a large interchange at the junction of No. 1 and 16 and leave 16 to deteriorate.

Now I give fair warning that as a member of this Legislature which Highway 16 runs through, that that is not an acceptable manner in which to put the provincial share of that federal money to use. There's no use of having a major interchange if you don't have a quality highway afterwards. Promotion of that route for tourism means that when the tourist gets on there, he's going to enjoy travelling on there and not have

to be dodging potholes and frost boils. He should have the opportunity to drive on a good highway and enjoy the beautiful scenery that is along the route.

Madam Speaker, small business and tourism is tremendously important to rural Manitoba. I'd like to spend a lot more time on highways but, quite frankly, the important part is that we get some consideration from the government that rural Manitoba needs this kind of development to promote livelihoods, promote jobs, promote the tourist industry all across this province.

The tourist industry has a large factor in the city and a factor that must be continually promoted and put forward, but let us not forget about all the travelling and the tourist industry that is outside of the Perimeter.

How much time do I have left, Madam Speaker?

MADAM SPEAKER: The member has four minutes remaining.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Madam Speaker, when I look at the Selkirk Bridge - and the Minister of Highways becomes quite dismayed when we draw attention to the concerns we have in that area - I simply want to know if we have had a fair and honest assessment of the priorities within the Highways Department. That is what concerns us on this side of the House. Where can those dollars best be spent to make the future for Manitoba better?

Madam Speaker, we constantly see the Government of the Day wanting to talk about matters outside of the boundaries of Manitoba. There are a couple of topics I would like to put before them. One is that the seaway is facing a tremendous challenge this summer, the potential for union disruptions of the traffic through the seaway is enormous and I hope that we can expect to see leadership from the government at that time, not just let the grain traffic wither on the vine. I hope that when that time comes, if settlements cannot be reached, that this government will stand up for the Manitoba grain farmer at that point.

Madam Speaker, I have one sentence with which I would like to finish up. There are many handicaps but if we can overcome the problems of division of power within this country, and it can only be seized through a unified and coordinated action between Federal and Provincial Governments, that we can make this province a lot better place to work and I pledge myself to work towards that end.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity in this Session to address a few remarks in reply to the debate on the Speech from the Throne.

To begin with, I would like to indicate my pleasure at seeing you so effectively in the Chair, and I wish you well in the deliberations of this House and I assure you of my every cooperation.

I certainly want also to reflect on the excellence of the services that were provided to Manitobans by Pearl McGonigal, the former Lieutenant-Governor, who was a very gracious and effective chatelaine of Government

House during her period. I'm sure that every member of this House wishes the new Lieutenant-Governor, Mr. George Johnson, as much success as Pearl McGonigal had in her term of office.

Madam Speaker, I also wish to compliment the Mover and the Seconder for the excellence of their speeches and indicate my concurrence with their views and with the thrust of the Throne Speech.- (Interjection)- The honourable member says I haven't read that either. The honourable member doesn't do much reading and I would commend to him a reading of that speech, because perhaps if he reflected on what that speech said, he might temper his remarks somewhat, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, our Throne Speech is a vindication of the kind of deliberate, caring government that Manitobans elected in March, one year ago today, the 18th.- (Interjection)- Well, Madam Speaker . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Could we please have some order while the Honourable Minister participates in the debate?

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, I know honourable members don't like to reflect on March 18 of 1986. They were expecting so much and obtained so little.

Madam Speaker, the Throne Speech continues the course of action that this government demonstrated to the people of Manitoba was worthy of support, a dedication to stand up for the needs of Manitobans, stand up in the face of a Federal Government that was determined to cut away support for the fundamentally necessary programs that this government identified and that the people of Manitoba identified on March 18, one year ago. It was essential that we had in power in Manitoba a government that was dedicated to the protection of those fundamental services, Madam Speaker, a government that was not going to see an erosion of health care and education in this province, despite the cutbacks of funding from Ottawa.

Madam Speaker, I know honourable . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The Honourable Minister.

HON. A. MACKLING: I know, Madam Speaker, that honourable members are discomforted by being reminded of the decision of the electorate a year ago and they are troubled by the fact that apparently this government, alone in Western Canada, is able to defend fundamental programs for Manitobans, like health care and education, and still provide effective leadership in respect to the broad economic concerns that affect Manitobans today - jobs, the plight of agriculture.

I want to say a few more things in those areas, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. Order. If honourable members want to conduct private conversations, they can do so elsewhere. Order.

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, I know the honourable members opposite are unhappy when they hear about the specific benefits the people of Manitoba

received by having a New Democratic Government in power. They have seen a government in power that has created jobs for Manitobans, that has had the political courage to make economic decisions.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Arthur on a point of order.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I wonder, Madam Speaker, if the Minister responsible for Labour would entertain a question at this point.

HON. A. MACKLING: Madam Speaker, when the honourable member will convince his colleagues to sit quietly so that perhaps they might understand something of what I'm saying, certainly I'll be happy to answer questions.

I have heard cackles, giggles, guffaws and sneers from the other side, but that doesn't dissuade me from putting on the public record the fact that this government has demonstrated an ability to produce jobs, to create jobs, to create an environment in this province conducive to economic development, conducive to the protection of the social fabric of this province. Madam Speaker, honourable members can sneer at those accomplishments. They can giggle, they can guffaw, but the people of Manitoba know that when they elected a government last March, they elected a government that sincerely believed that the rights of Manitobans were to be protected and defy the kind of corrosion by the Federal Government in Ottawa.

Madam Speaker, it has taken political courage to make the tough decisions that we have had to make in respect to allocations of funding in all areas of government activity and we have had to face the difficult decision of looking at funding in specific departmental areas, but nowhere, Madam Speaker, has this government slashed fundamental social programming as we have seen in other parts of Canada.

Madam Speaker, we have made those hard administrative decisions and, while we've been doing that, and honourable colleagues on this side of the House have quite correctly pointed out that time in and time out, speech after speech, the cry from the Opposition has been: more, more, more. Whether it be in Highways, whether it be in Natural Resource spending, wherever, Madam Speaker, it is more. The classic example is those members representing rural constituencies saying: look what Alberta did, look what Saskatchewan did. You must emulate what they did.

Then, Madam Speaker, they have the infinite gall to suggest that somehow we are threatening the fabric, the economic sustenance of this province by building a huge deficit. They are the people demanding spending. In the last election, they were going to spend their way into power. They were going to eliminate taxation, Madam Speaker, and when they come into this Chamber, there again: spend, spend spend, at the same time say, look at the deficit you've got; look at your credit rating. It's the Honourable Member for Kildonan who says, they can't have it both ways. But honourable members over there can say, oh, but we can. We do amazing things, we Tories. We can spend prolifically, and we can cut the deficit dramatically.

Well, Madam Speaker, the people of Manitoba didn't believe that was possible and that's why they're over there today.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

In accordance with Rule 35(3), I'm interrupting the proceedings to put the question on the amendment to the House. The question before the House is the amendment moved by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet as printed in today's Order Paper.

Do you wish the motion read?

On the proposed motion of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, an amendment thereto as follows: THAT the motion be amended by adding to it the following words:

But this House regrets:

1. That this government has abandoned the farm community;
2. That the Throne Speech neither acknowledges the financial chaos which the government has caused in Manitoba nor offers any assurances that the government intends to address the massive deficits with other than increased taxes and fees;
3. That this government has continued to squander millions in mismanaged Crown corporations;
4. That small business continues to be discouraged by the most anti-business government in Canada;
5. That the government has deceived the public by its broken promises both from last year's Throne Speech and the 1986 election;
6. That the government has ignored the real priorities of Manitobans in favour of increased spending on administration and debt service charges;
7. That this government has thereby lost the trust and confidence of the people of Manitoba.

All those in favour of the amendment, say aye. All those opposed, say nay. In my opinion the nays have it.

The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

MR. G. MERCIER: Yeas and nays, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Call in the members.

The question before the House is the amendment moved by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

All those in favour, please rise.

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

YEAS

Birt, Blake, Carstairs, Connery, Cummings, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Findlay, Hammond, Johnston, Kovnats, Manness, McCrae, Mercier, Mitchelson, Nordman, Orchard, Pankratz, Rocan, Roch.

NAYS

Ashton, Baker, Bucklaschuk, Cowan, Desjardins, Doer, Dolin, Evans, Harapiak (The Pas), Harapiak (Swan River), Harper, Hemphill, Kostyra, Lecuyer, Mackling, Maloway, Parasiuk, Pawley, Penner, Plohman, Santos, Schroeder, Scott, Smith (Elice), Smith (Osborne), Storie, Uruski, Walding, Wasylycia-Leis.

MR. CLERK, W. Remnant: Yeas, 25; Nays, 29.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is accordingly defeated.

On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet, the Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Madam Speaker, I am prepared to make my remarks unless there's a desire to call it 10 o'clock today. No? That's fine, Madam Speaker. I'm prepared to proceed with my remarks.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and that doesn't disturb me at all because that will not deter from the remarks I have to make in the Legislature here today.

Madam Speaker, this fall it will be 10 years since I got elected to the Legislature, and I think possibly from time to time you think that as a person who's been here for a long time, that it maybe gets to be old hat. Well, I want to indicate to all the members, especially 17 new members in this Legislature, that after all this period of time, it is still an exciting experience to participate in the Throne Speech.

One thing that happened though, Madam Speaker, is that after having the opportunity and the real privilege of being here in this House for almost 10 years after three elections is that you learn to look around and you learn to gauge what happens in this House. I find the comments of members, as each one speaks, we have a different development. Everybody has their own way of how they react in this House, they develop their own style, and I think it's very nice. We all develop different styles.

The Member for Radisson the other day said there are some people who speak easier, who don't have to worry about notes and stuff like that, there's people who have to use notes, but all 57 of us have been elected for a specific purpose, to represent our people. I'll tell you something; we've earned that right to be in here, all of us.

Madam Speaker, it's interesting to see how things develop. We see some of the rookie members. The Member for Kildonan gets up and he is trying to score big brownie points politically and he's bashing us, you know, and it's beautiful, it's nice, and it doesn't bother me.

We have our members here, and we have 11 on our side who are new members and very, very capable people. In fact, I had the privilege and honour of sitting in the backbench, being elected in 1977, and we had our front bench, as those limited members sitting on the backbench now have, and I was concerned, because here was the Opposition and they were taking and tearing the guts out of our government and our Ministers. I was concerned, and every time one of the Opposition scored a point, it bothered me. But you know what, I've overcome those kinds of things. I'm

now in my second term as a member of the Opposition and it's nice to see how things develop. I like to see how things develop here.

We are entitled to have our different views, and the speeches based on the Throne Speech Debate that we've had in the last days, interesting things develop. Madam Speaker, I was one of the culprits who kept calling at the Member for Thompson, "Landslide," because you won that first election by only a small margin. You knocked out one of our Ministers. And you know what, Madam Speaker? I respect him for that.

In this last election of 1986, Madam Speaker, it was less than a year ago. Last year at this time, on March 9, we were all of us pounding through the snow looking for support and looking for votes. It's less than a year ago.

A MEMBER: Not Ernst.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Well, we had a member here from Charleswood who had other people doing it for him. But, Madam Speaker, what I'm trying to illustrate is the fact that things have changed - new members in here, different views expressed - and I find it very interesting and very enjoyable. Madam Speaker, I love politics. I love to be here; I'm proud to be here.

When people are excited about what has happened, and we look at the views of various people - the Member for Kildonan gets up there and he's storming at our Leader and he's going to totally, single-handedly, almost bring down the Opposition, you know. Not so, Madam Speaker, not so.

Madam Speaker, then we have the member - and I find this most interesting - the member that I maybe embarrassed to some degree. We used to call him "Landslide," the Member for Thompson. He did a good job, because he got re-elected on a bigger majority, so obviously whatever he did, he did a good job.

But you know what, Madam Speaker, in replying to the Throne Speech, this member was all excited about the latest polls. He was so excited because federally and provincially it didn't look good for the Conservatives. I just want to raise a few points with the Member for Thompson because during the French language debate in this House we scored a lot of points. When we looked at the polls at that time, Madam Speaker, we were a shoo-in to be government. It was a shoo-in that we would form government.

What happened though, things changed - the snapshot of the day - and the Member for Thompson took great delight in telling us, "A Tory is a Tory is a Tory," and I have it here.-(Interjection)- No. Well, it's been used before, Madam Speaker, but the Member for Thompson took great delight in indicating that. He says you cannot disassociate yourself from the Federal Government and that's fair enough. That's fair enough. But if he takes any solace in the fact that all of a sudden they may be ahead in the polls right now, I want to caution them, it changes dramatically, and certainly this is his second term around and he should know that has no bearing on it at all. I'll get into the whole structure of what's happening to this government in the period of my speech. So I just want to say to the Member for Thompson, don't get excited. In case you figure that

the sun is now rising and setting in your corner, that's not the way it is.

Madam Speaker, we all have our opportunity and we all develop our own styles in terms of speeches. Some of us are very sincere and, Madam Speaker, great speeches get made in this House.

A MEMBER: One of them right now.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Albert, Albert!

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Madam Speaker, I don't know whether I can really cope with this kind of support.

But what I'm trying to illustrate is there have been good speeches made in this Session as well as in past Sessions, sometimes better, sometimes worse, this type of thing. There have been good speeches made in this debate so far. Some of it, we get attracted to people who are capable of making good speeches. Some speak on their concern, especially Ministers who speak on the area of concern that they are involved with.

For example, the Member for Radisson made a very good speech the other day. It was in French and I listened to the translation, and at least he spoke on the things that involved his department and I have to respect that, you know.- (Interjection)- That's right.

Madam Speaker, the Member for Lac du Bonnet got up the other day and he raised concerns how we, as members of the Legislature, could socialize one evening before and then get into the House and throw barbs at each other and he says, "How can this be?" You know what, the other day when the Member for Brandon West challenged his right to ask a question, he got as nasty as all of us.

You know, Madam Speaker, what a difference a day makes, but you know what we're all here.- (Interjection)- He's been trying, Madam Speaker, since he got elected, less than a year ago, but the Member for Lac du Bonnet has been trying to put a guilt complex on all members in the House in saying you should be conscientious, you should be here for the betterment of Manitoba, and you know what, I agree. But then when he gets put in a corner, he fights like a rat.- (Interjection)- He does.

Madam Speaker, we have the same thing from the Member for Burrows there. Madam Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, he got up in this House - and one of the first speeches - and berated everybody. Be conscientious, be fair. He talked to everybody and it was a very emotional speech and he said, how come, I've studied this thing here, and what is wrong, what are we doing wrong? Madam Speaker, he's also right in the fray right now, you know.

So it's surprising what happens in here. We all develop our own technique and I think it's good. I think that's what the political, democratic system is all about. We have a right; myself, representing the constituency of Emerson; or each one of the 57 members in this House have a right to come and express our views here. That's what it's all about. Very often when speeches take place, Madam Speaker, there are maybe six, seven, ten people in this House.- (Interjection)- I feel a little - how would you say that - yes, it's awesome, Madam Speaker, in the Throne Speech that we should have that many members in the House.

But, Madam Speaker, I think it's a beautiful system. We have a great country. We have a great province and this is what it's all about, getting in here and speaking our views. Madam Speaker, the Government side, their obligation is to defend the Throne Speech and ours, as Opposition, is to defy and sort of highlight the shortcomings. If there is praise, I want to say and many members have said tell us what to do - and some of our key speeches, the Member for Arthur and the Member for Morris have come forward with some constructive criticisms and made some suggestions. The Member for The Pas has said, "Tell us what to do." The Minister of Highways said, "Tell us what to do, support us." Madam Speaker, we are doing that, we are doing that.

I got a letter the other day, Madam Speaker, and obviously it was not one of my supporters and the individual had said: "How come you're always negative? How come you're always negative in terms of what happens?" And do you know what, I had to think about it a little bit. But you know what, nobody likes to be negative all the time. But our responsibility as opposition is to make the government responsible. Madam Speaker, that's one hell of a challenge with this government, you know. It is a real responsibility.

But you know what, I think the system is working well.- (Interjection)- Madam Speaker, the Member for Thompson says: "We say that the people in Manitoba made a mistake." I don't say that, I don't say that. What I say is that they will rue what they did. But the fact is that we maybe didn't sell our case well enough. And the Government of the Day, they have been very effective because they sold their ideas well; we maybe didn't do as well, and that is why they're elected by

Madam Speaker, when this government takes comfort, and I've heard some of the speeches saying: "The public gave us the support", but when you look at the percentage of votes, it was very close, wasn't it? And it's very interesting because that was really not a mandate, but to have another chance. But, Madam Speaker, for three years prior to the election they had their heads in the sand. Ever since the shellacking they got on the French language debate, this government hasn't had the guts to take any positive moves.

Now, Madam Speaker, the strategy worked - don't do anything, maybe we can get re-elected and they did. But, Madam Speaker, now that they say that they have that big mandate, one point or two points, whatever the case may be, now this government, you would have expected that they would take the initiative and come forward with positive programs.

A MEMBER: What are we getting now?

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Madam Speaker, what we're getting is a "head in the sand approach". This government is bankrupt with money and they're bankrupt with ideas. That's the tragedy of it. The tragedy is not here with these 57 members, the tragedy is for the people of Manitoba because this government has taken to driving this province down.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Madam Speaker, I have one little comment I want to make.

Monday, 9 March, 1987

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. The hour being ten o'clock, I am interrupting proceedings according to the rules. When this motion is again before the House, the honourable member will have 24 minutes remaining.

The hour being 10:00 p.m. the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned till 1:30 p.m. tomorrow. (Tuesday)